

THE TAKE HOME

St. Paul UMC | 2000 Douglas Blvd., Louisville, KY 40205 | stpaulchurchky.org



Crucifixion Scene
From the Victory Window
at St. Paul UMC

Suffering

Jesus brought a message of universal love, compassion and acceptance. Within a short time, this led to his brutal crucifixion.

How do you begin to make sense of this?

Those closest to Jesus hoped that his suffering could be avoided. His disciple, Peter, tried to dissuade him from taking roads that might put him in danger. But Jesus seemed to think that the suffering was necessary. Not that he sought it out. But he wasn't going to stop living the life he had chosen just because it might lead others to threaten him. Most people probably experience something like this, in ways great or small.

When have you had to be true to yourself, even when others disapproved?

Throughout the centuries, many Christians have found that their own painful experiences can in fact unite them more closely with Christ. They wouldn't have chosen those experiences. But afterwards, they can see something of how God has shaped and formed them through the suffering they have undergone.

Perhaps, as you look back now at your life, you see the hard parts and can catch a glimpse of how God was alongside you even there?

Reflect on the stained glass window to the left and consider how Jesus is with you in your suffering.



Silence

Be still, and Know that I am God. (Psalm 46:10)

Receive from God what you need. When you are finished,
offer this prayer.

You have given all to me

To you, Lord, I return it

Everything is Yours

Do with it what You will

Give me only Your love and Your grace

That is enough for me. Amen

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LOVE

Mark 12: 28-34

One of the scribes came near and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, he asked him, 'Which commandment is the first of all?' Jesus answered, 'The first is, "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength." The second is this, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." There is no other commandment greater than these.' Then the scribe said to him, 'You are right, Teacher; you have truly said that "he is one, and besides him there is no other"; and "to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength", and "to love one's neighbor as oneself",—this is much more important than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices.' When Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, 'You are not far from the kingdom of God.' After that no one dared to ask him any question.

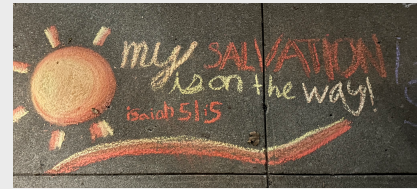
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From all the commandments, Jesus chooses two as supremely important. **What do you make of his choice?**

This way of understanding calls you to love God, your neighbor, and yourself. **Which of these do you find most challenging at the moment, and why?**

As you pray, hear Jesus repeat to you his last words to the scribe:
"You are not far from the kingdom of God"

Gratefulness



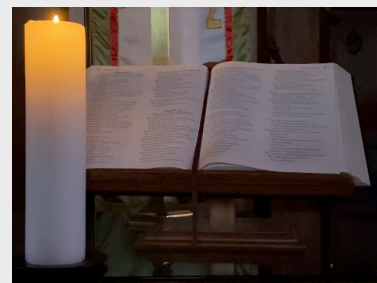
"Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; God's love endures forever."

(1 Chronicles 16:34)

When have you experienced the light of Jesus come into your life and felt gratefulness?

Remember the time and how it made you feel.

**When you can,
Light a candle to symbolize your gratitude.**



"Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus."

I Colossians 3:17