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Happy Thursday and thank you for tuning in to our St. Paul Lenten reflections! Today's Gospel reading comes from Saint Luke. Jesus is talking to His disciples. He says that He will have to face great suffering, be tried and found guilty by the religious leaders, killed, and then rise on the third day. He goes on to tell them that if this could happen to him, what should they expect for themselves?

In a contemporary translation of the Bible called, "The Message," Jesus says, "Anyone who intends to come with me has to let me lead. You're not in the driver's seat – I am. Don't run from suffering; embrace it. Follow me and I'll show you how. Self-help is no help at all. Self-sacrifice is the way, my way, to find yourself, your true self. What good would it do to get everything you want and lose you, the real you?"

How true is that statement!

During these next 40 days of Lent, over 400 members of our parish are on a quest to discover What On Earth Am I Here For? – a book by Rick Warren.

In the first group session, Warren reiterates that Gospel passage. He says, "you're not going to find your true self, your purpose, in any self-help books or classes, because it's NOT about you...it's about God. WOW, what a concept, it's not about me!

In today's culture, that is a radical statement, because our culture just appears more and more to be about self...self-importance, self-absorption, self-gratification and self-indulgence --- which doesn't leave much space for God!

This Lenten Season is an invitation to set aside our self interests, and focus on God. Let Him do the driving! Enjoy the ride, and hopefully He will help us see "What on earth we are here for!"