

February 15, 2026

**WISDOM IN THE WILDERNESS:  
THE WILDERNESS AS A PLACE OF PRAYER  
Matthew 4.1-11, Colossians 4.2**

The season of Lent begins this Wednesday. Lent is a 40-day journey of preparation as we look toward celebrating the Lord's resurrection at Easter. Traditionally, this season is marked by prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Today, we will reflect on the example of Jesus and set our intentions so that we may approach Easter with hearts devoted to prayer and a deeper pursuit of God.

*Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.* Matthew 4.1

The wilderness as **SEPARATION**.

- Jesus went into wilderness to fast, pray, and engage in spiritual warfare with the devil in order to be better prepared for his upcoming ministry among the people.

**The example of the Desert Fathers and Mothers:**

- What might it look like for you to seek separation in order to pursue spiritual growth?

*But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. Matthew 6.6*

- Jesus' advice on prayer: Close the door on **DISTRACTIONS** and **DISRUPTIONS**.

- The Biggest Challenge of Separation: **OUR BRAIN**

- An exhortation from the Apostle Paul:  
*Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.*

Colossians 4.2

Who or what are you devoted to?

**HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR PRAYER LIFE:**

1. **SHOW UP**.

Thomas Merton was once asked, "What is the best thing I can do to improve my prayer life?" His answer was simple: "Take the time."

2. Don't make it **COMPLICATED**.

"Prayer is nothing else than being on terms of friendship with God, frequently conversing in secret with Him who we know loves us."

-- St. Teresa of Avila

3. What about the distractions? **KEEP PRAYING**.

"How lovely, ten thousand opportunities to return to God."

-- Thomas Keating

4. But most of all start here: **I AM LOVED BY GOD**.

*And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."*

Matthew 3.17