

SERMON NOTES:



15th Feb, 2026

Lent Part 1
Walking with Jesus into the Wilderness

Pastor Mick Spann

The journey of Lent begins not with us, but with Jesus:

- Lent is not about gloom, rules, or trying to impress God
- Lent is an invitation — a season to walk intentionally with Jesus

Jesus in the Wilderness (Matthew 4:1–11)

- Jesus is led by the Spirit into the wilderness
- He fasts for forty days and faces temptation
- The wilderness is not a mistake or delay — it is preparation
- Jesus resists temptation by trusting God's word
 - “Man shall not live on bread alone...” (Deut. 8:3; Matt. 4:4)
 - “Do not put the Lord your God to the test” (Deut. 6:16; Matt. 4:7)
 - “Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only” (Deut. 6:13; Matt. 4:10)

Why the Wilderness?

- The wilderness strips away distractions and false comforts
- It creates space to hear God more clearly
- Jesus often returned to quiet places to pray (Luke 5:16)
- Silence and solitude were sources of strength, not weakness

Lent in Our World Today

- We live surrounded by noise, hurry, and constant distraction
- Stillness is difficult but necessary
- Jesus invites us into hidden prayer (Matthew 6:6)
- “Be still, and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10)

Devotion, Not Earning

- Lent is not about earning God's love
- Jesus entered the wilderness already declared “beloved” (Matthew 3:17)
- We do not practice Lent to become loved — we practice Lent because we are loved
- God works in us both the desire and the strength to follow Him (Philippians 2:13)

Traditional Practices of Lent

- Prayer, fasting, and giving are gifts, not rules (Matthew 6)
- Fasting reveals deeper hunger for God (Matthew 5:6)
- Giving turns love outward (1 John 2:1–2; Romans 12:1–2)

Humility and Grace

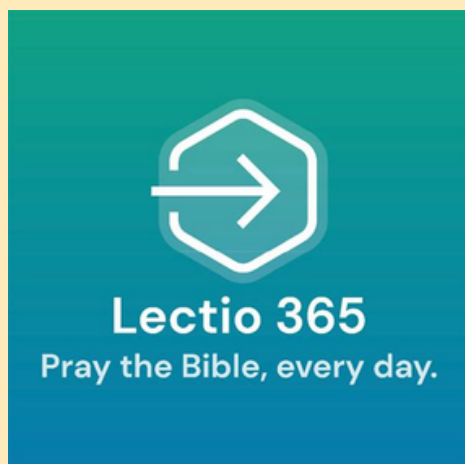
- Ash Wednesday reminds us of our fragility (Genesis 3:19; Psalm 103:14)
- Lent is about humility, repentance, and returning to God
- Jesus' way is gentle, not crushing (Matthew 11:30)

Invitation

- Begin with one word: Beloved
- Walk together, gently and faithfully
- Make small space for God
- Let this season prepare your heart for Easter joy

This series is based upon resources lovingly provided by Lectio 365 and the 24-7 Prayer Movement. The companion study guide on the next page is designed for small groups to consider each weekly theme more personally.

The Lectio 365 App provides daily guided prayers, in the style of meditative lectio divina. Over the next 40 days, the App will focus specifically upon these themes of Lent.





Week 1

(The week containing Ash Wednesday)

Reigniting my Passion for Jesus

The Desert as a Place of Prayerful Pursuit

Icebreaker Question

What is the best journey you have ever taken? Why?

Watch



lectio365.com/desertresources

Week 1: Anthony of the Desert

Read



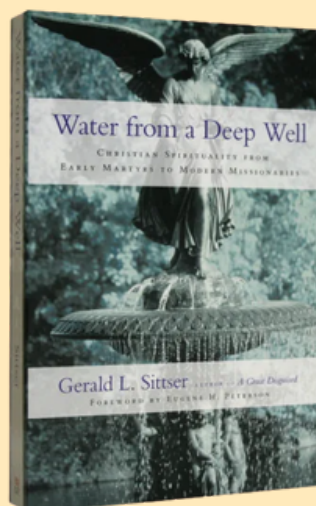
Colossians 4:2

Matthew 4:1–11

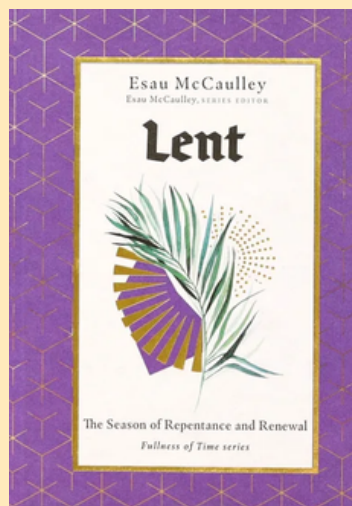
Discuss

1. As you enter this period of Lent, take a moment to reflect on your relationship with God and the particular “season” you may be in right now. For example: does regular prayer or Bible reading feel easy or difficult at the moment? Are you coming into Lent with any big questions in life?
2. Where do you want to grow in your relationship with God this Lent? What are some intentional steps you can take that might help you?
3. Pete shared the story about the hunter’s bow. How do we get the balance between being highly intentional without being too intense about our faith?
4. The people we spend a lot of time with can have a significant impact on our discipleship. Reflect on the relationships around you – both helpful and harmful. Perhaps take time as a group to consider how you can encourage one another practically this Lent.

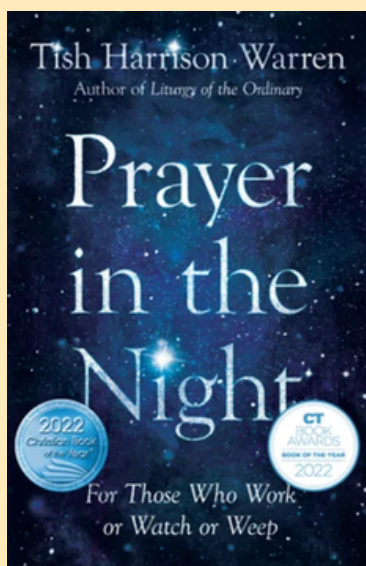
In preperation for this series, Mick has found these books to be very good:



Water from a Deep Well
by Gerald L. Sittser



Lent
by Esau McCaulley



Prayer in the Night
by Tish Harrison
Warren



To hear about the ‘Lenten’ practices of Prayer, Fasting and Alms giving from a Catholic perspective, you might enjoy this video from Bishop Robert Barron.

