



# Into the Wilderness: A Catholic Journey of Faith

## Week 2: Tested & Humbled

### Opening Prayer

Lord, humble our hearts as we reflect on Your Word. Quiet our minds and calm the noise within us. Teach us to live by Your voice alone. Help us set aside the distractions we carry so that we may be fully present to You. Teach us to slow down, to listen with intention, and to find rest in Your voice alone. Draw us deeper into Your will, that our time here may shape us in trust and obedience. Amen

### Deuteronomy 8:2–3

Remember how for these forty years the LORD, your God, has directed all your journeying in the wilderness, so as to test you by affliction, to know what was in your heart: to keep his commandments, or not.

He therefore let you be afflicted with hunger, and then fed you with manna, a food unknown to you and your ancestors, so you might know that it is not by bread alone that people live, but by all that comes forth from the mouth of the LORD.

### Lectio Divina + Reflection

This passage in Deuteronomy recalls Israel's forty years in the desert as a time when God tested and humbled them. Their hunger revealed not only their weakness but also God's desire to teach them that "man does not live by bread alone but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God." This passage highlights the wilderness as a place of humility and testing, where God reveals the depths of human reliance on Him.

### Discussion: Learning

What does the phrase "man does not live by bread alone" show us about the relationship between physical needs and spiritual needs?

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### The Wilderness as a Place of Testing and Purification

Israel's hunger in the wilderness revealed both weakness and God's greater purpose: to humble His people and teach them reliance on His Word. Jesus Himself cites this passage when tempted (Matthew 4:4), showing us that Scripture is not just history but a guide for our own struggles.

Catholic teaching makes clear that trials are not punishment but purification. They strip away illusions of self-sufficiency and call us to depend more fully on God. Just as Israel was prepared for the Promised Land through testing, so too are we prepared for holiness through prayer, fasting, penance, and perseverance.

Every trial, whether affliction or temptation, can become a crucible for holiness. When we embrace these moments with humility, we discover that the wilderness is not about deprivation, but transformation in God’s grace.

**Discussion: Experiencing**

How has fasting or acts of penance (sacrifice, confession, self-denial) revealed a deeper dependence on God’s will in your life?

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**Catechism (CCC 2835, 2847)**

The Lord reminds us that we do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from His mouth. This hunger points us to the Bread of Life—Christ Himself—received in faith through the Word and in the Eucharist.

The Holy Spirit helps us to recognize the difference between trials, which strengthen us, and temptations, which lead us toward sin. Even so, temptation can serve a purpose: it reveals our weakness, teaches us humility, and reminds us to depend fully on God’s grace.

**Discussion: Sharing**

How can your story of wilderness or trial that tested and humbled you encourage someone else today?

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**Closing Prayer**

Lord Jesus, place within us a deeper hunger for You, the Bread of Life, that nothing else can satisfy. Grant us the humility to seek You in the wilderness of our hearts, where pride is stripped away and Your grace alone sustains us. Deliver us from the desire to be seen or praised, and teach us instead to rest in Your presence and Your will. May our trials draw us closer to You, who are our strength and our salvation. Amen

**Challenge:** Choose one small fast (food, technology, comfort) this week.