



A Mini Lenten Retreat • For Knights of Columbus
45 – 50 minutes

Standing Ready to Enter the Desert

Leader: Lent is a sacred and disciplined season in the life of the Church - a time set apart for conversion of heart, renewal of faith, and recommitment to the mission of Christ. For the Knights of Columbus, Lent offers a particular invitation: to strengthen the interior life so that outward works of charity, fraternity, and service may flow more fully from Christ.

To “**Follow Jesus into the Desert**” as a Knight invites us to step away from constant noise, obligation, and activity, and to allow the Lord to shape the heart of a disciple. The desert is not a retreat from responsibility, but a place where faith is purified, courage is strengthened, and purpose is renewed.

This mini retreat invites Knights to walk with Christ into the wilderness - first as individual disciples, then as brothers who lead by example - so that they may help parishioners and families encounter Christ more deeply and discover what is gained through faithful perseverance.

All: Lord Jesus Christ, You call me to follow You into the desert. I come before You aware of my strengths and my weaknesses, my desire to serve and my need to be renewed. By Your Spirit, lead me into the quiet places where my heart can be examined and strengthened – where I can be a solid Knight in your eyes.

Help me to set aside distractions, comforts, and habits that dull my love for You. Grant me courage to face temptation, discipline to choose what is right, and humility to depend on Your grace. In silence, train my heart to listen more closely to Your voice.

When I feel weary or unsure, remind me that I do not stand alone. You walk beside me, strengthen me, and prepare me for the work You entrust to me as your son and as a Knight. Lead me into the desert with You, Lord, so that, leaving behind what is lesser, I may gain what is eternal. Amen.

God Forms His Servants in the Desert

Reader 1: Throughout Scripture, the desert is a place of testing and trust, where God forms His people for mission. Israel learned reliance on God during its forty years of wandering (cf. Deuteronomy 8:2). Prophets were strengthened in solitude before being sent to speak boldly. The desert reveals where true strength comes from.

For Jesus, the desert was a time of preparation and resolve. Following His baptism, He was led by the Spirit into the wilderness (cf. Mark 1:12–13). There He fasted, prayed, and confronted temptation. In that solitude, His obedience to the Father was confirmed and His mission embraced with unwavering faith. A Knight must follow the Spirit.

Reader 2: For Knights of Columbus, the desert is an interior training ground. It is where discipline is refined, motives are purified, and faith is strengthened. In the desert, God prepares men not only to stand firm in belief, but to lead others with integrity and courage.

To follow Jesus into the desert means:

- Facing temptations honestly and decisively.
- Choosing simplicity and self-denial to strengthen the will.
- Listening attentively for God's direction rather than relying solely on self.
- Trusting that God provides strength even when the path is difficult.

The desert shapes Knights into men who serve not for recognition, but for the glory of God and the good of His people.

Walking the Desert Path

(At your table or as a group, go through each of the 7 steps.

Note that some steps are done in meditation.)

1. Entering the Desert: Readiness of Spirit

Set aside a quiet space. Silence all devices. Light a candle. Place a crucifix or sacred image nearby. Have a Catholic Bible ready. Invite the Holy Spirit with this prayer:

“Come, Holy Spirit. Lead me into the desert with Jesus. Strengthen my faith, steady my resolve, and prepare my heart to be formed by You. Amen.”

2. Hearing God's Word in the Wilderness

Read and share:

- Slowly read **Deuteronomy 8:2–3**, **Psalm 27**, or **Luke 4:1–13**.
- Which word or image challenges or encourages you as a Knight?
- How does Jesus' response to temptation shape your understanding of strength?
- What does this Scripture invite you to change or deepen?
- Record insights at the end of this retreat.

3. Naming the Deserts You Face

Bring before God the deserts present in your life.

- Where do you experience spiritual dryness, discouragement, or impatience?
- Where do pressures of work, family, or leadership strain your faith?
- Where are you called to greater trust or surrender or service as a Knight?

Name these honestly before the Lord. Offer them without fear, trusting that God meets you precisely in these places.

4. Standing in Holy Silence

Set aside five minutes for silent prayer. This is a time not for planning or solving, but for presence.

If distractions arise, gently return to a simple prayer such as:

“Lord, be my strength,” -or- “Your grace is enough.”

Let silence become a place of renewal.

5. Fasting in Discipline and Freedom

Reflect, Pray and Share:

Fasting strengthens resolve and sharpens spiritual focus.

- From what will you fast this Lent - food, habits, media, or comforts?
- How will the time or energy gained be offered to God or others?
- What purpose guides your fasting?
- What virtue do you hope God will strengthen through it?

Allow fasting to train the heart for generosity and trust as one called to be a Knight.

6. Facing Temptation with Faith

Reflect, Question Yourself and Pray:

Jesus faced temptations of comfort, power, and testing God.

- Where are you tempted toward self-reliance rather than prayer?
- Where do pride, control, or discouragement arise?
- How does God's Word call you to respond with Knightly faith and humility?

Ask the Lord for the grace to stand firm and respond as Christ did.

7. Strengthened for the Mission

Conclude with prayers of gratitude and petition, trusting that the desert prepares the heart for service.

You may pray: "Lord Jesus, strengthen me for the path ahead. Shape my heart, sharpen my faith, and renew my desire to serve. May this desert form me into a faithful disciple and courageous servant. Amen."

Stepping out of the Desert

Leader: The desert is never the final destination. Jesus emerged from the wilderness filled with the power of the Spirit and ready to proclaim the Kingdom. In the same way, deacons are sent forth renewed- not only for personal holiness, but for the sanctification of the People of God.

As you leave this time of prayer, carry with you what the desert has taught: how to listen more deeply, serve more humbly, and accompany others more patiently. Lead your parishioners not around their deserts, but through them- always pointing toward hope, mercy, and resurrection.

All : Lord Jesus, we thank You for meeting us in the quiet places of our hearts. As we step out of the desert, keep us grounded in what we have received. Shape our service with compassion, our preaching with truth, and our charity with joy.

Make us faithful servants of Your Word and witnesses of Your mercy. May our lives as deacons reflect the humility we learned in the desert and the hope we now carry forward. Lead us always- from desert to discipleship, from service to glory- until we rest fully in You. Amen.

Resources to Promote a Deeper Lenten Experience

- ◆ Keep a Lenten journal, noting moments of grace, challenge, and growth.
- ◆ Pray the Stations of the Cross, especially focusing on Jesus' perseverance.
- ◆ Utilize "Mary's Way of the Cross" by Richard Furey. For your stations of the cross, on one Friday, follow Jesus on his journey to Calvary through the eyes of his mother, Mary.
- ◆ Attend daily Mass or Eucharistic Adoration.
- ◆ Receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation for a fresh start.
- ◆ Practice almsgiving: offer time, resources, or compassion to someone in need.
- ◆ Connect with a spiritual director or trusted friend for encouragement.



Lord, help us to see the Holy Season of Lent as a time of spiritual renewal, rather than a time of deprivation. Amen.

