

Solitude

Jesus would regularly slip away into the eremos, a Greek word that can be translated as "the desert," "the deserted place," "the solitary place," or even "the quiet place." There, he would pray; he would open to his Father and draw on the Holy Spirit for strength, wisdom, direction, and joy. Then, he would come back to the world of people to love and serve.

Solitude is also a great time to think about the topic surrounding this month. As you sit with God and the Spirit for this time, I would encourage you to practice what Tyler Staton calls "Searching and Naming." He writes, "Confession is two parts: searching and naming. Searching is God's part; naming is ours. Still, your body and mind. Wait in silence, opening yourself up to the Spirit of God, releasing every possible interference. Then pray the words of David, restated as an invitation: 'Search me, Lord, and know me.' Wait. Pay attention to what may come up. Note how God begins to reveal you to yourself. Confess."

As mentioned in the assignment section, we're asking every DM participant to practice an extended period of silence and solitude. Here are the goals to aim for:

- Minimum of 4 hours
- No phone, email, TV, work, etc.
- Find a spot where you can be alone and uninterrupted. If possible, go away to a park or retreat center.

Like most things in life, this will require some planning. It will not be as fruitful if you just show up and sit for four hours.

The following is a suggested schedule for how to spend the 4 hours:

- Forty minutes: Prepare your mind and heart, take a walk, or do whatever will help you set aside concerns over tasks and responsibilities.
- One hour: Read and meditate on Scripture, taking time to stop and reflect when God seems to be speaking to you through the text.
 - Recommended passages to read/meditate
 - Psalm 18
 - Psalm 23
 - Psalm 40
 - Psalm 42
 - Psalm 104
 - Psalm 130
 - Psalm 139
- Twenty minutes: Write down responses to what you have read. Speak to God about them.
- Thirty minutes: Take a walk, reflecting on the morning.
- Thirty minutes: Set goals that emerge from the day's reflection.
- Thirty minutes: Write down these goals and other thoughts in a journal.
- Thirty minutes: Pray and thank God for your time together, and ask if there is anything else he wants to say. Prepare to enter back into the flow of life.

* Adapted from www.practicingtheway.org

How to spend extended time in prayer:

<https://www.navigators.org/resource/spend-extended-time-prayer/>