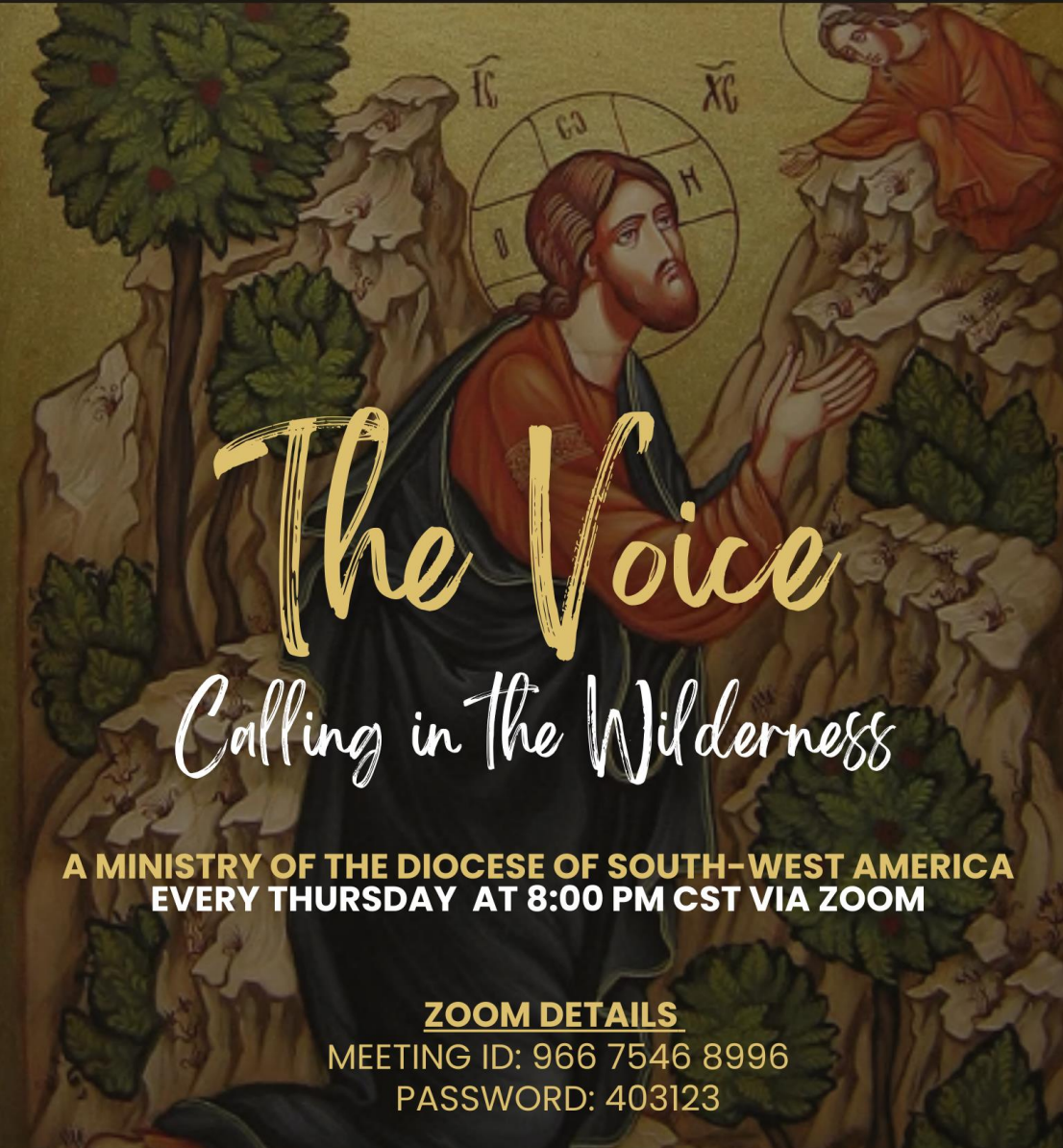


A voice cries: 'In the wilderness prepares the way of the Lord;
make straight in the desert a highway for our God'

ISAIAH 40:3



The Voice Calling in the Wilderness

**A MINISTRY OF THE DIOCESE OF SOUTH-WEST AMERICA
EVERY THURSDAY AT 8:00 PM CST VIA ZOOM**

ZOOM DETAILS

MEETING ID: 966 7546 8996

PASSWORD: 403123

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:
REV. FR. IMMANUEL (AMAL) PUNNOOSE
EMAIL: APUNNOOSE@SVOTS.EDU

The Voice Calling in the Wilderness

Schedule for every Thursday (CST)

8:00 PM – Kauma + Opening Prayer

8:05 PM – Bible Study

8:35 PM – Benediction + Announcements

Discussion Opportunities

Last Thursday of every month will be dedicated towards discussion of that month's topics.

Questions can also be emailed to the speaker or myself at apunnoose@svots.edu

Zoom Recordings

Available on diocesan website at
<http://ds-wa.org/bible-study-the-voice.html>

Upcoming Schedule

August 3rd – Session #1
August 10th – Session #2
August 17th – Session #3
August 24th – Session #4
August 31st – August Review

September 7th – No Class
September 14th – Session #5
September 21st – Session #6
September 28th – Review

October 5th – Session #7
October 12th – Session #8
October 19th – Session #9
October 26th – October Review

November 2nd – Session #10
November 9th – Session #11
November 16th – Session #12
November 23rd – Thanksgiving Break
November 30th – November Review

A dirt path winds through a dense forest. The path is flanked by lush green ferns and other vegetation. Tall trees with thick trunks line the path, and sunlight filters through the canopy, creating dappled light on the ground. The overall scene is a vibrant, natural wilderness.

The Wilderness

Hagar and Ishmael in the Wilderness

- **Genesis 21:14** - *So Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and a skin of water, and gave it to Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, along with the child, and sent her away. And she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beer-sheba.*
- The Lord heard the cry of Ishmael, not Hagar.
- God opened the eyes of Hagar to see water, to salvation.
- **Genesis 21:20-21** - *And God was with the lad, and he grew up; he lived in the wilderness, and became an expert with the bow. ²¹ He lived in the wilderness of Paran; and his mother took a wife for him from the land of Egypt.*

Moses in the Wilderness

- Exodus 3:1 - *Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God.*
- Encountering God
- The presence of God transforms the wilderness into a holy place (Ex. 3:5)
- The Lord guided the people of Israel out of captivity for 40 years in the wilderness until they preached the Promised Land.



Elijah in the Wilderness

1 Kings 19:1-4

Ahab told Jez'ebel all that Eli'jah had done, and how he had slain all the prophets with the sword. 2 Then Jez'ebel sent a messenger to Eli'jah, saying, "So may the gods do to me and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by this time tomorrow." 3 Then he was afraid, and he arose and went for his life, and came to Beer-sheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there.

4 But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a broom tree; and he asked that he might die, saying, "It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am no better than my fathers."

- The wilderness became refuge from danger.

1 Kings 19:15-16

And the LORD said to him, "Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus; and when you arrive, you shall anoint Haz'ael to be king over Syria; ¹⁶ and Jehu the son of Nimshi you shall anoint to be king over Israel; and Eli'sha the son of Shaphat of A'bel-meho'lah you shall anoint to be prophet in your place.

- The wilderness became the place of God's covenant with the people.
- **See also Exodus 24;** Moses receiving the 10 commandments from God on Mount Sinai

Christ in the Wilderness

- St Mathew 4:1 - *Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.*
- The wilderness is the site of Adam and Eve's defeat; **however, it is the place of victory for Christ, both at the beginning of His ministry and at Golgotha**
- It is where Christ calls us to ascend to a higher understanding – in Scripture and in praxis



Hymn 3 of *The Hymns on Paradise* by St Ephrem

- At the summit of Paradise stands the Tree of Life, whose glory is so great that it cannot be approached; indeed, for Adam and Eve any approach to it was effectively hedged off by the Tree of Knowledge, lower down the mountain, whose fruit they had been forbidden to eat. The serpent, however, manages to persuade them to disobey the divine commandment and to eat the forbidden fruit. This act of disobedience opens Adam's eye both to the higher state of glory which God had destined for Eve and him if only they had kept the commandment, and to the shame that failure to keep it had brought upon them.
- <http://www2.iath.virginia.edu/anderson/ephrem.hymns/parad.3.htm|#:~:text=At%20the%20summit%20of%20Paradise,had%20been%20forbidden%20to%20eat.>



You & I in the Wilderness

- Hosea 2:14-15

Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak tenderly to her. ¹⁵ And there I will give her her vineyards, and make the Valley of Achor a door of hope; And there she shall answer as in the days of her youth, as at the time when she came out of the land of Egypt.

- The wilderness is where God resides and where we were meant to live in communion with Him
- “The Tree of Life” awaits us in the wilderness

Next Week: St John the Forerunner

