



Small group discussion questions March 2015

Chapter & verse - David Grosch-Miller (p22)

Read Mark 1:9-13, followed by David Grosch-Miller's article.

- 1. Have you ever been in a desert? If so, what was your experience? If not, how do you imagine it?
- 2. In the second paragraph of "Chapter & verse", David says: "In the wilderness we confront the fears that inhibit us from becoming the faithful disciples that we are called to be." What kind of fears do you think inhibit Christians from becoming faithful disciples? What are your own fears?
- 3. In the same paragraph, David goes on to talk about the ways in which wild beasts and angels symbolise the essential nature of testing. How, would you say, do animals symbolise testing? What does it mean "to meet them on their terms"?
- 4. What do angels symbolise, when it comes to testing? Do you agree with David's explanation?
- 5. David says that angels "come in the most unexpected guises". Can you give any examples of this?
- 6. In the third paragraph of "Chapter & verse", David says that the Lentern journey is "an essential part of becoming a new creation". How do you understand this? Does it reflect your own experience?
- 7. David says: "Tradition has its place, but those driven into the wilderness will find it has limited use." Is Lent, for you, a matter of tradition, or of being "driven by the Spirit"? Can it be both?





- 8. In the fourth paragraph, David suggests that Lent is about confronting demons, knowing the presence of God, letting go and trying something new. Have you done this at Lent or another time? If so, what happened? If not, can you imagine what form Lent might take if you experienced it as David describes? Is there a part of your life that would benefit from this approach?
- 9. In the last paragraph, David says: "The need to imagine the future that God is dreaming for us is urgent." What future can you imagine?

For further reflection: "My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance; and let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing." James 1: 2-4

Prayer: Spirit, who drove Jesus into the wilderness, so that even he could be tested and know your presence with him, take us too, we pray, to the places we need to go. Let us know your presence when the wilderness is hard – strengthening and comforting us, and making us new. Amen.