By Pat Haggerty

I was meditating one morning recently in our church. I was being absorbed by the ambience of the environment. Is there such a thing as “feng shui”* in a church? Well, if there is, our church had it! There was a perfect balance of grandeur and simplicity in the Lenten décor.

I was contemplating a beautiful Lenten arrangement consisting of a medium-sized brown, wooden cross draped with a purple cloth. At its base was a collection of rocks, cacti and dry grass. There were leafless twigs strewn about and plants looking quite near desperation. Everything was placed perfectly to conjure up images of barrenness, dryness and void. I could almost find myself in the desert with Jesus or imagine the apostles trying to stay awake and pray with the Lord at Gethsemane. The Lord had said to his disciples, “Sit here while I pray” (Mark, 14:32). Later on He continued with, “Remain here and keep watch” (Mark, 14:34).

We know it was difficult for the apostles to do this. In fact, they failed. I think the Lord is asking us to do the same during Lent. He wants us to be with Him; he wants us to keep watch. He wants us to wrap ourselves in his silence and in his pain.

How difficult is it for us to be still? How difficult is it to sit quietly with the Lord and be with Him? We can do it! We just need to ignore our iPhones, forget about Facebook and terminate the Twitter just for a few moments each day. That’s all it takes. I remember the words of my mother who would often say, “Sit still and do such and such.” Well, we need to sit still---be still with the Lord---to deepen our experience of Lent.

Try it!

*This is a Chinese system of geomancy believed to use the laws of heaven and earth to help improve one’s life [Wikipedia].