

The background of the page is a faded, artistic photograph of a gallery. Several classical paintings are visible on the walls, including one depicting a reclining figure and another with multiple figures. The lighting is soft, creating a contemplative atmosphere. A large, light-colored semi-circle is overlaid on the right side of the image, framing the title text.

# Experiencing *the Beauty* of Lent

A DEVOTIONAL GUIDE BY NORTHWAY ARTISTS

# LENT & EASTER DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

Experiencing the Beauty of Lent at the Dallas Museum of Art



## OUR HOPE WITH THIS GUIDE

The intention of this guide is that you would set aside 2-3 hours to visit the Dallas Museum of Art. Spend time locating each of these paintings located in the 4 themes: Fasting & Feasting, Presence & Prayer, Repentance & Returning, Goodness & Gratitude. Each theme includes scripture, a short reading, reflection questions, poems, music, and an art piece. Engage with this tool with your family, your GC, or by yourself. Continue to reflect back on this tool throughout Lent and return especially to the reflection questions.

*This guide was made by Northway Artists, a group committed to truth, goodness, and beauty. We meet once a month to either share art or create art to give to others. We hope this guide blesses you and draws you near to the heart of God, the Artist of all Beauty.*

LINK TO SPOTIFY PLAYLIST | <https://open.spotify.com/playlist/o7yBzvHCRkFgbBowFDuvbC?si=wp1Rkk5IQo-i8uK1mKOswg>

# 1 | FASTING & FEASTING

## SHORT READING

Man can not live by bread alone. Our temptation is to put bread first and God second, but Jesus wouldn't do it. Jesus put his need for God over his need for bread, and so we will follow Christ's example. *We will feast on every word that comes from the mouth of God.*

Matthew 4:1-4, Exodus 34:27-28, Matthew 6:16-18

## REFLECTION

- What will you feast on today?
- When will you make time to come to the table?
- We see in scripture that Jesus fasted from food. Consider choosing one day a week to fast from food. If this isn't possible what are other things you can choose to fast from?
- Who can you partner with in your community for accountability while fasting during this season?



## UPON TASTING PLEASURABLE FOOD

For the infinite variety of your creative expression,  
I praise you, O God. You have made  
Even the necessary act of eating  
A nurturing comfort and a perpetual delight.

*A Liturgy by Douglas McKelvey*

## MUNICH STILL LIFE

*Painting by William Michael Harnett  
Location: American Art, 19th Century, Level 4*



2 | PRESENCE & PRAYER

SHORT READING

Jesus made time to get away by himself to pray and be with His father. He would go to a quiet and deserted place, *seeking silence and solitude before God*

Matthew 14:22–23, Mark 1:35, Luke 9:18, Matthew 6:5–13

REFLECTION

- How can you make it a priority to find time for silence & solitude with God? Could it be a daily rhythm? Weekly? Or once a month?
- During this season of Lent how can you make more space for prayer? *You could set reminders on your phone to pray every day at noon for 30 minutes.*
- Today find opportunities to pray while you are doing seemingly trivial or common things (*washing the dishes, doing laundry, driving, gardening, meeting with a friend*)

WHEN I AM AMONG THE TREES

When I am among the trees,  
especially the willows and the honey locust,  
equally the beech, the oaks and the pines,  
they give off such hints of gladness.  
I would almost say that they save me, and daily.

I am so distant from the hope of myself,  
in which I have goodness, and discernment,  
and never hurry through the world  
but walk slowly, and bow often.

Around me the trees stir in their leaves  
and call out, “Stay awhile.”  
The light flows from their branches.  
And they call again, “It’s simple,” they say,  
“and you too have come into the world to do this,  
to go easy, to be filled with light, and to shine.”

A Poem from Thirst by Mary Oliver



THE WATER LILY POND (CLOUDS)

Painting by Claude Monet  
Location: European Art, 19th Century, Level 2

THE PEACE OF WILD THINGS

When despair for the world grows in me  
And I wake in the night at the least sound  
in fear of what my life and my children’s lives may be,  
I go and lie down where the wood drake rests in his beauty  
on the water, and the great heron feeds.  
I come into the peace of wild things  
who do not tax their lives with forethought of grief.  
I come into the presence of still water.  
And I feel above me the day-blind stars  
waiting with their light.  
For a time I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.”

A Poem by Wendell Berry



WATER LILIES

Painting by Claude Monet  
Location: European Art, 19th Century, Level 2



## 3 | REPENTANCE & RETURNING

### SHORT READING

Repentance is the translation of the Greek word *metanoia*, which implies a change in our way of thinking, a turning back, or a return. Repentance turns us in a new direction, it turns us toward the holy one, Jesus. *This is a way of life, a daily turning back* to the one who saves us from our sin and darkness and shows us a new and better way of living.

Matthew 4:17, Luke 5:30–32,  
2 Corinthians 7:9–13, Matthew 3:8

### REFLECTION

- This week spend time reflecting on what sins, patterns, or vices may need to be removed from your life. Confess these to the Father first and also find a trusted person you can confess to.
- How can you turn away from these things in your life and follow Jesus? What next steps can you take towards relationship with Jesus and obedience to the Father?
- Often after we spend time considering our sin and confessing it we experience shame. Shame can lead us to further separation from God. How can receiving the free gift of grace and mercy draw you into deeper relationship with God?
- Spend time sitting in how beloved you are by God. (Ephesians 1:18)



**PRODIGAL SON**

Painting by Thomas Hart Benton  
Location: American Art, 20th Century, Level 4



**ST. JEROME IN A LANDSCAPE**

Painting by Herri met de Bles  
Location: European Art, 15th–17th Century, Level 2

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE JOURNEY

The self you leave behind  
is only a skin you have outgrown.  
Don't grieve for it.  
Look to the wet, raw, unfinished self,  
the one you are becoming.  
The world, too, sheds its skin:  
politicians, cataclysms, ordinary days.  
It's easy to lose this tenderly unfolding moment.  
Look for it as if it were the first green blade  
after a long winter.  
Listen for it as if it were the first clear tone  
in a place where dawn is heralded by bells.

And if all that fails,

wash your own dishes.  
Rinse them.  
Stand in your kitchen at your sink.  
Let cold water run between your fingers.  
Feel it.

A Poem by Pat Schneider



4 | GOODNESS & GRATITUDE

SHORT READING

*Give thanks to the Lord.* He is a Father who gives good gifts to his kids. Like the child in this painting, reflect on how we as children of God can receive his goodness in joy.

Philippians 4:4-7, Psalm 92:1-4, Matthew 7:7-11

REFLECTION

- During the remaining days of Lent practice a daily offering of gratitude through prayer.
- How can you pay attention more to the good gifts God gives you throughout the day? We often don't take time to slow down & see God's constant goodness to us throughout our days.

DUTCH GIRL LAUGHING

*Painting by Robert Henri  
Location: American Art, 20th Century, Level 4*



STILL LIFE:  
BOUQUET AND COMPOTIER

*Painting by Henri Matisse  
Location: European Art, James H. and Lillian Clark Galleries of 19th Century, Level 2*



A SONG OF PRAISES

for the gray nudge of dawn at the window  
for the chill that hangs around the bed  
and slips its cold tongue under the covers  
for the cat that walks over my face purring murderously  
for the warmth of the hip next to mine and sweet lethargy  
for the cranking up of the will until it turns me out of bed  
for the robe's caress along arm and neck  
for the welcome of hot water, the dissolving of  
the night's stiff mask in the warm washcloth  
for the light along the white porcelain sink  
for the toothbrush's savory invasion of the tomb of the mouth  
and resurrection of the breath  
for the warm lather and the clean scrape of the razor  
and the skin smooth and pink that emerges  
for the steam of the shower, the apprehensive shiver and then  
its warm enfolding of the shoulders  
its falling on the head like grace  
its anointing of the whole body  
and the soap's smooth absolution  
for the rough nap of the towel and its message to each skin cell  
for the hairbrush's pulling and pulling,  
waking the root of each hair  
for the reassuring snap of elastic  
for the hug of the belt that pulls all together  
for the smell of coffee rising up the stairs announcing paradise  
for the glass of golden juice in which light is condensed  
and the grapefruit's sweet flesh  
for the incense of butter on toast  
for the eggs like two peaks over which the sun rises  
and the jam for which the strawberries of summer have saved themselves  
for the light whose long shaft lifts the kitchen into the realms of day  
for Mozart elegantly measuring out the gazebos of heaven on the radio  
and for her face, for whom the kettle sings, the coffee percs,  
and all the yellow birds in the wallpaper spread their wings.

*A Poem by Robert Siegel*



**“HE HAS RISEN”**

Luke 24:6