

A Sanctified Art LLC is a collective of artists in ministry who create resources for worshipping communities. The Sanctified Art team works collaboratively to bring scripture and theological themes to life through film, visual art, curriculum, coloring pages, liturgy, graphic designs, and more. Their mission is to empower churches with resources to inspire creativity in worship and beyond. Driven by the connective and prophetic power of art, they believe that art helps us connect our hearts with our hands, our faith with our lives, and our mess with our God.


Learn more about their work at sanctifiedart.org.

A Lenten
Devotional

SAMPLE to the Brim

An expansive lent



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Art, reflections, &
poetry for the
season of Lent



The origins of Lent were that one was to leave their old life behind to fast and prepare to be baptized into a new way of living. In essence, this was a practice of stepping away from corrupt power, scarcity mentality, and empty rituals in order to live a more expansive and full life of faith. And so, our Lenten theme, *Full to the Brim*, is an invitation—into a radically different Lent, into a full life. It's an invitation to be authentically who you are, to counter scarcity and injustice at every turn, to pour out even more grace wherever it is needed. When we allow ourselves to be filled to the brim with God's lavish love, that love spills over. It reaches beyond ourselves; like water, it rushes and flows, touching everything in its path.

As you journey through this devotional at your own pace, you will find scriptures, poems, art, reflections, and hymns that are filled with promises of God's abundant and expansive grace. Some of the stories you will encounter include: Jesus as a mother hen, a prodigal son welcomed home, a fig tree nurtured with care and hope, precious oil poured out lovingly and freely, and stones shouting out with praise. These sacred texts are brimming with a gospel of grace. We've done nothing to deserve or earn this grace, and yet, like water, it spills over.

Full to the Brim reminds us to live fully—as we pursue justice and hope, or express grief and gratitude. And so, this Lent, let us trust—fully—that we belong to God. Let us increase our capacity to receive and give grace. Let us discover the expansive life God dreams for us.

Artfully yours,

The Sanctified Art Creative Team

Rev. Lisle Gwynn Garrity
Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed
Hannah Garrity
Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman
Rev. Anna Strickland



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About the SA creative team

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Founder | Creative Director of SA

Lisle Gwynn Garrity (*she/her*) is a Pastorist (pastor + artist), retreat leader, and creative entrepreneur seeking to fill the church with more color, paint, mystery, and creativity. She founded A Sanctified Art with the conviction that, in order to thrive, the church needs more creative expression and art-filled freedom.

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About our Guest Contributors GUEST ARTISTS



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On My Way

You said return to me
so here I am
skin and bones held
together
with memories and a little
bit of
duct tape. I am bringing
the worst of me,
consider yourself warned—
the furrowed brow,
the achy back,
the slew of judgments,
a pocket full of
assumptions,
the track of negativity
that runs
laps in my head.
I am bringing it all
because you said
return to me,
edits not required,
so return I will.
And not all of it will be bad.
Some of it will be lovely.
I will bring
a wagon full of nostalgia,
a melody that won't
let me go,
a million stories that start
with the words,
“Oh it was beautiful!”

I will bring a mended heart,
a glass half-full,
two lungs, out of breath
from dancing too long,
and dreams that taste
like honey.
I will bring my whole
messy
human self
because I know,
I just know,
deep in my bones,
that you are already
running to meet me.
There are no cuts on
this team.
You said you'd take it all,
so here I come.
Me and all my humanity.
We are on my way.

Poem by
Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed

Read Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Commentary | Rev. Ashley DeTar Birt

When you hear the words “Ash Wednesday,” what’s the first image that comes to mind? For many of you, I’m willing to bet it’s the marking of ashes, perhaps in the shape of a cross, on someone’s forehead. This image is so common that even people who don’t practice Christianity often take notice of it and are aware of what day it is. After all, they call it Ash Wednesday for a reason, right? This symbol serves as a visible marker of both our faith and our practice as we prepare to enter into a journey of the Spirit and the self, which makes it all the more interesting that our Matthew text for today seems to speak out against such markers.

In Matthew 6, we are given instructions on how we should practice our faith. Specifically, we shouldn’t be too “showy,” too “flashy,” or doing things to attract the attention of others. The truth is, though, sometimes we are going to attract the attention of others and sometimes we aren’t. Some of us are loud, bold people who live loud, bold lives, and our faith comes out the same way. Some of us are quiet and still, seeking quiet and still lives with quiet and still faith. Most of us are both and neither and in between. We’re boisterous and meek and terrified and joyous and nervous and so many things. These are all beautiful things, not because others can see them, but because they make us who we are. We, just as we are, are enough. That is enough for our existence, and that is enough for God. It doesn’t matter what others think. What matters is that we’re authentic, that our faith is authentic, and that we are ourselves before God.

On this Ash Wednesday, may you, ashes or not, connect with God for no one else but your beautiful self.

Read Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

From the Artist | Rev. Lisle Gwynn Garrity

Many of us begin Lent with ashen marks smudged against our foreheads, the oil glistening on our skin throughout the rest of the day. It's a mark that is holy because it tells the truth: we are formed from the dust, and to dust we shall one day return. We are not immortal. Death will one day find us all.

However, as we've crafted this Lenten series around the theme, *Full to the Brim*, we've found ourselves asking for more from our Lenten journey. Yes, death will surely find me one day, inhaling me into that infinite abyss. But the cross on my forehead only tells me part of the story. The empty tomb tells me a fuller, more expansive truth: death will not have the last word. There is more. God is more.

This expansive truth requires more of us. It invites us to abandon empty or showy practices of faith, and instead, draw inward to open ourselves to a deeper journey of transformation. It requires me to believe that I am truly worthy of love, belonging, and grace. It requires me to believe others are also.

In this Lenten season, we've reimagined this Ash Wednesday ritual. What if, instead of ashes, gold gleamed on our foreheads? What if, alongside the certainty of death, we are also reminded of God's expansive grace? What if on this day we said to one another, "From stardust you have come, and to stardust you shall one day return"?

Pray

Breathe deeply as you gaze upon the image on the left. Imagine placing yourself in this scene. What do you see? How do you feel? Get quiet and still, offering a silent or spoken prayer to God.



Stardust | Lisle Gwynn Garrity
Acrylic on raw canvas with digital drawing

Read Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

From the Artist | Carmelle Beaugelin

Mother's Day 2016 happened to fall on a Sunday, the weekend I buried my mother after a yearlong illness. I traded my traditional bright, spring dresses for a delicate black dress to wear to worship. As soon as I shook my first hand that morning, I was abruptly greeted with, "Why in the world are you wearing all black?" Visible signs of mourning, as I recall during that season of fresh grief, were uncomfortable for those around me.

The Day of the Lord in Joel chapter 2 is an intentional call to expressions of mourning that bring life to a holy halt. The rending of hearts and of garments of mourning, the calling for a holy fast and stillness, and the expectant joy of the relenting of the wrath of God are deeply tied to the process of fasting, weeping, and mourning named in verse 12.

Joy Comes in the Mourning is an interrogation of the collective "turning away" from practices of mourning. The mourner wears their grief as a golden garment for all to see. In a world where rendered black bodies captured on body cams frequent the media, while black mourning is disregarded as performative, *Joy Comes in the Mourning* embraces the dancing and disruptive public displays of black mourning that often serve as prophetic witness, calling us to face the reckoning of the Lord's Day where peace and justice will reign.

As we struggle to recoup in the reality of loss of all kinds in the midst of an ongoing pandemic era, what can a practice of holy mourning look like in our current life? Joel 2 calls us into a Lenten practice of expressing our hearts to a God who hears our lament out of the fullness of all that we are.

Pray

Breathe deeply as you gaze upon the image on the left. Imagine placing yourself in this scene. What do you see? How do you feel? Get quiet and still, offering a silent or spoken prayer to God.



Joy Comes in the Mourning | Carmelle Beaugelin
Acrylic, gold leaf on canvas