

Caravaggio's Taking of Christ: Artistic and Spiritual Reflections

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Michelangelo Merisi, better known as Caravaggio, led a violent and licentious lifestyle. This painting was lost and rediscovered in the Jesuit house of Dublin and is now on permanent loan at the National Gallery of Ireland. Here, he demonstrated his mastery of “chiaroscuro” in the skillful interplay between darkness and light, which symbolizes the struggle between sin and grace in every person. The representation of the kiss of Judas—as the greatest human betrayal of love, friendship and God—provokes different reactions in the personages in the painting. While telling the story of sin, passion and weakness, Caravaggio is analyzing the causes of human fallibilities and temptation not only of the traitor but in himself and each one of us!