Script for Visio Divina: Grace in the Land

Hello, my name is Les Miller.

I’m the author of a new book from Novalis: *Northern Light: A Canadian Prayer Book*. I’ve used prayers and photos to evoke the spiritual dimension of the Canadian landscape.

In this video, I’ll explain how I used Visio Divina of the Canadian landscape to create these prayers and reflections. I’ll also lead you in a Visio Divina using one of the photographs from the Northern Light project. With this technique, you can use photographs as prayer to draw closer to the Creator.

Visio Divina (or sacred seeing) allows us to meet the sacred by contemplating images. When we contemplate God’s creation in prayer, we are practising a form of Visio Divina called Visio Natura (seeing nature).

The photo and reflection *Grace in the Land* shows how I’ve used this process to create the reflections and prayers. I invite you to join in this creative process by letting me lead you in a Visio Divina of the photograph.

Let’s begin...


2. Now open your eyes. Gaze at the image. Let your eyes rest on the scene. Note your feelings as you explore it. What do you notice?
3. Grace is one of those ideas that longs to leap out of the theology classroom and play among the trees with the poets. One wise teacher told me to think about grace as the warmth of the sun on your back on a cool day. It is God’s undying compassion and care. The reflection *Grace in the Land* tries to evoke this idea. You’ll find the reflection in the *Panoramas* section of *Northern Light*. These prayers and reflections look at spiritual patterns that recur throughout our country. I wrote this prayer around Thanksgiving a couple of years ago by contemplating the Gatineau Hills – as seen from outside Ottawa as you draw closer to the nation’s capital on Highway 416 – and how grace touched this landscape. From there, my mind cast a wider net across the country to focus on similar scenes. I reordered the lines from east to west. I later took the photograph of this scene of the Madawaska River, west of Ottawa, to evoke the sense of grace in the land.

Listen to the reflection...

**Grace in the Land**

There is a golden warmth
That spreads over Charlottetown skies.
There is a Thanksgiving light that shines over the Gatineau Hills.
There is a Eucharistic glow over the wheat fields south of Brandon.
There is green gratitude among the Douglas firs of Stanley Park.
There is grace in the land.

[pause]

4. Gaze at the photo. Imagine yourself in this place. What do you see? What do you hear? What do you sense?

5. What other places evoke grace for you?

6. How is the sacred present to you in this experience?

7. How does this *Visio Divina* relate to your life now?

8. What insight from this experience do you want to retain? How will you do that?

9. Complete the *Visio Divina* by offering a prayer of thanksgiving.

[pause]

If you haven’t already tried the *Toronto at Night* *Visio Divina*, look for it on the en.novalis.ca or lesmiller.ca websites. Try out *Visio Divina* on other images in *Northern Light*, available from Novalis. For more information about me, my books and presentations, visit lesmiller.ca.