Anonymous Roman follower of Caravaggio, in the manner of Bartolemeo Manfredii
(Italian)

The Scourging of St. Blaise
Oil on canvas, 64 3/4” x 75 3/4”
Gift of Alice Tweed Tuohy

This monumental Baroque painting depicts Saint Blaise, an Armenian bishop who was tortured (martyred) by the Romans around 316 A.D. by having his flesh torn with iron combs.

Through an X-ray of the painting we know that the artist extensively reworked the image. Originally the saint wore a bishop’s hat, but this figure was later shifted to the right, and his hat was replaced by a halo.

The deep shadows, dramatic spotlighting and realistically modeled figures all contribute to the intensity of this work.

This painting uses contrasting lights and darks, or value, and very little color to create visual drama. The artist very carefully balanced a larger amount of dark areas with a few areas of intense light.
Try a "reductive drawing"
1. Cover an entire sheet of paper (8 x 12" or so) with a light layer of charcoal
2. Using a kneaded eraser, draw by removing charcoal. Erase a lot where the objects are lightest, and less where they are darker