

Pause for Prayer

THE 'EXAMEN'

A PRAYER 'HOW-TO'

WHAT IS THE EXAMEN?

A daily examen is a prayerful method of 'checking in' with God daily. It can be done at any point in the day, but usually is done in the evening or bed-time to think over the day's events.

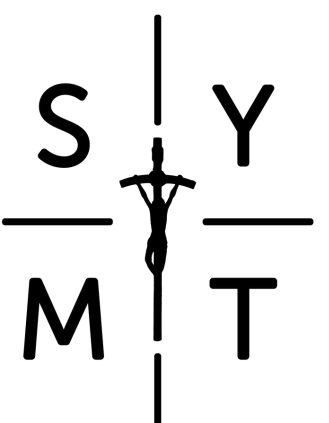
This method was developed by St. Ignatius of Loyola more than four hundred years ago. We reflect on how God has been present in our day and how we have responded.

The examen is different from an examination of conscience, where we review our actions in order to prepare to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation (confession).



HOW DO I BEGIN?

- Consider lighting a candle, sipping a bedtime brew or playing quiet music to help set the mood.
- Enter God's presence by taking a few moments to wind down. One way is to focus on your breathing. Imagine you are tracing a square in the air...as you trace one side, breathe in slowly for 4 counts and then out for 4 counts on the next side, and so on.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to 'guide you into all truth'(John 16:13). Be honest as you examine your actions during the day, knowing that the truth frees you to grow closer to God. Remember too that God loves you unconditionally.



CONSCIENCE CLEANSE

Review the following questions slowly (there are many other questions that could be used too). St Ignatius taught that the Holy Spirit often speaks to us through our emotions, even the negative ones. So, pay attention to your emotions as you reflect on these questions. God may want to reveal some truth to you through them.



HOW DID GOD BLESS ME TODAY?

WHAT CAN I SAY OR DO TO THANK GOD?



HAVE I THOUGHT, SAID OR DONE ANYTHING THAT COULD OFFEND GOD OR THOSE AROUND ME?

HOW COULD I HAVE REACHED OUT MORE TO OTHERS?

WHAT RESOLUTION CAN I MAKE TO MOVE ON FROM MY MISTAKES?

ASK-RECEIVE

Finish by imagining a friendly face-to-face meeting with Jesus and share whatever your heart feels – sorrow, gratitude, joy...

Ask him for forgiveness, consolation, encouragement, the grace to overcome bad habits, and anything else you may need.

'Ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you'. Matthew 7:7

