

# Daily Examen

"The unreflected life is no life at all." (Adapted from Socrates)

"We cannot afford to forget any experience, not even the most painful." (Dag Hammerskjold)

Taking time to notice, remember and reflect is key to allowing all of life be the materials God uses to shape us. The Daily Examen is a spiritual practice developed by Ignatius of Loyola from the 16th Century. It's a prayer process that helps us notice more of God's fingerprints in our daily life, and also a practice that grows our awareness of the times when we move away from God's presence and purpose. In bringing our everyday life to Jesus, we also give God the opportunity to transform our understanding of the meaning and significance of our experiences.

Ignatius intended the Examen to be done on a daily basis, usually at the end of a day. Though it can be adapted to be used between longer stretches of times, if one wants to grow in awareness of God's presence and understanding, then doing it daily will be more beneficial and fruitful.

## There are 5 suggested steps in a Daily Examen.

1. Quiet down and become aware of God's presence.
2. Ask for the gift of light and understanding as you review your day.
3. Review your day and ask God to show you where He has been present with you. Give thanks for those moments.
4. Review your day and ask God to show you when you have moved away from Him (one way to discern that will be when you didn't experience faith, hope & love, or the fruit of the Spirit). Ask God for forgiveness/healing, and also for understanding what pulls your heart and attention away from Him. Only look at the moment(s) God brings up. Don't try to search for all the possible times you feel you have moved away from God. Let the Spirit show you the moment(s) He wants to speak to you about.
5. Think ahead to tomorrow and ask for specific help either for: a) a situation where you foresee might be difficult to live out faith, hope & love; or b) not being pulled away the same way you did today. This help you request will become the focus of your next day's Examen.

The Daily Examen is meant to be a short 10-15 minutes prayer exercise and something you can do before you retire for the night. The consistent reflection of your daily life overtime will birth a deeper sense of peace inside you and also nurture a more discerning heart for God's presence in your life.