

Be Still

AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD.

PSALM 46:10

2018 Prayer and Fasting Week

Daily Examen – Evening Spiritual Exercise

The Daily Examen is a technique of prayerful reflection on the events of the day in order to detect God's presence and discern his direction for us. The Examen is an ancient practice in the Church that can help us see God's hand at work in our whole experience.

This is a version of the five-step Daily Examen that St. Ignatius practiced.

Become aware of God's Presence & pray for light

Since we are not simply daydreaming or reminiscing but rather looking for some sense of how the Spirit of God is leading us, it only makes sense to pray for some illumination. The goal is not simply memory but graced understanding.

Review the day in thanksgiving

Gratitude is the foundation of our whole relationship with God. Each of us loves to receive beautiful gifts and that is what the last 24 hours contain – gifts of existence, work, relationships, food, challenges. Use whatever cues help you to walk through the day from the moment of waking – even the dreams you recall up on awakening. Walk through the past hours, from hour to hour, from place to place, task to task, person to person, thanking the Lord for every gift you encounter.

Review the images and feelings that surface in the replay of the day

What particular moment do you "see" in your mind's eye? What catches your attention or makes you stop to look again? And what feelings, positive and negative, the painful and the pleasing, does this experience evoke in you? Pay attention to any image or story and all of the feelings it evokes in you as you relive this moment or time. If it just brings bewilderment or puzzlement it may be that something new is unfolding or you are resisting something that God is trying to reveal in your experience. Simply pray for greater illumination and clarity and trust God to reveal this to you.

Choose a moment or feeling and talk to God about this

Express spontaneously the prayer that surfaces as you attend to the source of the feeling – praise, petition, conviction, a cry for help, a longing for healing, a lament about a difficulty. Do not censor this or try to protect God (or yourself) from the strong feelings or reactions. Give thanks for the moments when you were aware of the gift of God's presence. If you are aware of your own sin and self-centeredness, name this and receive forgiveness, knowing that God is always eager to forgive.

Close this prayer with the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13).

This brings the prayer home and grounds it in Biblical soil.