



The Prayer of the Examen

“O LORD, you have searched me and known me.” Ps. 139:1

Silence: I prepare myself for prayer, for entering into awareness of my relationship with God. I gently find the still point within my being and appreciate the silence. I invite God to be present with me in a time of prayer.

Remembering: I look back over the past twenty-four hours of my life, beginning with the present moment. I let each hour of the past day gently pass by my awareness. I notice what I took for granted during the past twenty-four hours of my life.

What am I doing now? What was I doing just before coming here? Where did I have my last meal? What was I doing before that? Who was I with?...

Noticing God’s Presence: I look back again at the past twenty-four hours of my life, and this time I reflect on the ways in which God has been present. I notice the feelings and thoughts that emerge as I remember.

Where do I see God at work in my life? In joys, fears, suffering, work, relationships? In an act of service? In reading? In an event, person, sound, nature, music, action? Where in the past twenty-four hours did I feel I was cooperating most fully with God’s action in my life? Where did I resist God, was I not listening carefully enough to God? Do any of my actions or thoughts require God’s pardon, or the pardon of others? In what ways is God calling me to a new awareness, a change of heart, to different actions?

Gratitude: Having noticed ways God was present in my life during the last twenty-four hours, I experience my gratitude. I express this gratitude as I feel moved to do so (by writing, moving, acting...).

Silence: I hold this experience before God in silence.

Afterwards: I reflect on what I’ve observed about how God is working in my daily life, and see if any of these insights ask me to act in some way.

(Adapted, by Susan S. Phillips, from Joseph Driskill’s *Protestant Spiritual Exercises: Theology, History, and Practice* (Morehouse, 1999). Do not reproduce without permission.)

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1. Pray for God's Help

- Invite God to be with you
- Ask God for help in being grateful and honest
- Ask God to help you be attentive to how the Spirit was working in and through you, others, and creation.

2. Give thanks for the gifts of the day

- The practice of gratitude helps us find God in all things and can transform the way we look at our life and at other people.
- How has God freely given life and love to you today?
- Savor whatever gifts God shows you.

3. Pray over significant feelings that surface as you replay the day

- Review you day hour by hour
- Notice thoughts, motives, and feelings; words and actions; energy or fatigue; attraction, repulsions, moods
- Where were you aware of God's presence?
- Where did you resist God's presence?
- What drew you closer to God? What lead you away from God?
- How might you have missed God's presence during the day?
- What did God reveal about your fears and shortcomings, sins and struggles?
- What has God been asking of you?

4. Rejoice and Seek Forgiveness

- Rejoice in those times that brought you close to God
- Ask forgiveness for those times when you resisted God's presence
- Acknowledge the forgiveness in which you share as a beloved child of God
- Seek to accept the love of God as you are presently, with all your weaknesses

5. Look to tomorrow

- Invite God to be a part of your future
- What do you need God's help with?
- Ask God to give you the grace you need – courage, confidence, wisdom, patience, determination, or peace.
- If someone is on your mind, pray for this person
- Close with a prayer or perhaps the Lord's prayer