

## **Examen of Consciousness**

(Adapted from Joseph Tetlow, SJ, James Martin, SJ, Laurence Gooley, SJ, & Timothy Gallager, OMV)

The examen is a way of seeing God in the reality of everyday life, of finding God in all things and in all moments. It is sometimes called the discernment examen or an awareness review. The examen is a simple prayer exercise that makes us more aware of our inner movements—feelings, motives, and inspirations—that deepen and order our lives to God and make us more attuned to the Holy Spirit as well as the promptings of evil in our lives. The examen is the one prayer that Saint Ignatius insisted that his men never omit—it is THE prayer exercise in Ignatian spirituality. The examen is not about good or bad actions, but about how God is moving in us. Its focus is not on me, it is on God *in* me. This exercise can be well done in just a few minutes, perhaps sometimes only one or two. It is genuinely important that those who intend to mature in Christ spend some time at the end of each day thanking God for the day and examining how they are acting out their hopes and intentions.

1. **Invitation**: I ask God to be with me. I become aware of the love with which God looks upon me as I begin this examen.

2. **Gratitude**: I give thanks to God for all the gifts and blessings I've received this day. I thank God our Lord for all God does in and for me and all humankind.

3. **Review**: With my God, I review the day. I try to notice God's presence in the day, seeking an awareness of where I accepted and where I did not accept God's grace. I look for the stirrings in my heart and the thoughts that God has given me this day. I look also for those that have not been of God. I review my choices in response to both, and throughout the day in general.

4. **Forgiveness**: I ask forgiveness for any sins. I pray for the healing touch of the forgiving God who, with love and respect for me, removes my heart's burdens.

5. **Hopeful Recommitment**: I renew my commitment for the following day to follow the path that God offers me to be a source of light for all creation. I ask for the grace to follow God more closely as I seek to respond and trust Him.

*Our Father*: Aware of God's presence with me, I prayerfully conclude the examen with the Our Father