

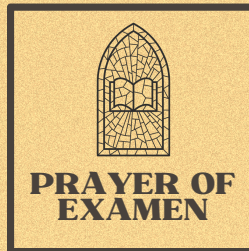
# FRAMES

PRAYER OF EXAMEN  
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## Foundation Verse

*Ephesians 2:10: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."*



## FRAME Questions:

1. What is the Prayer of Examen
2. And how can you practice it

## OPENING IMAGE

Have you heard of St. Ignatius Loyola? He was born in 1491, one of 13 children of a family of minor nobility in northern Spain. Over the years, Ignatius became expert in the art of spiritual direction. He collected his insights, prayers, and suggestions in his book called *The Spiritual Exercises*. This is one of the most influential books on the spiritual life ever written. With a small group of friends, Ignatius Loyola founded the Society of Jesus or the Jesuits. Ignatius called the Jesuits 'contemplatives in action.' This phrase also describes many Christians who have been inspired by Ignatian spirituality.



## Discussion

**How would you describe your current prayer life? How has your prayer life changed over time? What challenges do you experience?**

## What is the prayer of Examen?

The Prayer of Examen is a prayer that invites you to find God in all things. That means you have to pay careful attention to how the Holy Spirit is moving in each moment of your daily life. It's not always so easy to remain that aware of the Holy Spirit moment by moment. But the Prayer of Examen invites you to take a magnifying glass to the seemingly ordinary events in your daily life and look for encounters the Divine.

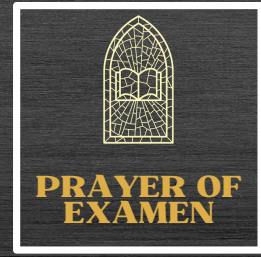
The Daily Examen is a technique of prayerful reflection on the events of the day in order to detect God's presence and discern his direction for you. That's why the Examen is such a powerful prayer. In it, we're invited to encounter God, express gratitude for His gift each day, and commit to recognizing the mistakes we may have made along the way.

The method presented here is adapted from a technique described by Ignatius Loyola in his Spiritual Exercises. One of the few rules of prayer of Examen that Ignatius made for the Jesuit order was the requirement that Jesuits practice the Examen twice daily—at noon and at the end of the day. It's a habit that Jesuits, and many other Christians, practice to this day.





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## Step 1. Giving Thanks.

Close your eyes and imagine yourself in God's presence. Give thanks for God's great love for you. Ignatius once said that the most abominable sin he could imagine was the sin of ingratitude. He knew that an awareness of God's goodness and generosity is the foundation of our relationship with God. Once we recognize God's goodness, we spontaneously feel gratitude.

## Step 2. Asking for Grace

The second point in the Prayer of Examen is to ask for the grace to recognize your sins and to root them out. Ask God to reveal where you may have sinned throughout your day and then then accept his available grace. First take 2 silent minutes to write in your journal and then share your reflections with a friend.

## Step 3. Review your day and recall specific moments and your feelings at the time.

Examine the events of your day methodically in order to uncover the source and the direction of your life that day. When we take time to look with a deeper level of intention and feeling, we can discover that sin has a larger hold on our life than we suspect and that there are all sorts of subtle ways that we focus on self rather than moving outward, towards others and towards God.

## Part 4. Reflect on what you did, said or thought in each instance.

Once we have reviewed our day, we may have come to a sense of the dynamic of sin and grace that has been operating in our life that day. The fourth point is our response to that awareness. In your daily activities, were you drawing closer to God, or further away? Be honest with God about our inner life

## Part 5. Look toward tomorrow

In the last part of the Examen prayer, you should think of how you might collaborate more effectively with God throughout your day. Be specific. The fifth point is to commit to making changes with the help of God's grace. We end the Examen by looking towards tomorrow with the desire and resolve to effect changes in action or attitude that God has called us to today.

### Action Step

**Continue practicing the Prayer of Examen again throughout your week.**

### Resources

<https://www.jesuits.org/spirituality/the-ignatian-examen/>

