



**Grace
Commons**
CHURCH



Journey with Jesus

A devotional of prayer practices to help
you grow and flourish through Christ



Journey with Jesus

Use this journal as a tool for your journey with Jesus. Each week you can take a day or two to practice the Examen, a prayer practice that helps us discern God's movement in our lives. Instructions on how to pray the Examen are in the back of the journal. We also provide two exercises for each week that you can choose to do on different days than the Examen. You'll come across the practice of Lectio Divina, a prayerful way to read Scripture, which you can find more information about in the back of the journal.

WEEK ONE

God Loves You!

Mark 1:40–42

EXAMEN

See Appendix for Examen on page 29.

EXERCISE 1:

You are the chosen one, the beloved of God!

1. What's your reaction to this statement?
2. Can you embrace these realities? If yes, how does this make you feel? If no, why is this difficult for you? Allow this to lead you into a time of prayer.



EXAMEN

EXERCISE 2:

Be mindful of the variety of emotions that might hit you as you contemplate God's love for you. You might experience anger, frustration, sadness, or love. Can you bring these things to the Lord? Journal about the ways that God has revealed his love to you daily.

EXAMEN

WEEK TWO

God Really Loves You!

1 John 4:7-21

EXAMEN

EXERCISE 1:

Read Romans 8:1

1. What do the words, "There is no condemnation" mean to you?
2. Are you able to believe these words? Why, why not?



EXAMEN

EXERCISE 2:

"And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him. In order for our knowing of God's love to be truly transformational, it must become the basis of our identity. Our identity is who we experience ourselves to be—the "I" each of us carry within. An identity grounded in God would mean that when we think of who we are, the first thing that would come to mind is our status as someone who is deeply loved by God." —David Benner

1. What would it mean for you to rely on and live in God's love for you?
2. How would your life be different if you were able to rely on and live out of a place of having internalized God's love for you?
3. What keeps you from embracing your identity as one deeply and unconditionally loved by God?

EXAMEN

WEEK THREE

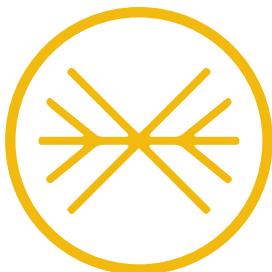
Created for Glory

Psalm 139:1-16, Ephesians 2:10

EXAMEN

EXERCISE 1:

Being created in God's image, take note of your own body. God has made you into a new creation, even if your body doesn't always feel that way. Isn't it marvelous how he created us? What does your created body tell you about God?



EXAMEN

EXERCISE 2:

Read 2 Corinthians 5:17, Ephesians 2:10

1. What does it mean to you that you have been made a new creation?
2. Spend some time reflecting on God creating you as his “masterpiece” or “workmanship.” What feelings and thoughts come to mind as you reflect?

EXAMEN

WEEK THREE | Created for Glory | Psalm 139:1-16, Ephesians 2:10

WEEK FOUR

Praise

Psalm 96:1-9; Psalm 103:1-14

EXAMEN

EXERCISE 1:

Read Psalm 136

1. Write your own Psalm 136 based on your own life experience replacing the first line of each verse with an event from your own life. Share your Psalm with God.



EXAMEN

EXERCISE 2:

Read Romans 11:33-36

1. Reflect on the greatness of God. How does pondering God's greatness impact you and your relationship to God?

EXAMEN

WEEK FIVE

Holy Indifference

Psalm 23 (esp. v. 1), Philippians 4:11-13

EXAMEN

EXERCISE 1:

Practice Lectio Divina with 1 Chronicles 16:23-35
See Appendix for Lectio on page 30



EXAMEN

EXERCISE 2:

Practice Lectio Divina with Revelation 1:12-18

EXAMEN

WEEK FIVE | Holy Indifference | Psalm 23 (esp. v. 1), Philippians 4:11-13

WEEK SIX

Sin & God's Love

Genesis 3:1-13, James 1:13-25, Romans 8:3-5

EXAMEN

EXERCISE 1:

Read Philippians 4:11-13

1. What do these verses teach about the place and power of contentment?
2. Ask God to show you areas in which you need to learn contentment and embrace holy indifference.



EXAMEN

EXERCISE 2:

Read 1 John 2: 15-17

1. Journal about any insights God gives you about any struggles you might have with any of the given topics from this passage.
2. Give the Lord these burdens you carry.

EXAMEN

WEEK SEVEN

Sin & God's Love

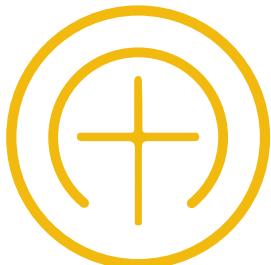
Mark 9:43-48, Romans 5:6-11

EXAMEN

EXERCISE 1:

Read Psalm 63:1 & Psalm 42:1-2

Spend time pondering the level of your desire for God. Ask God to show you how to amplify your desire for him and anything standing in the way.



EXAMEN

EXERCISE 2:

Read John 21:15-17

1. Imagine you are standing before Jesus, and he looks you in the eye and asks you, "Do you love me more than these?" What do "these" refer to in your life?
2. Take a moment to dwell on God's grace and love for you despite anything in your life that might stand in the way. Ask God to help you receive his love and grace.

EXAMEN

WEEK EIGHT

Walking with Jesus 1

Matthew 8:18-22, 10:1-15

EXAMEN

EXERCISE 1:

Read Matthew 8:18-22

1. Imagine yourself in the story of this passage, as one who comes with Jesus or one of the disciples.
2. What are your expectations as you approach Jesus?
3. What do you feel as you hear Jesus' reply?
4. What do you do?
5. Talk to God about this.



EXAMEN

EXERCISE 2:

Read Matthew 10:1-24 two or three times.

1. Is there a theme that connects with you? What does it make you think and feel?
2. What are you feeling about saying yes to Jesus in your own life?

EXAMEN

WEEK NINE

Walking with Jesus 2

Luke 5:1-11

EXAMEN

EXERCISE 1:

Read Mark 1:16-20

1. Imagine you are one of those called by Jesus to “follow me.”
2. What do you feel as you hear his words to you?
3. What draws you to follow Jesus?
4. What fears arise?



EXAMEN

EXERCISE 2:

Read Luke 5:1-11

1. Imagine you are Peter in this story.
2. What do you think as Jesus tells you to put your net on the other side of the boat?
3. What do you learn about Jesus as a result of the catch of fish?
4. Would this miracle be enough for you to follow Jesus, leaving all things behind?
5. How might this event impact how you live your life with Jesus?

EXAMEN

WEEK TEN

Walking with Jesus 3: Is Jesus Asleep?

Matthew 8:23-27, Mark 4:35-41

EXAMEN

EXERCISE 1:

1. Practice Lectio Divina with the above passages from either Gospel account.
2. What themes stick out to you?
3. Reflect on how you experience Jesus in your own life. Does he seem asleep? Talk to him about this in prayer.



EXAMEN

EXERCISE 2:

1. Imagine you are on the boat with Jesus and the disciples. Imagine the storm and how it would feel to be on the boat, looking over at Jesus asleep.
2. What do you feel as you see Jesus asleep?
3. What do you feel as you hear Jesus speak and as you see the storm stop?
4. What do you learn about Jesus? What truths can you take from this story that might impact your life?

EXAMEN

WEEK ELEVEN

Walking with Jesus 4: What Do You Want?

Mark 10:46-52

EXAMEN

EXERCISE 1:

1. Write a letter to Jesus, expressing everything you might want or need—any thoughts you might have for him. Take care to reflect on your life and the ways in which you want Jesus to be involved.
2. As you share this with Jesus, do you believe that he hears you and cares for you?



EXAMEN

EXERCISE 2:

1. Imagine you are the blind Bartimaeus.
2. What goes on in your head when you realize Jesus is passing by?
3. What goes through you mind and heart as Jesus asks you what you want? What fears, dreams and desires arise within you?
4. How can you relate to Bartimaeus' story? What have you learned about Jesus in this story and in your own story?

EXAMEN

WEEK TWELVE

Christ the King Sunday

Luke 15, Matthew 22:34–40

EXAMEN

EXERCISE 1:

Read Matthew 22:34-38

1. How has your love for God changed as you have gone through these journal exercises?
2. Do you find it easier to love God the Father, Jesus or the Holy Spirit? Why?



EXAMEN

EXERCISE 2:

Read Matthew 22:34–40

1. As you have gone through these exercises, what have you learned about what it might mean to love your neighbor?
2. Ask Jesus to reveal to you how you might grow in your ability to love your neighbor.
3. Perhaps you might practice hospitality and bring a meal to a neighbor in need or treats and a greeting to a friend nearby.

EXAMEN

EXAMEN

Listed below are the steps for the General Examen, which captures the essence of Psalm 139:23–24. It is a five-step form of the examen you can practice at any time of the day or week. When you come to the examen, take some time to calm your body, get comfortable, and breath deeply.

1. Give thanks to God for what you have received, focusing on God, his goodness, grace and greatness.
2. Ask God to reveal your sins to you. This may seem a bit moralistic, but that is not the case. The focus is not on external sin, but on the roots from which the sin reveals itself. It also affirms that we need God to help us see our sin and give us insight.
3. Examine how you lived this day, looking at your thoughts, words, and deed. How have you missed God? Perhaps you can remember this and practice noticing God tomorrow and connecting with him.
4. Ask for forgiveness, expressing sorrow for your sin while remembering God's grace and love. Soak in God's mercy and love for you.
5. Ask God for the grace to amend your ways and live more fully connected to Him. This affirms your need for God and dependance on him. Practice internalizing your dependence on God for all things. Slowly and thoughtfully, read the Scripture passage the first time. What word or phrase captures your attention and grabs your heart? Linger with it whenever this happens.



LECTIO DIVINA

Lectio divina is a method of praying the Scriptures. What better way to get to know God than by spending time with God's spoken word?

The practice of lectio divina traces its roots back to the early centuries in the Church. By the sixth century, St. Benedict had made it a regular practice in most monasteries. And while in its beginnings this prayer method was set aside for monks and religious, today lectio divina is a widely held practice by many laymen and laywomen.

Lectio divina is a slow, rhythmic reading and praying of a Scripture passage. You pick a passage and read it. Notice what arises within you as you read it. Then you read it again, and then again, noticing what words and phrases grab your heart and noticing the feelings that arise. You respond to God about whatever is stirring within as you read and pray with the passage. Finally, you rest and let God respond and speak to you.

Though this originated as a Jesuit/Catholic practice, it is still a meaningful way in which we can seek God in a unique method of reading and praying.



Let's consider the formal steps. To begin, you might open with a short prayer, asking God to guide your prayer time. Then do the following:

Read.

Slowly and thoughtfully, read the Scripture passage the first time. What word or phrase captures your attention and grabs your heart? Linger with it whenever this happens.

Reflect.

Slowly and prayerfully, read the passage again. What is God saying to you in this passage? offering you? asking you? What feelings are arising within you?

Respond.

Slowly and prayerfully, read the passage again. Respond to God from your heart. Speak to God of your feelings and insights. Offer these to God.

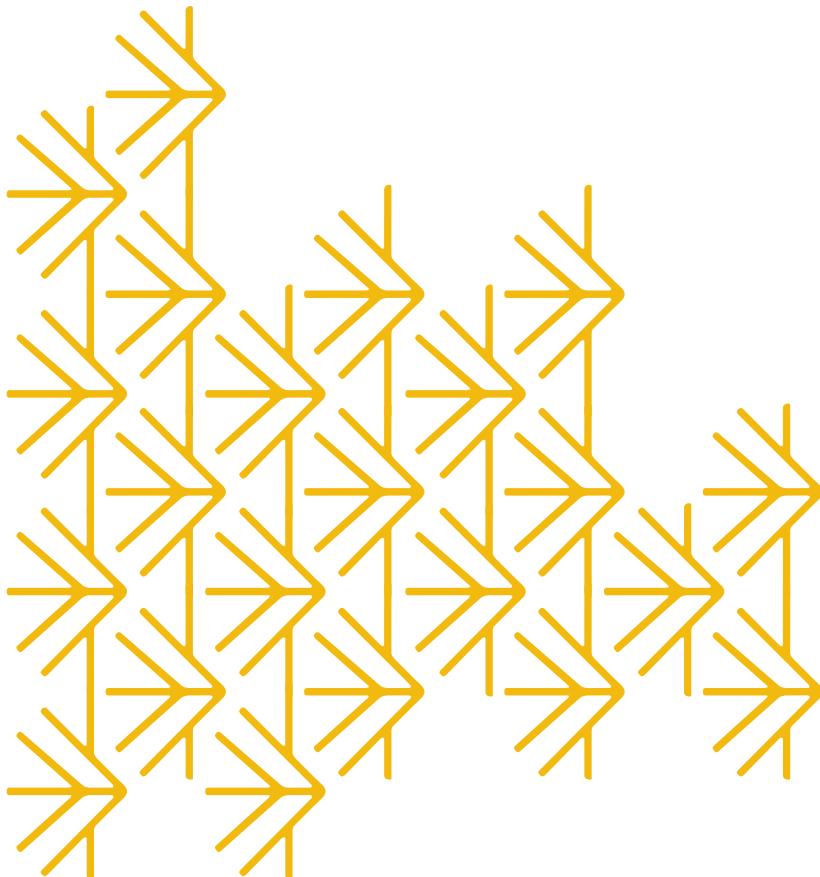
Rest.

Possibly read the passage another time. Sit quietly in God's presence, asking, "What are you saying to me?" Rest in God's love, and listen.

As you end your prayer period, you might close with the Lord's Prayer or another short prayer. It might be helpful to jot down in a journal what arose during this time. What did you speak to God, and what did God offer you?

Excerpt from loyolapress.com/catholic-resources/prayer/personal-prayer-life/different-ways-to-pray/lectio-divina/





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