

THE EXAMEN

LET US PRAY

Heavenly Father, we come to you today asking for your guidance, wisdom, and support. Allow us to learn from the Examen that through desire, discipline and faith we will strengthen our prayer life and our relationship with you. Help us to use this guide to go deeper into ourselves, to find our true selves and to grow in you.

A Prayer from Anselm of Canterbury

Teach me to see you, and to reveal yourself to me as I seek. For unless you reveal yourself I cannot find you. Let me seek you in desiring you. Let me desire you in seeking you. Let me find you in loving you. Let me love you in finding you. Amen

What is spirituality / what is the Examen?

Spirituality is the way a person makes sense of things or connection between themselves, creation and the other. There are many spiritualities as they apply to different faith traditions and even some within in those traditions. Some new age spiritualities do not include God.

The Examen prayer was made popular by St. Ignatius of Loyola . He was the founder of the Jesuit Order known as the Society of Jesus & made up of missionary priests.

The Examen is Ignatius spirituality and is about finding God in all things or being contemplative.

Ignatius believes you can find God outside. The monks, on the other hand, found God in the chapel choir stalls and at prayer time inside the monastery.

The Jesuits, on the other hand, find God “in action” in their daily engagement with the world as well as the church.

Ignatius founded a religious order which he never intended to do. He believed in individual prayer, going into the world and being involved, not

being confined to monastic communities for prayer but rather to be free to be on mission. God's presence was not to be tied to a church or chapel or prayer room but found in all things.

For Ignatius, God is certainly found traditional ways: scripture, Liturgy, sacraments and so forth, But God can also be found in creation, in human history, and in other people. He used the Bible as proof that God's presence can be felt directly as it was by Moses, Paul, in epiphanies, or manifestations.

Regular use of the Examen in prayer reminds us of God's active presence in the ordinary and extraordinariness of our lives. It reminds us of where we are on point, or off course, moving away from our true selves and away from God. The Examen keeps us in touch with the movements within our hearts that are reinforcing what our true desires and hopes for ourselves are, what is life giving and ultimately fulfilling and therefore what God wants of us.

Deuteronomy 30:15

I place before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life.