

# THE DAILY EXAMEN

Concepts taken from *Reimagining the Ignatian Examen* by Mark E. Thibodeaux, SJ  
and *Through All the Days of Life* by Fr. Nick Schiro, SJ

In the Examen, we review our recent past to find God and God's blessings. We look back at moments in the day when things didn't go well – we were hurt by something, we sinned, or we made a mistake. We give praise and thanksgiving for blessed moments and ask forgiveness and healing for difficult and painful moments. Next, we turn to the day yet to come and ask God for guidance and insight into what graces we might need to live this next day well: patience, wisdom, fortitude, self-knowledge, peace, optimism. We ask God for that grace and trust that God wants us to succeed in our day even more than we do.

*St. Ignatius Loyola would say that this should be the most important moment of our day. Why? Because this moment affects every other moment.*

**Give thanksgiving.** Give God thanks for all the things you are grateful for today. Allow your mind to wander as you reflect on the ways God has blessed you this particular day. Find big things and small things—from the gift of your faith, to the gift of a relationship, to the easy commute to work today.

**Ask for the Spirit.** Ask to be filled with the Spirit, so God can lead you through difficult soul-searching. Look at the moments in your day when you could have acted better.

**Review and recognize failures.** Look back and ask God to point out the moments in your day when you failed in big ways or small. Take a sobering look at the mistakes you've made on this day.

**Ask for forgiveness and healing.** If you have sinned, ask God to forgive you and set you straight. If you simply made a mistake, ask for healing of any harm that might have been done. Ask for help to get over it and move on, and for wisdom to discern how you might better handle such moments in the future.

**Pray about the next day.** Ask God to show you how tomorrow might go. Imagine things you will be doing, people you will be with, decisions you will be considering. Ask for help with moments you foresee that might be difficult. Especially ask for help in moments when you might fail as you did today.

Below are two variations to help you remember the five basic steps.

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**THANKSGIVING** | I realize that all, even myself, is a gift from You. *Today, for what things am I most grateful?*

**INTENTION** | Open my eyes and ears to be more honest with myself. *Today, what do I really want for myself?*

**EXAMINATION** | Show me what has been happening to me and in me this day. *Today, in what ways have I experienced Your love?*

**CONTRITION** | I am still learning to grow in Your love. *Today, what choices have been inadequate responses to Your love?*

**HOPE** | Let me look with longing toward the future. *Today, how will I let you lead me to a brighter tomorrow?*

by Fr. Nick Schiro, SJ

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**RELISH** the moments that went well and all the gifts I have today

**REQUEST** the Spirit to lead me through my review of the day

**REVIEW** the day

**REPENT** of any mistakes or failures

**RESOLVE**, in concrete ways, to live tomorrow well

by Mark E. Thibodeaux, SJ

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