



The Examen of Consciousness: A “Stripped Down” Version

At various points in the rhythm of each day—morning, noon, and evening—St. Ignatius would have us pause to reflect on our experience. We look at the divine presence and action in our lives, as well as reflect on the quality of our response. Take about ten minutes at least once each day to reflect in the following way.

- Settle:** Quiet your spirit, take a few minutes to become aware of God’s presence.
- Thank:** Bring all the gifts and graces of this day to mind and thank God for them.
- Recall:** Ruminates over the events of your day—your social interactions, inner thoughts, emotional responses, particular behaviors. Re-experience your day in your imagination, freely allowing the events to bubble up to your consciousness. Be conscious of any movements of consolation or desolation as you review your day. Where was God in all this—what was “of God” and what was “not of God”? Put another way: where did I love well, and where did I stifle love in me or in others?
- Interact:** Talk with God about the grist of this review of your day. Focus upon the event or pattern—whether one of consolation or desolation—that tugs most strongly upon your heart or conscience. Thank God for any insights and, if necessary, ask God’s forgiveness for any sins of commission or omission.
- Plan:** Make specific resolutions for the future: How will I handle a particular situation better in the future? How will I find God in the events and persons on my schedule for the next day, etc.?

The steps of the Examen can be remembered by using the acronym “STRIP,” for the goal of this prayer method is to uncover the core of our daily lives by laying bare before God all of our motivations, interactions, and inclinations. In this way, we see our lives in the true light of God’s love—without the masks that we usually use to cover up our joys and fears—so that God’s grace might move us to become more fully the person whom God is calling us to be.

Examen
“STRIP”

Settle
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Plan