

THE EXAMEN AND JOURNALING CLASS HANDOUT

“Love is patient, love is kind, love is not jealous or boastful, it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; ... it does not rejoice at wrong but rejoices in the right.... Love hopes all things.” I Corinthians 13

“When the spirit of truth comes he will guide you in all truth.” John 16:13

Two ways to do the Examen:

1. A simple reflection on the day. What was I most grateful for today? What was I least grateful for today? How was God present with me in this day?
2. A more detailed version: **My Day with God: An Evening Prayer**

Stillness. Relax; be still; let the tensions of the day slip away from you. Know that you are in God’s presence. God rejoices that you have come, however forgetful of God you may have been during the day.

Thankfulness. Remember with thanksgiving the gifts of God to you today. A meeting with a friend; a glimpse of deep joy or sadness in a passing face; a flower at the wayside; a baby’s first steps; a grandparent’s smile; a friendly shop assistant; a considerate driver; a moment of insight; a job done; a problem solved; a child’s hug; a loved one’s touch; a warm memory; a rising moon; a falling leaf. . . .Be still in the memory, and offer God your thanks in your own way.

Light-seeking. Ask God to help you see and understand how God’s love has been working within you today. This is a gift of the Spirit, and it has been promised to all who sincerely seek it.

Reflection. Reflect peacefully on what has been happening to you and in you today, trusting that your prayer for the light of God’s Spirit has been granted. Let God show you whatever God may want to show you.

Sorrow. With hindsight you may realize that much of your reaction to the events of the day has been centered on your own “kingdom.” This may have led you to fail to respond to the cry of another person, or to allow your own preoccupations to take center stage and crowd out other people’s needs. Or perhaps you were preoccupied with others’ needs in ways that drained and discouraged you. Your day may have left little space for an awareness of God or God’s creation. Whatever inadequacies you find in your day’s living, let them be there before God now, not for judgment, but for God’s Spirit to hover over the mess, bringing wholeness out of brokenness, as that same Spirit brings creation out of chaos. Express your sorrow to God, and confidently ask God for healing and forgiveness.

Hopefulness. Look forward to tomorrow. Ask God to open your heart to whatever surprises it may bring; to open your eyes to notice God in unexpected places; to open your ears to become tuned in to the unceasing song of God's kingdom. Pray for the sensitivity to recognize God in whatever ways God may greet you and call you. Something of God lies still concealed for you in tomorrow's journey. Look forward to discovering it.

Adapted from Inner Compass, by Margaret Silf, p 59-61

Ideas for Journaling . . .

. . . Each day this week, write a little about the following question: *Where did I notice God's presence (or absence) today?*

. . . Create a picture of your life as you see it now: use crayons or markers to draw a large circle that represents your life. Draw smaller circles, boxes, or other shapes within the circle that represent different aspects of your life – relationships, work, family, leisure activities, worship, whatever seems important to you. If something seems to take up a lot of space in your life, draw it larger. If something seems to be missing altogether, you might want to draw it outside your life circle. There's no "right" way to do this – just make something that expresses how you see your life. What is this exercise like for you?



© 2005 Kairos: School of Spiritual Formation, www.on-the-journey.org