**November Prayer Practice**

The Daily Examen (based on the prayers of St Ignatius of Loyola)

The Ignatian Exercises rest on the theological assumption that God creates this universe precisely in order to invite other persons into the relational life of the Trinity. Another way of making the same point is to say that God is always in conscious relationship with each one of us as our creator, our sustainer, dear father or dear mother, our brother, our savior, the Spirit who dwells in our hearts. Ignatius presupposes that at every moment of our existence God is communicating to us who God is, is trying to draw us into an awareness, a consciousness of the reality of who we are in God’s sight. Whether we are aware of it or not, at every moment of our existence we are encountering God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who is trying to catch our attention, trying to draw us into a reciprocal conscious relationship. **William A. Barry, SJ**

More than 400 years ago St. Ignatius Loyola encouraged prayer-filled mindfulness by proposing what has been called the Daily Examen. The Examen is a technique of prayerful reflection on the events of the day in order to detect God’s presence and to discern his direction for us. Try this version of St. Ignatius’s prayer.

**1. Become aware of God’s presence.** Look back on the events of the day in the company of the Holy Spirit. The day may seem confusing to you—a blur, a jumble, a muddle. Ask God to bring clarity and understanding.  
 **2. Review the day with gratitude.** Gratitude is the foundation of our relationship with God. Walk through your day in the presence of God and note its joys and delights. Focus on the day’s gifts. Look at the work you did, the people you interacted with. What did you receive from these people? What did you give them? Pay attention to small things—the food you ate, the sights you saw, and other seemingly small pleasures. God is in the details.

**3. Pay attention to your emotions.** One of St. Ignatius’s great insights was that we detect the presence of the Spirit of God in the movements of our emotions. Reflect on the feelings you experienced during the day. Boredom? Elation? Resentment? Compassion? Anger? Confidence? What is God saying through these feelings?

God will most likely show you some ways that you fell short. Make note of these sins and faults. But look deeply for other implications. Does a feeling of frustration perhaps mean that God wants you consider a new direction in some area of your work? Are you concerned about a friend? Perhaps you should reach out to her in some way.

**4. Choose one feature of the day and pray from it.** Ask the Holy Spirit to direct you to something during the day that God thinks is particularly important. It may involve a feeling—positive or negative. It may be a significant encounter with another person or a vivid moment of pleasure or peace. Or it may be something that seems rather insignificant. Look at it. Pray about it. Allow the prayer to arise spontaneously from your heart—whether intercession, praise, repentance, or gratitude.

**5. Look toward tomorrow.** Ask God to give you light for tomorrow’s challenges. Pay attention to the feelings that surface as you survey what’s coming up. Are you doubtful? Cheerful? Apprehensive? Full of delighted anticipation? Allow these feelings to turn into prayer. Seek God’s guidance. Ask him for help and understanding. Pray for hope.

St. Ignatius encouraged people to talk to Jesus like a friend. End the Daily Examen with a conversation with Jesus. Ask forgiveness for your sins. Ask for his protection and help. Ask for his wisdom about the questions you have and the problems you face. Do all this in the spirit of gratitude. Your life is a gift, and it is adorned with gifts from God. End the Daily Examen with the Our Father.

From: [Ignatianspirituality.com](http://Ignatianspirituality.com) <http://www.ignatianspirituality.com/ignatian-prayer/the-examen/how-can-i-pray/>

**About St Ignatius of Loyola**

Saint Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556) is the founder of the Society of Jesus, the Jesuits. Originally, a Spanish knight from the Basque region, Ignatius underwent a conversion experience after being wounded in battle. Subsequently, he devoted his life to the work of God. The Jesuits were missionaries whose life was traveling Europe to teach and create schools, colleges and seminaries.

This prayer, one of several written by St Ignatius, is called suscipe which means “receive.”  Psalm 118 is the inspiration for this prayer of thanksgiving. Suscipe was included as additional material to the “Excercises,” a four-week contemplative practice of prayer toward “attaining love.” In the prayer, Ignatius speaks of the immeasurable love of God that is bestowed upon all of creation, and then asks what he might offer to such a loving God.

**Suscipe by St. Ignatius of Loyola**

Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty,

my memory, my understanding,

and my entire will,

All I have and call my own.

You have given all to me.

To you, Lord, I return it.

Everything is yours; do with it what you will.

Give me only your love and your grace,

that is enough for me.

**You Tube suscipe meditation** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=ElxE6r3noQk>