



Praying the Examen

*How gentle and loving is Your awakening,
O Bridegroom Word, in the center and depth of my soul ...
Awaken and enlighten me, my Lord, so I might know and love the blessings
You ever propose to me, and I might understand that You have moved
to bestow favors on me and have remembered me.
Adapted from St. John of the Cross, Living Flame 4:3,9*

It is recommended to practice the examen at least twice a day. This is not an intellectual exercise. It is a prayer. Do not feel compelled to use the same words given here unless they are helpful. In the beginning, they may be helpful, but as you become comfortable, use your own words.

Thanksgiving: Father, I rejoice in Your love for me. You thought of me and so loved the idea of me that You created me. Each moment You are at work, loving me into existence. Thank You, Father for accepting me as I am. (Here, thank God for any special gifts received this particular day e.g. the weather, a good book, a holy desire, a good joke, the ability to hear His voice and/or see Him working ... etc).

Petition: Father, You know me better than I know myself. Please help me be aware of how You worked in and around me today. I wish to respond to Your call for me, with obedience and love. However, for me to follow Your will, I first need to know it. Please help me listen and hear the voice of Your Spirit in me that I may see how You see me.

Reflection: In this section ask yourself some questions as you go through the previous few hours since your last examen. The answers will come as you are guided by the Holy Spirit. Examples of these questions could be as follows:

1. How am I feeling right now? Why?
2. Is this leading me to God or away from God?

3. How did God manifest His love for me in the last few hours? How did I respond? Was there anything lacking?
4. What did I do to show my love for God?

Contrition: Father, thank You for Your care and guidance in the last few hours. I am sorry for the ways in which I was not sensitive to Your Spirit in me. I love You, Lord, and You know where and how I need healing and forgiveness. I surrender myself to You completely (Here, ask for the grace to see specific areas the Lord is showing you).

Together looking to the future: Father with hope I look to the future. You accept me the way I am and You allow me to grow. You give me time and grace, opportunity, and space. I place the time between now and my next examen in your hands. I ask you to make me more sensitive to Your Spirit in me. May my life between now and then be united to the life of Your Son, my Lord and Savior, Jesus (Here one is to be specific as well: What is in the coming hours I want to discuss with the Lord, to lift up in prayer, ... etc.).

As I go forward with You, Lord, please strengthen the quiet voice of my conscience, Your own voice, in my life. Look at me as You looked at Peter.

Let Your gaze penetrate my heart and indicate the direction my life must take... Grant me, ever anew, the grace of conversion.

*Adapted from Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger,
Way of the Cross 2005*