

Reviewing Today's Encounters

In a traditional Examen, you pray over your day, moment by moment. In this version, you prayerfully review your day place by place, thing by thing and activity by activity.

1. I quiet myself. I slow my breathing. I sit very still for a moment and try to turn down my thoughts. I remember that I am in the presence of God.
2. I spend a few moments in gratitude, thanking God for one or two of the blessings, big and small, that I have received today.
3. I ask God to show me each person I encountered today. I ask God to reveal which encounter today was the most important one. That is, which conversation had the strongest impact on me and/ or on the other person? It could be a positive or negative encounter. In that specific encounter, was I spiritually free or unfree? What led to my feeling spiritually free or unfree with this person? How does today's encounter relate to past encounters with this person? In general, am I spiritually free or unfree with this person? What leads to this spiritual freedom or unfreedom?
4. Now I look to the future. When might I encounter this person again? What are my great desires for my relationship with this person? I allow my great desires to well up within me. I place these desires in God's hands and ask God to make them Holy. I ask the Lord to show me what grace or virtue I need to be the person I want to be in this relationship. I ask for that grace or virtue.
5. If I feel called to do so, I make a resolution to be the kind of person I feel called to be in the relationships upon which I have reflected on in this Examen.
6. I close in prayer.

My relationship with God

Luke 9:18-20 – Once when Jesus was praying alone, with the only the disciples near Him, He asked them, “Who do people say that I am?” They answered, “John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others that one of the ancient prophets has arisen” He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered “The Messiah of God”.

1. I ask God to make His presence know to me in this moment. I place my hands, palms up, in a gesture of receptivity.
2. I spend a few moments in gratitude, thanking God for one or two of the blessings, big and small, that I have received today.
3. I think about my relationship with God. I talk to God about how my relationship with Him has been going lately. Are we getting along well? Do I feel close to or distant from God right now? Have I spent quality time with God or have I been neglectful? Do I sense that God is close to me when I call on Him? Am I bored with God? When I look upon the face of God, do I feel joy? Gratitude? Shame? Fear? I ask God to show me how He sees our relationship.
4. I read reflectively the verses above. Quietly and peacefully, I reflect on how today has played out. I ask, “Where was Christ in these moments? How did Christ come to me in these moments?”
5. After looking at the details of my day, I pull back and look at the big picture. I ask, “Given all that has happened today, who was Christ to me today? Teacher? Friend? Consoler? Coach? Silent observer? Saviour? Parent? I declare who He was.
6. I then declare who I was today. If God was teacher, I was student. If He was consoler, I was one in need of healing. I speak to God about the way my relationship with Him played itself out today.
7. I look ahead. How do I want or need Christ to be present with me for the rest of today or tomorrow? I tell Him what it is I want or need from His presence in my life as I move forward.
8. I close in prayer.

I'm Drained

1. I quiet myself and slow my breathing. I sit still for a moment and try to turn down the volume on my random thoughts and preoccupations.
2. I spend a few moments in gratitude, thanking God for one or two of the blessings, big and small, that I have received today.
3. Looking back, I ask God to reveal to me which moment was the most draining. I return to that draining moment with God, reliving it with Him right beside me. I let myself become steeped in the moment, particularly in the most difficult thing about the moment. I let myself feel the strong emotions – lethargy, despair, or whatever other feelings are present within me. I present this draining moment to God and tell Him what was going on in my heart and soul in that moment. If I handled it ok, I thank God for that. If I handled it badly, I ask for pardon and peace.
4. I invite God to speak to me about this moment. I remain receptive to anything God says or does.
5. Looking back, I ask God to now reveal my most life-giving moment. I again return to that moment with God, reliving both the exterior events and my interior disposition. Steeped in joy, gratitude and relief, I give it all to God. I talk with God about it, making sure to express my thoughts and feelings and to let God speak freely to me.
6. I now look ahead. What is coming up that will be draining? I speak to God about it, telling Him how I feel about this possibility. I ask God to show me how I can prepare spiritually for this potentially draining moment. I ask God to keep me from contributing negatively to that situation by presuming the worst. I allow for the possibility that everything will go fine and pray for peace and hope.
7. Looking ahead again, I anticipate an upcoming life-giving moment. What might it be? I allow myself to anticipate this moment. I give it to God and ask Him to help me prepare Spiritually for the possibility that it will not be as life-giving as I anticipate. I ask for God to help me be able to say, "That would be ok too"
8. I close in prayer.

Traditional

1. I get into a comfortable position. I let my muscles relax and my mind quiet down. I take a deep breath and ask God to make His presence known.
2. I ask God to reveal all the gifts and graces He has given me today, from big one (life, safety, love) to small ones (a good sleep, a compliment, an encounter with a friend). I thank God for each of these gifts.
3. I ask God to fill me with His merciful love. I ask Him to lead these moments.
4. I review my day moment by moment. I linger over important moments with God.
5. I continue thanking God for His gifts. But I also pause at the difficult moments. I pay attention to any missed opportunities. When I find moments in which I was not the person I am called to be, I ask for forgiveness. I let His healing mercy wash over me.
6. I ask God to show me how He wants me to respond and who He wants me to be in upcoming moments. I ask Him to remind me who He has called me to be in upcoming moments. I resolve to ask Him for His help moving forward.
7. I ask God if there is anything more He has for me. I close in prayer.