

EXAMINE – 2023

Lent is a time to examine the way you are living and evaluate what sacrifices or additions can be made to grow closer to Christ. This year we are following in the prayer practice of St. Ignatius.

St. Ignatius was a Jesuit brother born in Spain to a wealthy and noble family. He entered the military and was injured by a cannonball to the point of being near death. During his time recuperating, he read the life of Christ and was so moved that he prayed for three days to ask God to remove his sins from him. At the end of this time, he felt peace and clarity about his life and felt called to lay down his sword forever, both spiritually and physically. He is best known for his prayer practices called The Examen and The Daily Exercises. These practices have influenced millions of people all over the world.

Each week we will offer a new point of learning about the Ignatian Way on the back of our GRASP sheet.

Ash Wed - EXAM: Thoughts, Words, and Deeds

G Spend a moment in gratitude, thanking God for one or two blessings, big or small, that you've received today

R Ask God to reveal your thoughts. What were my strongest opinions today? What presumptions did I make?

Review your Deeds. What did I do that was unloving and unhelpful? Ask for forgiveness where needed.

A Assess what thoughts and attitudes do you desire to have tomorrow? What desires do I want to have tomorrow?

S Pay attention to a particular struggle with your thoughts, words or deeds. Surrender that struggle to God.

P Pray for God to go before you and meet you tomorrow in a particular time when you know you will need help. Trust that God will be there with you. In thought, word, and deed.

Ever present God, we ask your Holy Spirit to go ahead of us, to travel with us and to be within us. Amen.

LENT 1 - EXAM: Where are you? What do you seek?

Gratitude Allow your mind to wander to a few things you are grateful for today.

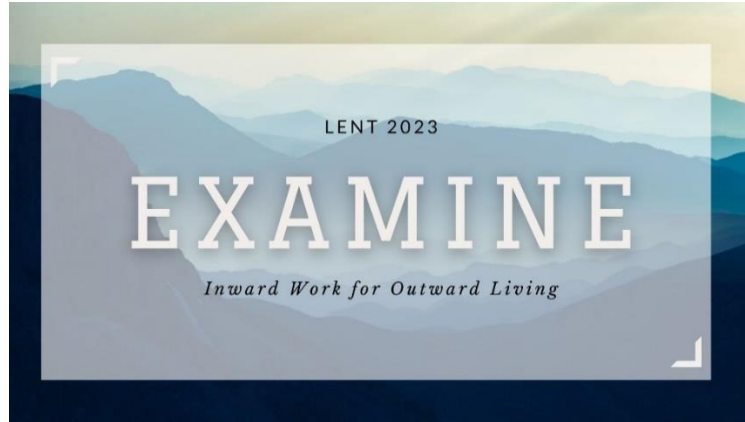
Repent In the garden, God asks Adam and Eve, "Where are you?" Where in your life have you wandered from God?

Awareness As God asks, Where are you?, allow yourself to answer honestly, describing where you are mentally, physically and spiritually. Listen for what God might be saying to you wherever you are.

Struggle Jesus asks the disciples, What do you seek? Tell Jesus about your great desires and struggles you are facing, places you long for Christ's peace. Listen for what he might be saying to you in the struggle.

Prayer of Hope Imagine what it might look like, in a concrete way, to invite the Spirit to meet you in the struggle and for God to be the answer to your greatest desire.

**Ever present God, we ask your Holy Spirit to go ahead of us, go travel with us, and to be within us.
Amen.**



EXAMINE – LENT 2023

Praydream

Ignatius was a master daydreamer. It was through daydreaming that Ignatius learned to determine God's will for his life. He learned that God had communicated through great desires for faith, hope and love that welled up in his soul and by daydreaming in the context of prayer, Ignatius allowed those dreams to surface. Doing so would allow him to have the necessary passion to perform those great works. Through *praydreaming*, we can approach the day ahead as God's hands and feet and voice for ourselves and others.

Each week we will offer a new point of learning about the Ignatian Way on the back of our GRASP sheet.

Lent 2 Exam: Present or Absent

G Spend a few moments in gratitude, thanking God for one or two blessings, big or small that you've received today.

R Looking over the past 24 hours or even the past few moments, I ask God who show me the moments when I was not fully present -- when I became distracted and lost in my own thoughts. I ask God to show me the ill effects of my absence and show me how much better things could have been if I had been fully present.

A As I reflect over the last day, I recognize the grace filled moments when I was fully present and engaged, when I listened or helped or had the grace to forgive or love. Or maybe it was simply a moment when I was aware of the goodness and grace that dwelled in the room. I give thanks to God for this presence.

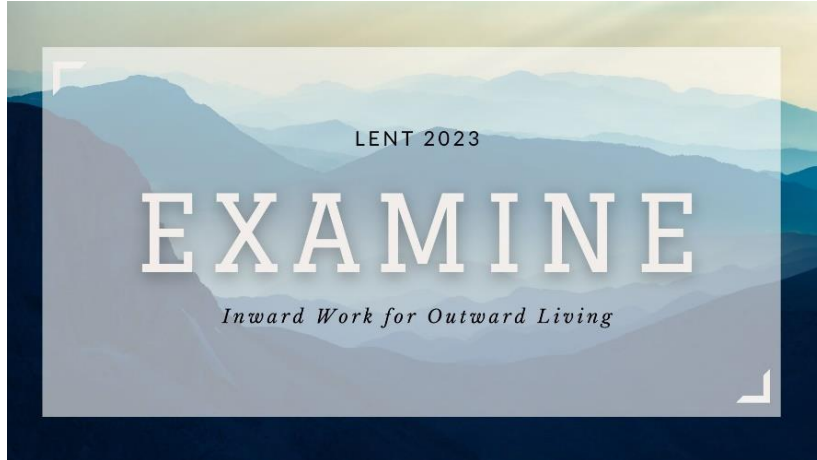
S I look to what is ahead. What moment that is coming needs my full attention? What moment may I be tempted to get lost in distraction. I speak with God about the concrete moments that may challenge my presence.

P I pray for God to meet me in my distraction and gracefully invite me back to the present with love and care.

Ever present God, we ask your Holy Spirit to go ahead of us, go travel with us, and to be within us. Amen.

EXAMINE – LENT 2023

Ignatian Concept: Prayerful Imagination



God is the inventor and creator of the gift of imagination and God loves what he has created. God can speak through your imagination if you allow God to do so.

The Examen uses "prayerful imagination" to listen to God. For example, if you deeply desire God to answer a question you have, imagine Christ sitting beside you and in your imagination, allow God to speak to you. Through persistence in prayer, God will help you sort out stuff that doesn't come from God and what is the voice of God. If you know a hard situation is coming up, imagine what it would be like to have God with you in the situation and then conversely, process what it would be like to "go it on your own." Use your prayerful imagination to walk with God.

Each week we will offer a new point of learning about the Ignatian Way see other side for our GRASP sheet.

Lent 3 Exam: Habits

Looking over the past 24 hours, ask God to show you a habit that is typical of the way you think or act. As you look over your time, say to Christ, Lord I see that I am in the habit of...

(Some examples: nitpicking my coworkers or family, beginning my day in prayer, putting myself down for small things, wasting time on the internet, or greeting each person with a warm smile.)

Gratitude Ask God to show you some of your healthy habits that you can identify and thank God for those things.

Repentance It's usually easier to see unhealthy habits rather than to see healthy ones. If an unhealthy habit comes to mind, speak with God about it now and ask for direction or forgiveness.

Awareness Bring to mind a time when you felt God's presence because of a habit (perhaps in worship on Sunday or because of a regular practice). Thank God for this presence.

Struggle What habit do I want to break? Or where do I want to make space to cultivate a new habit?

Prayer Ask God to help you break particular habits or grow in others. Invite God to give you strength and clarity for this work.

Ever present God, we ask your Holy Spirit to go ahead of us, go travel with us, and to be within us. Amen.

