



PRAYER OF EXAMEN

A Practice of Attentive Presence, Communion, and Becoming

For generations, followers of Jesus have returned to the Examen as a way of learning to notice how God's life moves through ordinary days (Col 1:9; Phil 1:9-10). This practice is not a moral inventory or a demand for self-improvement. It is a way of paying attention... to God's nearness, to the wisdom carried in the body, and to the places where love, resistance, longing, or fatigue shape our responses.

The Examen invites awareness of the space between instinct and action, where grace often becomes visible. Here, memory, sensation, emotion, and desire are welcomed without judgment. Nothing needs to be resolved in order to be received. Nothing must be explained before it can be held.

This practice honors those carrying stress, grief, trauma, or exhaustion. It does not require positivity, clarity, or emotional access. Choice remains available at every step. You may pause, adapt, or skip any part. God's presence is not fragile, and your participation does not need to be perfect.

At its heart, the Examen opens us to communion with the living Christ... who meets us in joy and disruption, courage and fear, connection and fragmentation... and who forms us not through pressure, but through faithful presence.

A Breath to Begin

If it feels supportive, allow attention to settle into the body.

You might notice the place where your body meets the chair or floor.
Perhaps a hand rests on your chest, belly, or lap... anywhere that signals safety or steadiness.

- Allow one unforced breath to arrive.
- Notice the brief turning point between inhale and exhale.
- Let the breath release in its own rhythm.

This breath is not a technique.
It is a reminder that life is already being given, moment by moment.

The Practice

1. Arrive

Take a moment to orient yourself to this time.

You may become aware of sounds in the room, light in the space, or the posture of your body. If it helps, a candle or small object may serve as a sign of God's nearness, but nothing is required.

Prayer of Intention

God, I offer my attention.

Let this time open my senses to Your presence in ways that support truth, healing, and belonging.

Illuminate what is ready to be seen,
not for striving, but for communion.

Pause as long as needed.

2. Noticing What Brought Life or Alignment

Allow the day to come into view at its own pace. You may notice images, interactions, sensations, or quiet moments. Trust what comes, and what does not.

You may explore one or two of these invitations:

- What moment from today carries warmth, steadiness, or a sense of connection?
- What experience felt aligned with how life is taking shape within you?
- What memory holds ease in the body or space in the breath?
- What might be stirring as you recall a moment where God's nearness felt tangible

Pause.

3. Noticing What Felt Heavy, Draining, or Disruptive

Without forcing recall, allow moments of tension, fatigue, grief, confusion, or disconnection to surface as they are able. If words feel hard to find, sensations or emotions may speak first.

You may explore:

- What moment rises with weight, sharpness, or unfinished energy?
- What interaction or thought narrowed your sense of connection or safety?
- What experience feels tender, unresolved, or constricting in the body?
- What might be coming into awareness as you name where distance formed... within yourself, with others, or with God?

If overwhelm arises, returning attention to breath or physical grounding is always an option.

Pause.

4. Attending to Meaning and Communion

Hold both the life-giving and the difficult moments in God's presence. There is no need to fix, justify, or resolve them. Let them be seen together.

You may listen with these questions:

- What patterns, longings, or invitations seem to surface across these moments?
- What desire feels closer to the surface as you stay present with today?
- What kind of support might sustain connection in seasons of strain, clarity, courage, or waiting?
- What movement of care, justice, or solidarity may be forming as you reflect on how today touched your community and world?

Pause.

5. Resting in Belonging

Allow awareness to widen. Notice your body, your breath, your place within God's life. Formation unfolds not through self-pressure, but through participation in love already given.

You may rest with this prayer:

God, thank You for being present in every part of this day,
seen and unseen.

Remain with me as I move forward.

Let my steps emerge from Your compassion at work within me.

Remain here as long as you wish.

The Fruit That Often Emerges

These are not outcomes to achieve, but movements that may unfold over time:

- Awareness of companionship with Jesus across the full range of experience
- Recognition of God's presence in ordinary, overlooked moments
- Deepening discernment rooted in love rather than certainty
- Capacity to listen with others rather than lead from urgency or control
- Gratitude that grows from honesty, not pressure
- Attunement to tender places where growth is forming
- Trust in God-given desires that surface within the heart
- Openness to prayer and communion woven through daily life

May this Examen create space for you to discover the ways God is shaping, healing, and freeing you... moment by moment... in unforced love.