



Saint Ignatius of Loyola

Born: c. October 23, 1491 in Loyola, Gipuzkoa, Basque Country, Crown of Castille (Currently Spain)

Died: July 31, 1556 (age 64) in Rome

Canonized: March 12, 1622 by Pope Gregory XV

Feast Day: July 31

Patron Saint of: Soldiers, Spiritual Retreats, Decision Making

Saint Ignatius was born of a noble family in 1491, in the Castle of Loyola in Guipuscoa, Spain. Reared in the Court of Ferdinand V of Aragon, the husband of Isabella of Castile, he entered the army and distinguished himself by his valor. He was wounded at the siege of Pamplona, in a war between Charles V and Francis I, King of France. During his convalescence he read the "Lives of the Saints" which effected his conversion from worldliness to piety. Henceforth, his life belonged entirely to God.

After a general conversion in the monastery of Monserrat, he spent ten months in the solitude of Manresa, where he composed his **Spiritual Exercises**, and then made a pilgrimage to Rome and the Holy Land. On his return to Spain, he began his studies and in 1528 he went to Paris to continue them. Here his virtue and wisdom gained him a few companions, and these became the nucleus of the Society of Jesus. At Montmartre they vowed to go to Palestine, or to offer themselves to the Pope to be employed in the service of God in some other manner. Receiving ordination at Venice together

with his companions, Saint Ignatius went to Rome where he was graciously received by Pope Paul III.

In 1540, Pope Paul III approved the Society and it soon made rapid progress, spreading to India in the East and Brazil in the West. Saint Ignatius continued to reside in Rome, employed in consolidating and governing his Society. There he became the friend of Saint Philip Neri. He was General of the Society more than 15 years. He died peacefully on July 31, 1556, and was canonized in 1622 by Pope Gregory XV.

Prayer: God, You raised up Saint Ignatius in Your Church to inspire men to work for Your greater glory. Grant that we may labor on Earth with his help and after his example and merit to be crowned with him in heaven. Amen.

On the medal, begin with:

Take, O Lord, and receive my entire liberty, my memory, my understanding and my whole will. All that I am and all that I possess You have given me: I surrender it all to You to be disposed of according to Your will. Give me only Your love and Your grace; with these I will be rich enough, and will desire nothing more.

Grant, O Lord, that my heart may neither desire nor seek anything but what is necessary for the fulfillment of Thy holy Will. May health or sickness, riches or poverty, honors or contempt, humiliations, leave my soul in that state of perfect detachment to which I desire to attain for Thy greater honor and Thy greater glory.

On each group of three beads, pray

Our Father

Hail Mary

Glory Be

Conclude on the cross/crucifix with:

O my God, teach me to be generous: to serve you as you deserve to be served; to give without counting the cost; to fight without fear of being wounded; to work without seeking rest; and to spend myself without expecting any reward, but the knowledge that I am doing your holy will

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2nd Version: **How to pray it:** On the **Gold** Beads: Apostle's Creed, the Our Father and the Hail Mary. On the **red** beads pray the different steps of the Examen from St. Ignatius' "Spiritual Exercises", SEE BELOW. On the **black** beads pray the "prayer to know God's will". Going back down the gold beads you can pray either the first three prayers or the Prayer for Generosity, Suscipice, and Anima Christi (all Ignatian prayers) finally end on the medal with Prayer to St. Ignatius of Loyola.

In the Examen, we review our recent past to find God and God's blessings in life. We also look back to find moments in the day when things didn't go so well—when we were hurt by something that happened to us, or when we sinned or made a mistake. We give praise and thanksgiving for the blessed moments. We ask forgiveness and healing for the difficult and painful moments. Having reflected on this past day, we then turn to the day yet to come and ask God to show us the potential challenges and opportunities of tomorrow. We try to anticipate which moments might go one way or the other for us: toward God's plan or away from it. We ask for insight into what graces we might need to live this next day well: patience, wisdom, fortitude, self-knowledge, peace, optimism. We ask God for that grace, and we trust that he wants us to succeed in our day even more than we do.

That's the basic idea behind the Ignatian Examen. [St. Ignatius Loyola](#) would say that this should be the most important moment of our day. Why? Because this moment affects every other moment.

Specifically, How Do You Do the Examen?

Ignatius provides a simple five-step routine for our daily Examen:

Give thanksgiving.

I begin by giving God thanks for all the things I'm grateful for today. I allow my mind to wander as I reflect on the ways God has blessed me on this particular day. I allow big things and small things to arise—everything from the gift of my faith, to the gift of my marriage, to the easy commute to work today.

Ask for the Spirit.

Next, I want to look at the moments in my day when I did not act so well. However, before doing so, I ask God to fill me with his Spirit so that the Spirit can lead me through this difficult soul-searching. Otherwise, I'm liable to hide in denial, wallow in self-pity, or seethe in self-loathing.

Review and recognize failures.

I look back at my day and ask the Lord to point out to me the moments when I have failed in big ways or small. I take a sobering look at the mistakes I've made this day.

Ask for forgiveness and healing.

If I have sinned, I ask God to forgive me and set me straight again. If I have not sinned but simply made a mistake, I ask for healing of any harm that might have been done. I ask for help to get over it and move on. I also ask for wisdom to discern how I might better handle such tricky moments in the future.

Pray about the next day.

I ask God to show me how tomorrow might go. I imagine the things I'll be doing, the people I'll see, and the decisions I'll be mulling over. I ask for help with any moments I foresee that might be difficult. I especially ask for help in moments when I might be tempted to fail in the way I did today.

To help remember the five steps, use a 5-Rs:

- **Relish** the moments that went well and all of the gifts I have today.

- **Request** the Spirit to lead me through my review of the day.
- **Review** the day.
- **Repent** of any mistakes or failures.
- **Resolve**, in concrete ways, to live tomorrow well.

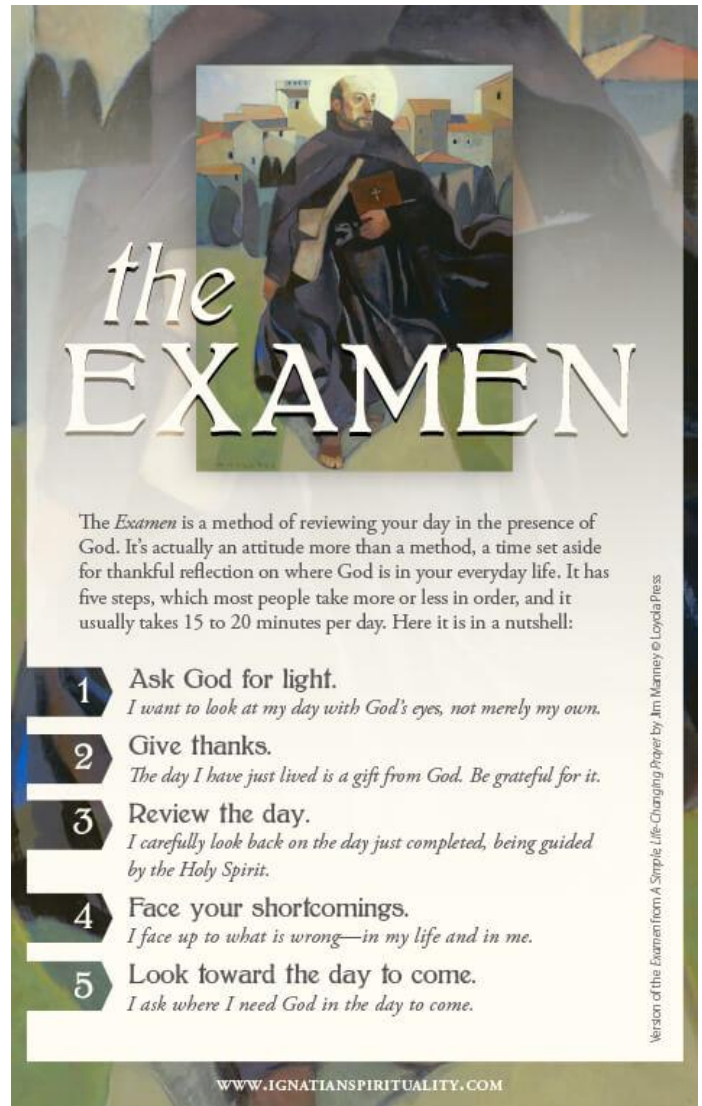
Prayer to Know God's Will:

May it please the supreme and divine Goodness to give us all abundant grace ever to know His most holy will and perfectly to fulfill it. Amen

Suscipe: 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. Amen

Anima Christi:

Soul of Christ, sanctify me
 Body of Christ, save me
 Blood of Christ, inebriate me
 Water from the side of Christ, wash me
 Passion of Christ, strengthen me
 Good Jesus, hear me
 Within the wounds, shelter me
 from turning away, keep me
 From the evil one, protect me
 At the hour of my death, call me
 Into your presence lead me
 to praise you with all your saints
 Forever and ever
 Amen



the
EXAMEN

The *Examen* is a method of reviewing your day in the presence of God. It's actually an attitude more than a method, a time set aside for thankful reflection on where God is in your everyday life. It has five steps, which most people take more or less in order, and it usually takes 15 to 20 minutes per day. Here it is in a nutshell:

- 1 Ask God for light.**
I want to look at my day with God's eyes, not merely my own.
- 2 Give thanks.**
The day I have just lived is a gift from God. Be grateful for it.
- 3 Review the day.**
I carefully look back on the day just completed, being guided by the Holy Spirit.
- 4 Face your shortcomings.**
I face up to what is wrong—in my life and in me.
- 5 Look toward the day to come.**
I ask where I need God in the day to come.

Version of the Examen from *A Simple Life-Changing Prayer* by Jim Marney © Loyola Press

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