



# **The Examen Prayer: Ignatian Wisdom for Our Lives Today**

*Timothy M. Gallagher (O.M.V. Father)*

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The examen prayer is a transforming and ever-growing practice in Christian spirituality. In *The Examen Prayer*, Fr. Timothy Gallagher draws from real-life stories and his experience as a spiritual director to explain the core principles of the examen prayer: What is the examen and how can we begin to pray it? How can we adapt it to our individual lives? What are its fruits? Also, "Is it really possible to live this way?"

## The Examen Prayer: Ignatian Wisdom for Our Lives Today Details

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# **From Reader Review The Examen Prayer: Ignatian Wisdom for Our Lives Today for online ebook**

## **Ryan says**

This book is a perfect introduction to the Examen Prayer, its importance in Ignatian Spirituality and its practice.

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## **Simon says**

A very straightforward and traditional book on the Ignatian style examen. Using lots of anecdotes and examples Gallagher writes for the general populace. This is not hard read. It will help readers grasp or deepen an understanding of this great spiritual discipline of reviewing our lives in the presence of God. Readers will be assisted in reviewing their day, being grateful, learning from challenges and looking to the future in hope. Readers are also reminded that, while the examen has practical benefits for self awareness and decision making, it is essentially a style of prayer.

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## **antony says**

This is a book that every praying person should read. If you are interested in starting to pray, or even if you have been praying for some time, you will gain benefit from reading this book.

I have read other books by this author and found them to be well researched and written and easy to read. I was interested in finding out about the Examen prayer so when I came across this book I knew it would be a comprehensive and instructive read.

The author writes in a very personal way, which is like being involved in a conversation with a friend. He writes in an everyday language with lots of quotes and examples from the lives of modern day people.

This book presents a practical way to learn about and practice the Examen prayer, or the examination of consciousness, as introduced by Saint Ignatius Loyola. Initially, we read about each of the five step and where they fit in the practice of the prayer as well as how to practice.

We hear from the writings of Saint Ignatius as well as the experiences of many others who have been practicing this way. We get to read about what works for some and doesn't work for others.

I got a lot from reading this book. I started using the prayer form immediately and found it significantly uplifting. It is not restrictive in any way, the book, as well as the Saint Ignatius, allow for significant flexibility in making this work for the individual.

The main benefit is that using this prayer form you can improve your relationship with God and spend more time recognising God's presence and activity in your life.

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## Samuel says

K tejto knižke nepoviem veľa. Čítal som ju preto mnoho dôvodov. Odporúčil mi ju jeden kňaz ako dobrý úvod k ozajstnému spytovaniu svedomia. Takému spytovaniu, ktoré človeka učí rozlišovať a odpútať sa od seba. Knižka je príručkou modlitby exámen podľa Ignáca Loyolského a hlboko ma oslovila. Zatiaľ je to však len prvý krok k duchovnej skúsenosti, ktorý je jej cieľom. Každopádne, odporúčam každému veriacemu, ktorý má problém s modlitbou, nechce zostať povrchný vo viere a túži svoju vieru žiť naplno. S týmito troma predpokladmi som začal čítať knihu aj ja a neľutujem.

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## Lora Lee Hensel says

Gallagher's writing on the practice of a daily examen, a gift of God to us as he writes it rather than a practice in which a human achieves something spiritual has been helpful to me in better understanding this spiritual discipline. He provides lots of real examples of its use in real people's lives. I appreciated the sense of humility and openness I heard in his voice through the book. His purpose seems that as a practitioner of the daily examen himself, he is always learning about the practice of the examen prayer, he recognizes that he is always learning but wanted to illuminate the examen prayer for those who are building the practice into their daily life.

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## Keith says

This is an excellent overview of the prayer of examen, taking each of the five steps chapter-by-chapter and explaining both the how, why and benefit of each step. One of the nice features are the many examples from a variety of daily lives of real people and the ways and impact each of the steps of the prayer had for them. This is one of the best books for understanding and practicing the Examen that I have read.

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## Rob says

Incredible teaching on this prayer discipline which holds the key to much spiritual growth and outpouring of love.

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## Glen Grunau says

Augustine's prayer was "Grant Lord that I may know myself that I may know thee." Perhaps in no other prayer form is this close relationship between self-knowledge and God-knowledge so practically attained. Yet self-reflection, with all of the fascination and reward that it has held for me through my life, has also been fraught with pitfalls. My melancholic bent makes me prone to easily drift from self-reflection into self-recrimination. So when I first noticed this book in the Spring, I saw it as my opportunity to dig deeper in my study and further refine my practice of this prayer, which Ignatius claimed was the one prayer form that

should never be forsaken above all other prayers. I was not disappointed by my encounter with this book. I'm not sure if I gave this book top stars because of the actual quality of the book or because of its success in renewing my desire to place greater emphasis on this prayer in my contemplative journey. In this aim, it more than succeeded! With the guidance I have received from this book, my hope has been renewed that this prayer will bear the promised fruit of an enhanced awareness of God's love and movement through the moments and hours of my day, each and every day. Already, my renewed practice of this prayer in the past 2 weeks has noticeably heightened my awareness of the love and action of God in my life. God help me to maintain my renewed commitment to the use of this prayer, not out of duty, but out of the flowing of my deep desire to know God and to hear his voice in my soul. Gallagher recognizes that the power of this prayer is that it often finds us: "I think that the examen finds us because whenever a heart cries out, 'O God, you are my God, for you I long; for you my soul is thirsting' (this Psalm 63 has become one of my favourite psalms to quote as I walk to work each morning because of how it reflects my desire for God), this deepest desire awakens another desire: the desire to hear God's voice throughout the day and to respond as fully as our strength, our souls, our minds, and our hearts are able. This kind of heart wants to 'stay awake', wants always to be watchful and alert to discern the coming of the Lord it loves. This kind of heart desires to encounter the God who is Emmanuel, who is with us always, hour by hour, every day of our lives. Such a heart desires the prayer that Ignatius, in our spiritual tradition, calls the examen".

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## **John says**

Having struggled with the examen for a few years I wanted to read something to motivate me, to renew my resolve. Fr. Gallagher did not disappoint. This book was exactly what I was looking for to get me started on that relationship vehicle once more,

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## **♥ Ibrahim ♥ says**

We all long for intimacy. People get married and yet never get intimate. They may stick to each other physically and still, sadly they don't get intimate. This book is about having intimacy on the level of the divine. Fr Gallagher is taking us for a great start as he quotes from Maureen Conroy's book "The discerning heart" a statement that is absolutely indispensable for intimacy to occur with God, same with people. "Growth in relationship with God occurs through mutual self-revelation". Yes, mutual self-revelation and no less! How often wives marry men and the man is like a closed book, a world to his own, etc.! No intimacy in a real sense. In order for this intimacy to occur there has to be mutual self-revelation. Can I tell who I am and not be afraid and still feel secure? This can happen with our Heavenly Father. He took the initiative of self-revelation when he is a hidden God and we can't know everything about him (Isa. 45: 12).

The further I went away from his quote of Maureen Conroy, the less I liked the book for the following reasons:

The author "judges" experiences of people in terms of objective and subjective when the whole thing in prayer is purely subjective and there is nothing wrong with that. But because he is the kind of author that gets called onto to give seminars on prayer, he ended up being "methodical", "systematic", etc. Symptoms that strike me as characteristic of American thinking where everything has steps and judged as "valid" or "invalid". Reading this book I felt he is using a yardstick for determining how to do it and do it right. We are talking about spiritual matters. I also disliked the book being written as if it is a seminary student writing a research paper and he finally gets an A on the paper. Do we treat subjects of spirituality as research papers?!

That is why I am turning instead towards the writings of Maureen Conroy and we shall see.

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### **Lisa says**

Gives very specific guidance woven with stories to help approach a more reflective (attentive) living. substantive read for those seriously interested in pursuing the practice.

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### **Emily says**

Thorough explanation of Ignatius' daily examen; both inspiring and practical.

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### **Joyce says**

Fr. Gallagher's book on the Ignatian Examen Prayer is an excellent introduction to the prayer, as well as a deepening for those who already pray the Examen and want to improve their experience.

Fr. Gallagher does a really good job of setting up the prayer as more than just going through the steps. He is careful to emphasize the starting point (love of and desire for a closer relationship with God). Like his other book, Fr. Gallagher explains the concepts and the method very simply and with lots of anecdotal examples to facilitate understanding. This book was written for Everyman and doesn't contain any convoluted lingo beyond the capabilities of Everyman.

This was a very good read. It's very motivating for improving one's prayer life in general and the Examen prayer in particular.

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