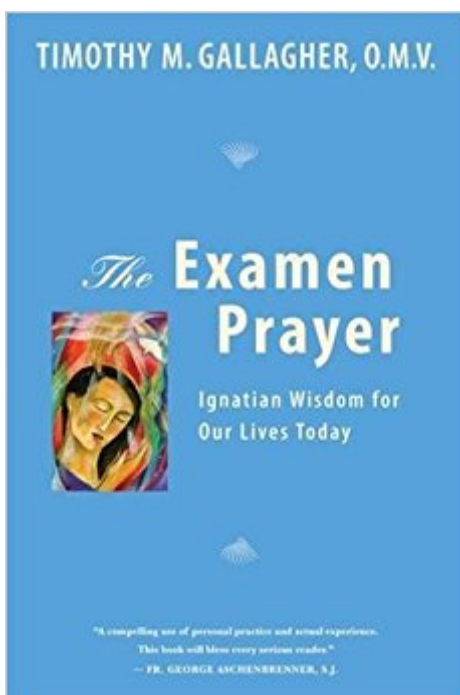


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The Examen Prayer: Ignatian Wisdom For Our Lives Today



Synopsis

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?

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Customer Reviews

Timothy M. Gallagher, OMV, is considered to be one of the greatest interpreters of the spirituality of Ignatius of Loyola. He is a popular retreat leader, an Ignatius scholar, and a lecturer. He is the author of several books, including *Begin Again*, *The Discernment of Spirits: The Ignatian Rule for Everyday Life*, *The Examen Prayer*, *An Ignatian Introduction to Prayer*, and *Meditation and Contemplation*. He lives in Boston.

An underlying methodology, or series of practices, was presented to us by Father Timothy M. Gallagher, O.M.V. in his first book, "The Discernment of Spirits." We could call them the "tools of the trade," indispensable for discernment. We learned about the necessity of our own "awareness," "understanding," and "action." We were shown how to use and live Saint Ignatius' fourteen Rules for Discernment. This was all prefaced by the premise quoted by Father Gallagher from the work of Jean Pierre de Caussade, S.J., in "Abandonment to Divine Providence," II, 1. Here he told us "All creatures live in the hands of God.... There is never a moment when God does not come forward in the guise of some suffering or some duty, and all that takes place within us, around us and through

us both includes and hides his activity. Yet, because it is invisible, we are always taken by surprise and do not recognize his operation until it has passed by us. If we could lift the veil and if we watched with vigilant attention, God would endlessly reveal himself to us and we should see and rejoice in his active presence in all that befalls us. At every event we should exclaim: "It is the Lord!" (Jn 21:7). Nothing could happen to us without our accepting it as a gift from God. "To begin to "lift the veil," which can also be said to "dis"-cover, we need "awareness" and "understanding." Only then can we take appropriate "action." The fact that Father Gallagher uses this book to present us with simply "one" of the "practices" in the discernment process, underlines its importance. It's called "The Examen Prayer," or simply an Examen. Saint Ignatius of Loyola (and many other saints after him) recommended that we become more "aware" with an "Examen." An examen is not an examination of conscience, but rather a general analysis or survey of our day and done at least once a day. We look over our day, its events, persons and circumstances and allow them to pop to the surface of our mind, permitting us to understand them. Our feelings can help indicate what God desires for us in our life. We notice our reactions during meetings, encounters with others, work, spending time with kids, doing volunteer work, praying--whatever! Do we feel joyful, drawn to God, full of faith and hope? Or, do we feel sad, depressed, a sense that God is far away? Our feelings are an indication of whether we are moving towards or away from God. Our feelings are the "tip of the iceberg," whereby we can search deeper. Once we notice whether our feelings (which might have led to actions) are moving us towards God or away from Him, we can identify real opportunities offered by the Lord to "dis"-cover Him or as ones in which we did not recognize Him. Over time, we begin to see patterns and reoccurrences of things that then help us to "dis"-cover our greatest weakness. We recognize this as God calling us to a deeper conversion. We then use these to make the necessary corrections. We can therefore make decisions about our life that bring us to feel drawn to fuller faith, greater hope, and joy-filled peace. We can see this accomplishing what Saint Ignatius taught, "easing and taking away all obstacles, so that the person (we) may go forward in doing good." The "Examen" sharpens our awareness and understanding to better succeed in this. The biggest challenge I think we all face is incorporating or firmly integrating the Examen into daily lives. This book will go a long way to help us face that challenge.

This is the second book that I have read by Fr. Gallagher. It is a renewed expert on Ignatian Spirituality. I have to honestly admit that the last book that I read of his was one of the deepest books that I have read and took some time to get through. Not this book. This book is a beautiful guide to an Ignatian form of prayer that Ignatius of Loyola suggested as a part of his spiritual

exercises. Gallagher suggest that it is essential to understanding whether or not you are growing in your relationship with God. I had thought that Ignatian spirituality involved contemplation leading to action. Gallagher correctly suggest that it is contemplative in action. The intent of the examen is to help us see where God is in our life, and where we did not see God in our life. Gallagher gives us a very practical guide on this. Highly recommend!

This is about the kindle edition; the book is excellent!The Kindle edition does not work on my iPad or iPhone. It does work on my first generation Kindle. After reading one chapter I found that I could not go beyond that page without the app crashing. Also, I cannot go to the Table of Contents.I called where I was told they would escalate the problem to the technical staff, but they could provide no target date for a fix. This was over a week ago, and it still crashes even after reloading it from the Manage My Kindle site.If your are using an iPad or iPhone, proceed with caution, or buy it in book form.

Insightful and valuable

Read this book for class. The Examen Prayer by St. Ignatius is a way to review your day - where it went well, what you could do better, and to plan for your tomorrow.

If you are looking for an intimate and personal relationship with Jesus read this book. Fill yourself up with this relationship and your cup will overflow. Pax

Gallagher writes very clearly about the prayer of examen which goes back even prior to the 16th century when St. Ignatius of Loyola structured it the way most people can engage in it today. It is a very helpful prayer for spiritual growth.

I got a lot out of reading this book. It gives a very clear explanation of the examen prayer, and the thing that I found the most helpful were the collected experiences of other people. This helped illuminate the prayer and show how it could be personalized without losing its the Ignatian character.

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