

## **The Daily Examen – By St. Ignatius of Loyola**

Taken from the Word Among Us – Meditation - August 19, 2019

(Matthew 19:20)

What do I still lack? (Matthew 19: 20)

When we read this story often of the rich young man, we often focus on how he went away sad” (Matthew 19: 22}. But we don't always give him enough credit. He knew enough to realize he needed help - and to ask Jesus for it. His question was sincere too: Teacher, what good must I do? He wanted to be a better man, and he wanted the "eternal life" that he saw the disciples enjoying (Matthew 19:16).

This is a good question for us to ask Jesus every day as well. In fact, the Church encourages us to do it. Every day, we can ask Jesus to help us see how we are doing in our walk with him and how we can do better. In the sixteenth century, St. Ignatius of Loyola developed a way for us to do just that. He called it the Daily Examen.” Here’s a version that consists of five steps.

The first step is to thank God for all the blessings you've received that day. What are you thankful for?

The second step is to pray, to the Holy Spirit. It can be hard to recognize God's presence in the course of the day. So ask him to help you look back with spiritual hindsight to see where he was with you that day.

Third, review what happened today. Whom did you encounter? What situations and emotions arose? How was God speaking to you through them? And how did you respond? Don't worry about every circumstance; just look at what stands out.

Fourth, think about when you felt closest to God. Perhaps it was as someone helped you in the grocery store or as you admired a beautiful sunset. When did you feel further away from God? Use the Examination of Conscience found in the Association of Catholic Coaches and Athletes (ACCA) Confession Pamphlet to see when you turned away from God. Maybe you felt impatient when someone asked you for help. Perhaps someone cut you off in traffic, and you got angry. Be sure to ask the Lord's forgiveness for any sins and for his help to change. Pray the Act of Contrition found in the ACCA Confession pamphlet. But remember, don't go away sad! Jesus is inviting you to follow him on the path to heaven.

Your fifth and final step is to look ahead to the next day. Think about the people you'll meet, the situations you'll face, and invite Jesus to be part of them. Remember, he wants to walk with you every step of the way.

“Lord, open my eyes! Help me to become more like you.”