

A Daily Examen

Theme = My Daily Habits

INTRODUCTION

Humans are very much creatures of habit. God made us this way so that we don't have to rely solely on good judgment and decision making in each situation that arises. Instead, we can train our minds, bodies, and souls to habitually, naturally do the right thing. Today's Examen encourages a reflection on habits.

1. I ask God to make his presence known to me at this moment. I linger in God's presence and then make the sign of the cross.
2. I spend a few moments in gratitude, thanking God for one or two of the blessings, big and small, that I've received today.
3. Looking over my day, I ask God to show me a few of my habits. I try to see my one thought or action today that is actually typical of the way I think or act. For example, I may find myself saying to Christ, "Lord, looking over my day, I see that I am in the habit of..."
 - Criticizing and nitpicking at people in my life
 - Staying focused on my work, once I've had a strong cup of coffee
 - Putting myself down for the smallest things
 - Wasting time on the Internet
 - Greeting people warmly when they walk in the door
4. It's usually easier to see my unhealthy habits than to see the healthy ones. When I do find an unhealthy habit, I speak with God about it. Perhaps I'll ask God for forgiveness or for healing, and for ideas about how to break the habit.
5. But I don't want to settle for simply looking at my bad habits. I won't rest until I find a couple of good habits in my day today. When I do find them, I will give thanks and praise. I speak to God about why I'm so grateful for this good habit.
6. I now look to tomorrow. What bad habits do I want to break? What good habits do I want to cultivate? What graces will I ask God for in order to help me break these particular bad habits and grow these particular good habits? I speak with God about this.
7. I end by singing or humming the refrain of my favorite hymn.

From Reimagining the Examen by Mark Thibodeaux, S.J.