



The Ignatian Examen: An Invitation to a Little Peace Along the Parenting Journey

Here is a stab I have taken at adapting St. Ignatius' Daily Examen into a daily practice specifically for harried parents who ultimately long for living and parenting in ways that reflect a belief in and a relationship with a loving God. I share it, not as an expert in getting this stuff right (neither the parenting nor the regular reflection), but as a fellow pilgrim along the journey with you, who is thirsty for ways to slow down, for ways to make meaning of the messiness of having children, and for ways to stay afloat when it would be far too easy to drown.

A Daily Examen for Parents *

THANKSGIVING

How am I grateful for my family today? How have they loved and supported me?

PETITION

Before I review my day, I ask for clarity and honesty as I search for God and as I look at myself and my kids.

REVIEW

From my interactions with my kids today today....

What did my kids do or say that made me smile, laugh, or pause in joy?

What did they do or say that challenged or frustrated me?

How did I respond to my kids with love and patience?

How did I respond to my kids out of frustration and impatience?

When did I feel closer to them? More distant from them?

How might my kids have tried to communicate deeper needs to me underneath the surface of their actions and words?

Have I noticed God's presence in the midst of any of this?

What might God be inviting me to consider when I reflect on these experiences in my family?

RESPONSE

What is my response to God who is present in the life of my family?

A LOOK AHEAD

As I consider my family's day tomorrow...

How can I be an instrument of God's love in my family tomorrow?

How can I honor the gifts of my children more fully tomorrow?

If you've ever been educated by the Jesuits or studied Ignatian spirituality, then you know we're called to be active and not called to merely just read about these practices. Ignatius Loyola himself might say: Don't just think about it... live it. So I'll challenge myself to do this Examen at least once this week – to truly listen to my days and to the voices around me, not as just the everyday din of the mundane, but instead as constant invitations to a life of joy

and meaning. I will try to grow the practice into one that I do multiple times a week, maybe even daily sometime later down the line. But I also know that with all the other pressures of parenting, I don't need to give myself another unrealistic one. So once this week. That's where I'll start. I invite you to join me and, more than that, I wish you peace along the journey that is parenting.

** Adapted from the Daily Examen for Cultural Diversity by Debra Mooney & Cheryl Nunez. Find more versions of the Daily Examen or other Ignatian-inspired resources at Jesuitresource.org.*



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