

Rhythm of Life

Developing healthy spiritual habits in order to draw closer to God.

Feb/ Mar Confession

Challenge: Use the Prayer of Examen regularly this month.

What is Confession?

"If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1: 8-9

Confession is about remembering that God is perfect, and that we are not. We recognise our need for Jesus to make the way clear for us to have a friendship with God, by asking him to forgive us for what we've done wrong. The rubbish and dirt get cleared away so the channel of communication with God is open again. It also reminds us that we hurt others, on purpose or by mistake. As we bring that to God too, we ask him to make things right again, knowing that we might need to be the answer to that prayer by saying sorry to others. Lastly, we learn to forgive ourselves and others in the same way that we receive that forgiveness.

What is the Prayer of Examen?

The Prayer of Examen is an ancient method of reflection which you can use at the end of a day. It helps you to notice where God was at work today, and what he might be encouraging you to learn from the day. It's connected to the practice of Confession, as we examine how we might not have lived as God intended, and helps us to repent and start afresh with Him. But the Prayer of Examen is far richer than confession alone. As we look back over the day in God's presence, we become more aware that he was with us, protecting, guiding and encouraging us, and working even when we didn't notice at the time. It increases gratitude and trust.

How do I do the Prayer of Examen?

Choose a time that works for you, towards the end of the day. See if you can develop a routine of doing it at the same time every day. Find a quiet spot: preferably the same place each time. Before you start, sit for a moment of quiet and take some slow deep breaths.

A model Prayer of Examen:

1. **REPLAY** Rewind the day in your mind, from the beginning. What do you notice? What made you happy, anxious or angry?
2. **REJOICE** Thank God for the good things you experienced. Then thank him for the less obvious things: the simple things, the unexpected things.
3. **REPENT** Say sorry to God for the things you did, said or thought that you now regret. For the times you acted as if He was not there with you. For the moments when you ignored His still, small voice or chose to go another way.
4. **REBOOT** Make a decision in your heart to live for Jesus tomorrow and ask for grace to see His presence more clearly.
5. **REST** Take a moment to thank God for His presence with you as you wind down for the day, and commit tomorrow to His loving care while you sleep.

Keep it real

Set yourself a target of how often you will do this and for how long. You can always extend and increase once you get in the rhythm!

Keep it focused

These spiritual habits are not an end in themselves, they are a means to an end. The goal is to love God more. So try not to do them as a duty you have to endure, but as something you gladly undertake. There are no prizes– save for the joy of knowing God better!

Keep it up

You're going to forget, or get distracted, or interrupted. Don't worry! Try again later, or make a fresh start tomorrow.

Ready for a Challenge Boost in March? Try this with a friend or family member, or in a group.



**Scan me for more info on Prayer of Examen,
Confession and Rhythm of Life**