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Praying the Daily Examen: A Reflective Prayer to Notice God's Presence ===== St Ignatius of Loyola first wrote about the daily examen in his spiritual exercises, which he created in 1522. He was looking for a way to grow closer to God and asked friends to pray with him at night. The prayer is meant to be simple: speak little, listen much. As St Ignatius reflected on his day, he sought consolation from God. This led to the development of the daily Examen as we know it today. St Ignatius was not always in a good place when he started praying the Examen. He had been shot by a cannonball in 1521 and suffered from severe injuries. Nevertheless, he continued his pilgrimage on horseback to Montserrat, Spain (with the intention of traveling to Jerusalem). When he arrived, he stayed for almost a year at a cave near Montserrat called Manresa. Today, Pope Francis has encouraged people to incorporate this daily prayer into their routine, saying "What happened inside of me today? That is the question. It means rereading the day with Jesus." The Examen can be used to express gratitude, ask for help, or simply acknowledge God's presence in one's life. One should adapt it according to their needs and situation. Praying the Examen might improve one's ability to see beauty in mundane tasks, such as a job or school. It could also make them more patient throughout the day. Ultimately, this prayer helps people become better listeners for and discerners of God's gift of life. The Surrender Prayer shares the same purpose: "Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will." To get started with the Examen, one can begin by finding a comfortable position and taking some deep breaths to calm their heart and mind. They should acknowledge their intention to grow closer to God and express thanks for the gifts of the day. One could then reflect on where they feel consolation from God or desolation in their daily life. The Hallow App provides various Examen options, including 5, 10, and 15-minute meditations. Here are five steps to use the Examen: 1. Time needed: 15 minutes 2. Prepare for prayer by finding a comfortable position. 3. Begin with deep breaths to calm your heart and mind. 4. Acknowledge God's intent in this prayer - growing closer together. 5. Express gratitude and reflect on where God is present in daily life. The Examen can be used as an opportunity for self-reflection, listening to how the Spirit moves one, and discerning what brings them closer or further from God. Lookin forward to seein everyone at the meeting tomorrow and discussin our strategies in front of God. Now, walk through your day as though you are playin a movie in your mind. What stands out? Any particular emotions or moments? Any consolations - when you felt close to Him or noticed Him workin? Or desolations - times when you felt far from Him and from who you are called to be? Respond Talk with God about what stood out from your day. What might He be tellin' you through your experiences and feelings? Take some time to ask forgiveness for the times you weren't at your best. Offer up more gratitude for the blessins that stood out. Whatever comes to mind, talk with God about it. Look to tomorrow What are you excited for? What are you nervous about? Visualize yourself walkin through the day with God and ask for His help. Close Spend a few more moments with God, listenin for Him and findin peace in His presence. In Hallow, we close with an Our Father and the sign of the cross. We hope you'll join us in prayin the Examen in Hallow. St. Ignatius Loyola included in his Spiritual Exercises a prayer called "the Examen," which derives from the Latin word for examination. It is a meditation with roots not only in Ignatian spirituality, but also in the spiritual practices of the ancient Stoics. There are many versions of the Examen today, but all have five steps. Here is a simple renderin of some key elements: "God is in it" The heart of the Examen is the third part: reviewing your day. "Think of it as a movie playin in your head," writes Fr. James Martin, SJ, in The Jesuit Guide to (Almost) Everythin. "Push the play button and run through your day, from start to finish, from your risin in the mornin to preparin to go to bed at night. Notice what made you happy, what made you stressed, what confused you, what helped you to be more lovin. Recall everythin: sights, sounds, feelins, tastes, textures, conversations. Thoughts, words, and deeds, as Ignatius says. Each moment offers a window to where God has been in your day."