



PO Box 458 · MUKILTEO, WA 98275  
360-631-6994  
RENEWALMINISTRIES@LIVE.COM  
WWW.RENEWALMINNW.ORG

## The Prayer of Examen

*The Prayer of Examen* is an ancient prayer practice that is used to assist us in preparing to enter into authentic and transparent prayer with God. You may use *The Examen* questions below to help you reflect on your day; revealing the state of your heart and mind as you enter into communion with God through Christ.

For centuries people have participated in St. Ignatius' Spiritual Exercises (16<sup>th</sup> century) which assist us in developing an intimate relationship with God. Ignatius suggested that God speaks to us through our deepest feelings and yearnings, through what he called, "consolation" and "desolation." Consolation is whatever helps us connect with ourselves, others, and God, that is, fullness of life in the Spirit of Christ. Desolation is whatever disconnects us from God, others, and ourselves; draining us of the life and love of God.

### *The Examen*

Ignatius recommended that at the end of our day or as we enter a new day we review the day and return to our deepest moments of consolation and desolation. To do this we simply become aware of God's presence and invite the Spirit of Christ to help us reflect on our day. We quiet ourselves and ask:

For what moment today am I most grateful?

For what moment today am I least grateful?

There are other ways to ask the same question. Choose **only** the questions that work best for you. Using too many questions may complicate your time of prayer but here are a few other questions you might use for your *Prayer of Examen*:

When did I give and receive the most today?

When did I give and receive the least today?

When today did I have the greatest sense of belonging to myself, others, and God?

When did I have the least sense of belonging?

When did I feel most alive today? When did I feel life draining out of me?

This simple process is one that you can use every day at the close of your day or the beginning of the next day. Through prayer you will discover your own experience of consolation and desolation and what you can do more of and less of in resolving daily problems. Many prayerful people have found direction for their days and for their lives by identifying these moments. *The Examen* will enrich your prayer life as well as your everyday life and relationships.