

IGNATIAN PRAYER JOURNAL

Based upon The Spiritual Exercises of
St. Ignatius of Loyola



OUR LADY OF THE WAY
An Ignatian Virtual Retreat Center

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www.IgnatianRetreats.org

ANIMA CHRISTI

BY ST. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA

SOUL OF CHRIST, SANCTIFY ME.

BODY OF CHRIST, SAVE ME.

BLOOD OF CHRIST, INEBRIATE ME.

WATER FROM THE SIDE OF CHRIST, WASH ME.

PASSION OF CHRIST, STRENGTHEN ME.

O GOOD JESUS, HEAR ME.

WITHIN THY WOUNDS HIDE ME.

PERMIT ME NOT TO BE SEPARATED FROM THEE.

FROM THE WICKED FOE DEFEND ME.

AT THE HOUR OF DEATH, CALL ME.

AND BID ME COME TO THEE,

THAT WITH THY SAINTS I MAY PRAISE THEE

FOREVER AND EVER.

AMEN

INTRODUCTION

This journal is for anyone making *The Spiritual Exercises in Daily Life* Retreat or for anyone seeking to adopt the Ignatian prayer methods as part of their daily routine to grow in a deeper relationship with God and thus, save their soul.

Spiritual Exercises include all the ways in prayer we prepare and dispose our souls to rid ourselves of disordered attachments, which are obstacles to our relationship with God, for us to seek God's will for our lives to save our souls as we come to know Him clearly, to love Him more dearly, and serve Him more freely. (SE#1)¹

¹ (SE#__) Indicates the internationally agreed versus with numbers in *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius: Based Upon Studies in the Language of the Autography* by Louis J. Puhl, S.J.. Chicago: Loyola Press. 1951

DAILY PRAYER GUIDELINES

The following guidelines will help you develop a rhythm and pace for prayer conducive to a fruitful retreat.

Time of Prayer: Commit to setting aside time each day, preferably at the same time every day. Establish a routine by setting aside an hour to an hour and a half each day for the different aspects of the retreat prayer: preparation, exercise, review, and Examen.

Place of Prayer: Create a quiet and comfortable space you can return to regularly. Returning to the same space throughout the retreat is most helpful. Candles, icons, rosaries, or a crucifix may help create a sacred space for prayer. (SE#20)

Withdraw: St. Ignatius knew the benefits would be greater, and the prayer time would be more fruitful for those who could withdraw from worldly distractions. (SE #20) Before your prayer period, minimize as much sensory and information overload as possible to help you transition into your prayer time and recollect yourself.

Daily Routine: St. Ignatius makes three recommendations for attentiveness and keeping our focus when making a retreat in daily life.

1. Night Before: Before falling asleep, reflect briefly on the moment you will rise for the day and visualize yourself praying the next spiritual meditation. (SE# 73)
2. Morning: Be intentional about not allowing your mind to roam or become distracted by thoughts about the day ahead. Turn your mind immediately to the morning's meditation. (SE# 74)
3. Before I Begin: For about as long as it takes to recite an Our Father, stand with your mind and heart lifted to God and consider how God gazes upon you with delight. This reverent gesture disposes the soul, centers our hearts in God's loving gaze, and opens us to receiving His grace. (SE# 75)

Flexibility: St. Ignatius offered the Exercises to souls of all ages, occupations, and education, meeting others where they were in their state of life. He notes that they must be adapted to fit the state of life of the person doing the Spiritual Exercises. (SE# 18) Though the Spiritual Exercises have a structure—where and when we pray—the retreat becomes naturally embedded within our daily routine, which leads us to become more contemplative in our daily lives.

IGNATIAN PRAYER PERIOD

St. Ignatius offers us a framework for meditating on Scripture or spiritual exercise so we may encounter and discover the Word of God in a personal way.

Step 1: The Preparatory

The Preparatory is a time for recollection to dispose ourselves rightly in reverence and humility in offering ourselves.

- **Silence**

We begin by standing in silence and raising our hearts and minds to settle into the reality of God's loving gaze as He looks down upon us in delight.

- **Offertory Prayer**

Before meditating on the Scripture or Exercise, offer yourself to the Lord. Pray the words of St. Ignatius:

*Take Lord, and receive all my liberty,
my memory, my understanding,
and my entire will, all that I have and possess.
Thou hast given all to me. To Thee, O Lord, I return it.
All is Thine; dispose of it wholly according to Thy will.
Give me Thy love and thy grace, for this, is sufficient for me. Amen*

- **Petitionary Prayer**

The Petitionary Prayer asks God, Our Lord, for the grace that all of our intentions, desires, actions, and thoughts be ordered purely to the service and praise of God (SE#56). In the Spiritual Exercises St. Ignatius invites us to ask God for graces related to the subject matter of the meditation.

Step 2: Meditation

St. Ignatius invites us to a mental representation of the Scripture or Exercise by using our imagination. During meditation, we allow ourselves to be moved by the Holy Spirit. By using our imagination to relate to Christ, we allow God to shape us as we relate to Him personally.

Step 3: Close the Prayer

Make a *Colloquy Prayer*. (SE#54) Speak to God in a personal way as the Holy Spirit moves you. Talk to God as a friend speaks to a friend, as a child speaks to a mother or father, or as one would speak to someone they loved and cared for deeply. The colloquies are spontaneous prayers that communicate what is in one's heart at that moment. Close with an *Our Father* or *Glory Be*.

Step 4: Reflection

At the end of each prayer period, note your experiences in your Daily Prayer Journal and ask yourself: *What are the insights, feelings, thoughts, images, and memories that came up in me?* Savor the graces.

DAILY PRAYER ROUTINE

Your Night Before Preparations: In preparing for tomorrow's prayer period, read the next day's meditations for understanding. If there is more than one reading for the day, consider the one that resonates with you. (SE# 75)

Your Retreat Mornings: St. Ignatius offers us a framework as we begin a Prayer Period and enter into the mysteries for a personal encounter and discovery of the Word of God. Each Retreat Morning consists of **4 Steps:**

Preparatory (Silence, Offertory and Petitionary Prayers)

Meditation (Praying with the Scripture or Spiritual Exercise)

Close (Ending with a personal and/or formal prayer)

Reflection (Making notes in your journal)

Step 1: Preparatory: Begin standing in silence, reflecting on this reality of the gaze of God lovingly looking down upon you. You respond. (SE# 75) This is a time for recollection to dispose of ourselves rightly in reverence and humility and with an Offertory and Petition (what we want and desire from the Lord). Each Preparatory Prayer lasts about a minute.

Step 2: Meditation: Read slowly the Scripture or Exercise given and pray attentively using all of your faculties—faith, feelings, interior senses, imagination, and recall—as you pray with each.

Step 3: Close the Prayer: Close your prayer time with a personal prayer (*colloquy*), speaking to God in a personal way as the Holy Spirit moves you. Then recite a vocal formal prayer (Our Father, Hail Mary, or Glory Be). (SE#54)

Step 4: Reflection and Review: At the end of each Prayer Period, note your experiences in your Daily Prayer Journal and ask yourself: *What are the insights, feelings, thoughts, images, and memories that came up in me?* Savor the graces.

Your Retreat Day: Recall how the Lord spoke to you during your morning contemplation, and be open to His promptings during the day.

Your Retreat Evenings: Pray the Examen and Review your Daily Prayer Journal notes. Consider the graces of your morning prayer time and daytime recollections. Read the next day's Scriptures or Exercise for understanding.

PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

Ignatian Meditation

Ignatian Meditation is a practice of praying with Scripture that helps us be attentive to how God speaks to us, relates to us, and loves us through the intentional, repetitive reading of the Divine Word of God. It is a prayer practice of attentive listening to the movements of the Holy Spirit which invites us to respond to Christ, our Lord, with our deepest desires and intentions. It is a great way to begin praying with Scripture passages from the Old and New Testaments.

- 1. Read:** Read a Scripture passage slowly, mindful of a word or phrase that captures your attention.
- 2. Reflect:** Read again. Find a word or phrase in the Scriptures that speaks to you. Think about it and ponder it. Become aware of your thoughts, feelings, desires, longings, intuitions, attractions, or resistances.
- 3. Respond:** Read again. Take a moment to speak person-to-person with Christ, sharing what comes up from your heart with a *colloquy* prayer. This step is a dialogue with Christ, a loving conversation with the one who invites us into His embrace.
- 4. Resolve:** Discern and determine what God is revealing to you at this moment, consider its meaning for your life, and ask for the grace to carry it into practice.
- 5. Rest:** In this final step rest in the presence of the One who, through His Word, invites you to accept His transforming embrace. Enjoy the experience of simply being in God's presence.

Ignatian Contemplation

St. Ignatius knew from his conversion experience the power of the Holy Spirit, which deepened his desire to become a soldier for Christ by imagining living like the saints.

In the Spiritual Exercises, St. Ignatius proposes praying with the Gospel scenes and various spiritual exercises by using our imagination, thoughts, and memories. This prayer practice is called *Ignatian Contemplation*, and it is most useful when praying about events in the life of Jesus.

In *Ignatian Contemplation*, we use our active imagination to imagine a particular event in the life of Jesus. We imagine all the aspects of the scene, sights, and sounds. We allow our imagination to lead us to relate to Jesus personally.

St. Ignatius suggests we use three steps: see, listen, and consider.

- First, read to understand what is going on and who is there. Construct the scene in your mind and see the different people. (SE# 106)
- Read it a second time to imagine the scene. Listen to what the people are saying and hear how they interact. (SE# 107)
- Read a third time and focus on the people in the passage. (See SE 108) Consider what the people are doing and where you are invited to enter the scene to relate to Jesus and all that is happening.

THE EXAMEN

The Examen is a prayer of gratitude, petition, and awareness of the many graces God bestows on us daily. It begins with giving thanks, which leads us to grow in awareness of God's love, and enables us to relate to Him personally with deep affection. Then, emboldened by His love for us, we ask for insight to know our faults and how God sees our souls.

We continue by asking for the gifts we desire to grow stronger in our faith. We review the day, hour by hour, to notice more deeply the moments of interior joy or any experiences of heaviness in our souls and the thoughts and actions that arise from each. By asking forgiveness for our faults, we seek to be free from all burdens on our hearts and then plan with the Lord how we may progress in His infinite love tomorrow.

Daily Examen Journaling Prompts

- 1. Give Thanks:** The gifts and graces the Lord has given to me today are...
- 2. Petition:** I ask the Lord to show me the state of my soul. I ask for the outpouring of His grace. Today I desire...
- 3. Review:** Today's moments of joy in the Lord, interior heaviness, and the thoughts that arise from each are...
- 4. Pardon:** The burdens of my heart that I wish to be free of are...
- 5. Progressing with God:** As I look to the day ahead with gratitude, I will respond to His call for growth by...

DAILY JOURNAL NOTES

DATE: ____/____/____

Scripture/SE: _____

Offertory Prayer: *“Take Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will, all that I have and possess. Thou hast given all to me. To Thee, O Lord, I return it. All is Thine; dispose of it wholly according to Thy will. Give me Thy love and thy grace, for this is sufficient for me. Amen.”*

- St. Ignatius of Loyola

Petitionary Prayer: *Today I desire:*

Today’s Meditation: *Today I hear Your Word speak to me:*

Colloquy: *Lord,*

EXAMEN

Give Thanks: *The gifts and graces the Lord has given to me today are:*

Petition: *I ask the Lord to show me the state of my soul. I ask for the outpouring of His grace. Now, I desire:*

Review: *Today's moments of joy in the Lord, interior heaviness, and the thoughts that arise from each are:*

Pardon: *The burdens of my heart that I wish to be free of are:*

Progressing with God: As I look to the day ahead with gratitude, I will respond to His call for growth by...
