

Daily Examen for Racial Justice Challenge

Based on a 400 year-old spiritual practice developed by Saint Ignatius of Loyola. Try this technique, or one of the journaling practices listed below, after viewing the day's content.

Step one: Center yourself. Wherever you are, pay attention to your posture. Bring your body into alignment, shoulders back, feet grounded as you are able. Breathe in deeply. Exhale completely. As you breathe in and out, acknowledge God's Spirit flowing through you. Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you (1 Cor 7:19). Breathe in God's love. Let it fill you up. Let it travel from your nose into the depths of your being. Breathe out God's love. Let it flow over the content you just watched, read, or listened to. Breathe in. Breathe out.

Step two: Gratitude is the antidote to anxiety. Give thanks for God's loving, liberating, life-giving presence. Give thanks for God's resurrection power. Give thanks to God for this moment of revelation. Think about the content you have just absorbed. No matter how troubling, disturbing, or distressing, this information is a gift. Find one piece of it for which you are grateful. Name it. I am grateful for _____. Breathe in God's love. Breathe out God's love. "Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thess 5:18).

Step three: Examine your emotions. What do you feel? We rarely feel just one way about something. More often, we feel multiple emotions at once. Separate them out. Name one emotion. Name another. Name another. Pick one emotion. What is God showing you?

Step four: Pray for the Holy Spirit to move freely in this world. Pray for the Spirit to move freely in you. God is at work in us and in this world. With confidence in God's liberating, justice-seeking, life giving power, ask God to help you inwardly digest the discernment of today. Pray that in thought, word, and deed we might become anti-racist people. May we not be conformed to this world, but rather be transformed by the renewing of our minds, so that we may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect (Romans 12:2). Bring your kingdom, God, on earth, as it is in heaven. Amen.

You might want to set a timer for these

Journaling—Write your thoughts, reactions, and feelings down. Use a free-flow style, without regard to how the words sound. Don't worry about grammar, punctuation, or spelling. A few minutes is enough. Just write down what comes to mind. You can also turn your journaling into a prayer.

Praying in Color--You need colored pencils/pens/markers and paper.

1. Choose a color and write your name for God in the center of your paper.
2. Draw a shape around the name, or just begin to doodle around it.
3. Sit in silence and listen—what prayer concerns bubble up?
4. Use a word or draw an image to represent this prayer.
5. Continue to doodle around this word/image as you lift it up to God.

Take good care of yourself. We are on a spiritual journey that is more akin to a marathon than a sprint. As you engage in this deeply reflective work, trust in God's boundless love and resurrection power. God will make a way where there seems to be no way. Our role is to bear witness to this truth.