



## Mark Maddix

### THE3060 – Life of Holiness

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*Christian Practice in the Higher Education Classroom is described as incorporating instructional spiritual practices into one's course for the purpose of cultivating Godly reflection and practice in academic life.*

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#### Christian Practice:

*Sabbath - Self-Care - Solitude*

One of the assignments I include in my general education class is to have students take time for sabbath and self-care. Students are asked to complete the assignment during a given week. The following options are described for students to complete the practice:

During one week in class you are to take an intentional time of Sabbath in one of the following ways:

*i.* Technology Sabbath-you take one day (24 hours) and do not engage in any email, phone, or texting.

*ii.* Solitude-you take one day (24 hours) to be alone and not talk or engage in conversation with anyone. This is a time to rest and relax.

*iii.* Exercise-you exercise three times during a week as part of your self-care.

Once you have completed your Sabbath / self-care time, write a 500-750-word essay describing how this Sabbath rest improved your sense of well-being, reduced your anxiety, and helped you connect with God.

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## Examen

*Examen* is a simple contemplative practice developed by St. Ignatius of Loyola. The daily Examen is a technique of prayerful reflection on the events of the day in order to detect God's presence and discern direction for our lives. It is an ancient practice in the Church that helps us see God's hand at work in all aspects of our lives. In other words, it is an examination of God's presence in your life, to review your day and give gratitude to God.

We invite you to examine your day by taking time to be aware of God's presence in your life both the areas of gratitude (consolation) and those areas in which you are the least grateful (desolation). Examen your day with honesty and openness. God values our honesty and our willingness to share about our life.

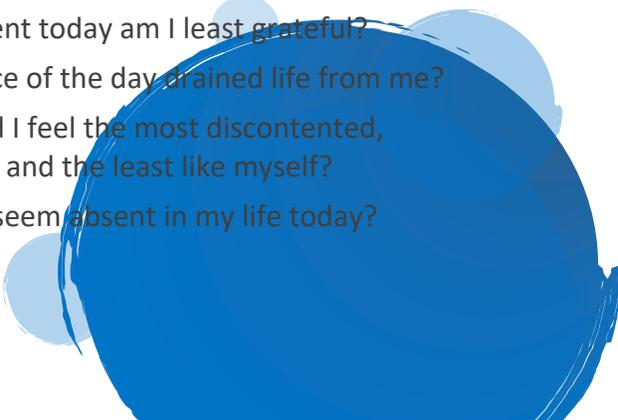
To begin a practice of The Examen, follow these guidelines:

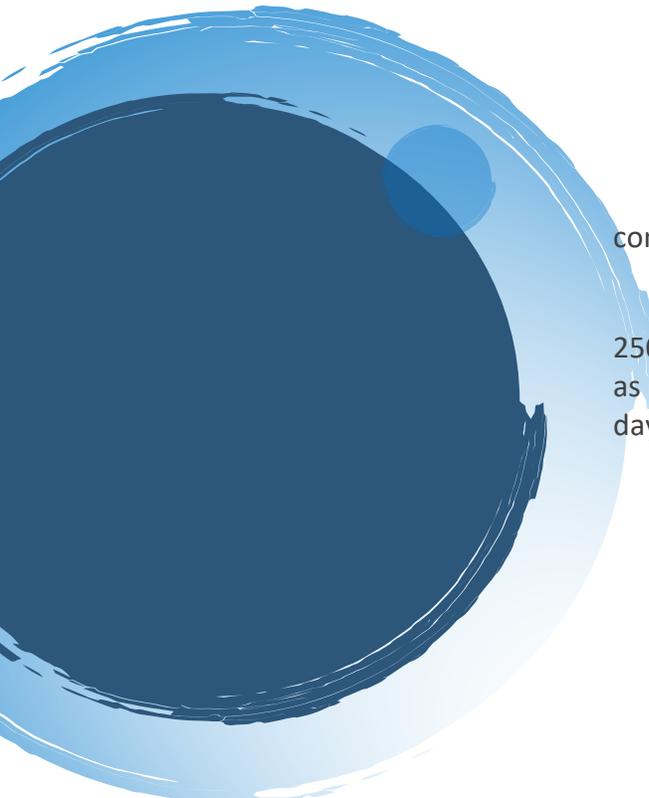
1. Sit quietly and relax. Light a candle if you'd like.

2. Think back over the last 24 hours and look for your moment of consolation. You can use one of these questions as a guide:

- ✓ For what moment today am I most grateful?
- ✓ What experience of the day felt most life-giving to me?
- ✓ When today did I feel most content, most like myself?
- ✓ When did I sense God's presence most fully today?

3. Think again through the last day and look for your moment of desolation. You can use one of these questions as a guide:

- ✓ For what moment today am I least grateful?
  - ✓ What experience of the day drained life from me?
  - ✓ When today did I feel the most discontented, uncomfortable, and the least like myself?
  - ✓ When did God seem absent in my life today?
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4. Spend a moment in prayer, thanking God for your consolation, and asking for help with the desolation.

Once you have completed the spiritual exercise, write a 250 word reflection paper on what you experienced, particularly as it relates to the ways you see God at work in your life that day.

