

Prayer of Awareness

This prayer practice, also known as the *consciousness examen*, is a way of praying over the treasures and troubles of the day, holding them up to the light of Christ. Done daily, for ten or fifteen minutes, it helps us to expand our awareness of the ways God is present to us, and of the ways we respond to God.

1) Take a moment to center yourself and to open yourself to the presence of God.

You may want to light a candle, take a few deep breaths, or listen to prayerful music as a way to slow down and be present with God, the One who created us, knows us, and loves us.

When you are ready, begin the prayer by asking the Spirit of God to cast light on your reflections as you review the events of the past day.

2) Pray through the day.

Let the events and people of the day scroll through your memory. Don't obsess over remembering every detail, but allow the Spirit to bring to your awareness specific blessings and events from this unique day. Give thanks for these gifts.

3) Recognize the flow of feelings and behaviors from the day's events.

Recall the feelings and behaviors that came to mind as you reviewed the day, both positive and negative. Don't let them pull you in, but ask the Spirit to stand a little apart with you and to help you notice what is there.

4) Choose one of these feelings or behaviors and pray from it.

Focus on the remembered feeling or behavior that most nudges at you for your attention. Express the prayer that surfaces as you attend to the source of that feeling – praise, petition, confession, cry for help or healing, whatever rises.

5) Take a moment to listen with your heart.

Wait for the Spirit of God to respond, being aware that response can come in many forms.

6) Look toward tomorrow and pray for guidance.

Look ahead to the next day, being aware of the hopes and fears that you carry. Offer these to God in prayer, asking for help, healing and whatever else you need. Rest in the assurance of God's steadfast love.