

THE ART OF EXAMEN

DEEPER GUIDE

"Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed." Mark 1:35

But why did Jesus pray?

He prayed because He was fully God. Within the Trinity this conversation has been ongoing since the beginning of time, Jesus simply continued that. But Jesus, also fully human, made prayer part of how he orientated around his primary identity – that he was Son and loved by his Father.

"There is not in the world a kind of life more sweet and delightful, than that of a continual conversation with God"

- Brother Lawrence

Take a look at these two famous early Church Icons. On the left is Rublev's Icon of the Trinity and on the right one called the 'Icon of Christ and His Friend'. They express these two sides of Jesus' prayer well...



"It's an invitation from the heart of the trinity, into the heart of the trinity"

- Alain Emerson

Take some time to marvel in this relationship, which was not only Jesus' but one we are invited into as well.

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EXAMEN PRAYER

As mentioned in the film we'd like to encourage you to pray the Examen prayer each day this week. Check out the 24-7 Prayer website for information about how to do this. Particularly this week, use this structure to help you pray:

INVITE THE HOLY SPIRIT
GRATEFULLY REVIEW YOUR DAY
WHEN DID YOU CONNECT WITH JESUS?
PRAY ABOUT ONE THING THAT STANDS OUT
LOOK TO TOMORROW

DAILY READINGS

MONDAY

Luke 5:15-16

Jesus withdrew to pray when his ministry was reaching its height of popularity. He knew his focus was God not fame. Reflect on how you find the idea of making your own heart a chapel for God.

TUESDAY

Luke 11:2-4

The Lords prayer was a response to the disciples seeing Jesus praying and asking Him to teach them to pray like that. Patrick, one of the early Celtic saints began his faith journey tending to sheep and learning to pray in the solitude. Ask God to teach you to pray like Him.

WEDNESDAY

Revelation 3:20

This famous verse comes from the letters of Jesus to the early churches in John's Revelation letter. Artist Holman Hunt painted a Jesus with a lantern at an old overground door, knocking and asking to come in. He knocks on the door of our hearts today and every day.

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THURSDAY

John 5:16-20

Within the prayers of Jesus is wrapped up the amazing idea of Jesus doing what the Father is doing. Mission is God's idea not ours and in these verses we see the heart of Jesus' prayers was unity with God's plans. We can pray with that same heart. Ask God to speak to you as you pray. Could you be the answer to your own prayers? Is God already answering them around you?

John – Father knows the Son etc Son does what Father says
Cuthbert - prepared for teaching, healing and evangelistic journeys by long times of prayer.

FRIDAY

Luke 15:17-24

The parable of the Lost Son shows us the love God has for each of us, and for those who are far away from him. Mission has always been at the heart of prayer. We see this as St. Cuthbert used to withdraw from long times of prayer before going out on evangelistic journeys around the country. Dedicate your mission to prayer today. Pray for friends and neighbours.

SATURDAY

Luke 22:39-46

The prayers of Jesus show us the vulnerability and pain of prayer as well as joy and celebration. Take some time to be still today and ask God to help you pray deep and painful prayers.

SUNDAY

John 17:20,21

Amazingly in John's gospel we read that Jesus prayed for us as disciples who'd come after his life here on earth. Accept these prayers today. Receive the love Jesus has for you.



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DEEPER GUIDE EXTRA TIME:

Take some action

This week why not carve out a short time of daily withdrawal.

This could be outside, in the store cupboard at work, on the bus to school or wherever. Use Brennan Manning's simple prayer, breathing in saying "Abba" (the Jewish word for Father) and "I belong to you" as you breathe out.