



## **Finding God in retrospect**

Sometimes it is difficult to look out the windshield at the road ahead and see God's presence. But when we look in the rear-view mirror, we see God everywhere, having been present with us in the past. That's a resource for those tough times you face. Look to how God has been faithful in the past and trust that God is faithful still and that God is with you in the problems you face this week. Here are two different ways you can make this a daily practice:

### **The Good, the Bad, and the Godly**

I wanted to change our staff meetings in a way to deepen how we know one another as a team and to do so in a way that allows us to see how the Holy Spirit is working in and through our weeks. The Rev. Canon Loren Lasch recommended this approach she learned from a dedicated youth leader at the first parish she served, the Church of the Good Shepherd in Augusta.

At each gathering of her youth Sunday School class, as a way of building community, the group would share their "good, bad, and Godly" moments from the week. Whether you do this alone when you get home from work or before you go to bed, taking time to recall what was good and bad helps you see the day in retrospect. Then consider, where did God show up in your day. This can also be done by a couple or family at dinner or before going to bed.

### **The Examen**

If a more disciplined approach will help, the Examen of St. Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556) is a time-tested means of daily reflection. Ignatius was a talented spiritual director who founded the Society of Jesus (The Jesuit religious order). He received the idea of a daily examination, called The Examen, as a gift from God and named it the most important of all spiritual disciplines.

The Examen has five steps:

1. Thanksgiving - Be aware of God's presence, offering gratitude for God's love.
  2. Prayer - Ask for grace to know your sins.
  3. Examination - Review your day, recalling the sights, sounds, emotions.
  4. Sorrow - Pray for forgiveness for any sins done during the day.
  5. Hope - Look toward tomorrow, asking God's assistance in the day ahead.
- Close with the Lord's Prayer.

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