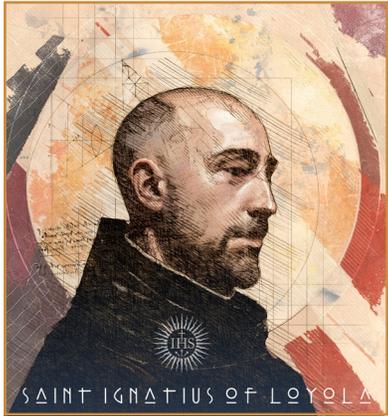


THE DAILY EXAMEN

The Daily Examen is a brief (10–15 minute), prayerful reflection



practiced once or twice a day. Its purpose isn't self-criticism, but awareness—learning to notice where God was present in your ordinary day, how you responded, and how you're being invited to live tomorrow. At its core, the Examen asks: Where did I notice God today—and how did I respond?

The practice comes from Ignatius of Loyola (1491–1556), founder of the Jesuits. As he paid attention to his inner life, he observed that some thoughts led him toward God, humility, and love, while others led toward anxiety, pride, or despair. From this insight, he developed the Spiritual Exercises. Ignatius considered the Examen essential, urging daily practice—even when busy—because it trains us to recognize God's activity in everyday life.

Many Christians value the Examen because it integrates faith with daily life, deepens emotional and spiritual awareness, strengthens discernment, and cultivates gratitude. For Vineyard communities, it aligns beautifully with Kingdom theology—helping us notice where the Kingdom is breaking in and where God invites our cooperation.



LENT
2026

WHAT IS LENT?

Christians have traditionally set aside the weeks leading up to Easter (known as Lent) to prepare our hearts in a unique way for the most significant celebration in the church calendar—Resurrection Sunday. At Blue Route Vineyard, we use this season to try to lean into our spiritual lives in a special way.

This booklet offers 4 ways to participate in Lent this year. Try some or all.

1. PRACTICE THE EXAMEN ONCE OR TWICE A DAY

Stillness

Become aware of the Presence of God.

Quiet your heart, and listen. In this moment, become present to Jesus.

Gratitude

Review your day with gratitude.

Seeing through a lens of thanks, appreciate God's gifts each day.

Reflection

Become aware of your emotions.

Review your positive and negative feelings. Did you choose Jesus' way in each situation?

Joy & Sorrow

Choose one aspect or event of your day, and pray about it. Rejoice in a success, or ask forgiveness for sin. If necessary, plan to make amends.

Hope

Look toward tomorrow. Move toward expectation. Ask God to shine light on tomorrow's path. Resolve to grow.

2. PRAY FOR SOMETHING BIG.

Pray for something that stretches your faith. Set high expectations and pray with all your heart as if God will answer your prayers for sure. At the same time, hold it loosely, and promise beforehand that you will not turn bitter and give up on praying if God's answer is "no." In that tension, we continue to pray with faith and perseverance.

3. MEMORIZE PSALM 130

1 Out of the depths I cry to you, Lord;

2 Lord, hear my voice.

Let your ears be attentive
to my cry for mercy.

3 If you, Lord, kept a record of sins,
Lord, who could stand?

4 But with you there is forgiveness,
so that we can, with reverence, serve
you.

5 I wait for the Lord, my whole being waits,
and in his word I put my hope.

6 I wait for the Lord
more than watchmen wait for the morning,
more than watchmen wait for the morning.

7 Israel, put your hope in the Lord,
for with the Lord is unfailing love
and with him is full redemption.

8 He himself will redeem Israel
from all their sins.

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4. FAST

Throughout the Bible, people fasted as they sought God. The point of fasting is that, under God's direction, we feel desperate for something and we direct that desperation towards God. Note: fasting does NOT make you more holy and acceptable before God. That has been completely accomplished by Jesus on the cross.

Fasting often involves not eating food in some way. Sometimes, that can be a total abstention, a "water fast." We don't recommend these at any length beyond a couple of days unless you have a good deal of experience fasting and are under a doctor's supervision. We also don't recommend water fasts if you've ever suffered from an eating disorder.

Other fasts involve not eating a certain kind of food. This can involve giving up a beloved food: desserts, meat, sugar, caffeine, alcohol etc. Are there any non-food-related options? Yes! Fasting from TV is a popular choice. You can also fast from digital games, shopping, social media — anything that feels costly to give up for a season.