



## The Examen (Ignatius of Loyola) Entering Your Field Education Placement

In his *Spiritual Exercises*, Ignatius taught a daily examination of our deepest feelings and desires. He called these feelings our **consolations** (what connects us with God, others and ourselves) and **desolations** (what disconnects us). He believed that God would speak to us through these feelings and desires. Live with this practice for your first three weeks...or more.

### The *Examen* helps us:

- Acknowledge sad or painful feelings and hear how God is speaking to us through them.
- By encouraging us to notice the good in each day in order to live in a spirit of gratitude.
- Tell the truth about who we truly are and what we need, rather than who we think we should be.
- Become aware of the people and features of the new environment we find ourselves in and perhaps even discern the Spirit of God at work.

### Step One...

Ask God to bring to your awareness the moment today for which you are **most** grateful.

- If you could relive one moment, which one would it be?
- When were you most able to give and receive love today?
- Ask yourself what was said and done in that moment that made it so good.
- Breathe in the gratitude you felt and receive life again from that moment.

### Step Two

Ask God to bring to your awareness the moment today for which you are **least** grateful.

- When were you least able to give and receive love?
- Ask yourself what was said and done in that moment that made it so difficult.
- Relive the feelings without trying to change or fix it in any way (unless it calls for repentance and reconciliation on your part).
- Take deep breaths and let God's love fill you just as you are.

### Step Three

**Give thanks to God and express your concerns to God** for what you have experienced. If possible, share these two moments with a friend (call, message, Skype or email—best of course, in person).

Also, consider **recording your thoughts in a journal**. When we write down where we have felt closest and furthest from God, we can often read back through our behaviors and patterns and discern the grace of God at work—with gratitude.