

2021



YEARLY EXAMEN

Section 1: General Examination of my Life

1. What are the most important events that happened to me or in me this past year?
2. What are the greatest breakthroughs in any category of my life (physically, emotionally, relationally, vocationally, spiritually with other people) this past year?
3. What has been the greatest struggle in my life this past year?
4. What has been my greatest and deepest loss this past year?
5. What has been the area (health, relationship, future) that has consumed my thinking, attention, and focus this past year?
6. Where have I felt most vulnerable in my life? (What area of your life do you feel; the most naked, susceptible, and exposed?)
7. Where have I most experienced the presence of God this past year and why?
8. In the past 12 months, where have I experienced the greatest sense of consolation (peace, happiness, contentment, shalom, serenity, beauty)?
9. In the past 12 months, what area of my life has given me the most desolation (pre-occupation, distress, sadness, depression, anxiety, fear, brutality, etc.)?
10. What ONE word would tend to sum up this past year?

Section 2: Five Categories of my Life

1. My Physical Health:

- List five words that describe my physical condition and well-being this past year.
- How many hours of sleep can I honestly say I get each night (8 is recommended)?
- What choices have I given attention to regarding my health this past 12 months?
- What specific goals (better blood pressure, weight management, exercise) do I want to achieve in the future 12 months?

2. My Emotional Health

- List five FEELINGS (positive or negative from your perspective) that you believe have dominated your life this past year:
- What were you doing, who were you doing this with, and where were you physically when you believe that you were the HAPPIEST this past year?
- What area of your life gives you the greatest sense of internal stress?
- How do you feel about your overall emotional well-being this past year?

3. My Vocational Health

- List five words which best describe your job/vocation/career:

- This past year, have you lived to work or worked to live?
Circle one or the other.

- Is your job giving you a sense of contentment and satisfaction? Why or why not?

4. My Relational Health

- List the names of people who have been life-giving to you this past year:

- Give a letter grade to your overall sense of having community, a sense of sharing life with a few other people:
A-Excellent B-Very Good C-Average D-Really lacking in friends

- Is your life style and work schedule conducive to having the relationships you feel you want and need? (Explain in a few sentences.)

5. My Spiritual Health

- List five words or phrases that would describe your spiritual health (distant, intimate, excellent, very poor, no time for God):
- How would you describe your prayer life this past year?
- Describe how you are feeling about your church experience?
- What do you feel is lacking in your relationship with God?
- How has your image of God changed or matured in this past year?
- List five words that would describe your image of God:
- How has your relationship with God been challenged this past year?
- What are the three most important spiritual lessons from this past year that you don't want to forget?
- What was your deepest spiritual struggle?

Prayer of Gratitude

End your time of Examen in a prayer of gratitude. Express thanks for all the specific things, events, people, and growth you have experienced or witnessed.

Prayer for the Future Year

Spend some moments asking for God's blessing and guidance for the next twelve months.

My Lord God,
I have no idea where I am going.
I do not see the road ahead of me.
I cannot know for certain where it will end,
Nor do I really know myself,
And the fact that I think I am following your will
Does not mean that I am actually doing so.
But I believe that the desire to please you
Does in fact please you.
And I hope that I have that desire in all that I am doing.
I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire.
And I know that if I do this, you will lead me by the right road,
Though I may know nothing about it.
Therefore I will trust you always.
Though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death,
I will not fear, for you are ever with me,
And you will never leave me to face my perils alone.

Thomas Merton

For Longing

blessed be the longing that brought you here
and quickens your soul with wonder.

may you have the courage to listen to the voice of desire
that disturbs you when you have settled for something safe.

may you have the wisdom to enter generously into your own unease
to discover the new direction your longing wants you to take.

may the forms of your belonging — in love, creativity, and friendship
be equal to the grandeur and the call of your soul.

may the one you long for long for you.

may your dreams gradually reveal the destination of your desire.

may a secret providence guide your thought and nurture your feeling.

may your mind inhabit your life with the sureness
with which your body inhabits the world.

may your heart never be haunted by ghost-structures of old damage.

may you come to accept your longing as divine urgency.

may you know the urgency with which God longs for you.

John O' Donohue