

Sample nightly examen based on the Beatitudes

Individuals may prefer to concentrate on just one Beatitude for a whole week or longer, so as to focus on eliminating a particular fault and acquiring the corresponding virtue.

1. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Did I behave today as if my relationship with God is the most important thing in my life?

Am I overly-pleased with my possessions, status, accomplishments, or talents?

How have I denied my appetites today? What could I have done better?

Did I purchase something I do not have a use for? Why?

Have I over-indulged in sensory pleasures? (food, drink, physical comforts, entertainment)

Did I remember that I am a steward of God's gifts?

When was the last time I helped the poor and needy?

2. "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted."

How have I responded to the sufferings of others today?

What has caused me grief today? Have I taken it to God?

Did I reflect on the sufferings of Christ, especially His patience under trial?

Have I reflected on my sins and shortcomings?

Have I repented and asked God's help?

Did I pray for sinners, including myself, today?

3. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

How have I worked with others today? Was my mind on pleasing God or pleasing myself?

Did I give my opinions with mildness and charity? Was I open to correction?

Am I happy to be a "little one"?

How have I resisted God's grace today?

What can I do better tomorrow?

4. "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied."

How did I make God the center of my life today?

What distanced me from Him?

Did I appreciate God's love and patience, and try to respond to Him?

Was I faithful to my time of solitude with God?

Did I make short recollections throughout the day?

Have I valued the opportunity to attend weekday Mass?

How did I feed myself spiritually today?

How have I helped others to follow Christ?

What can I do better tomorrow?

5. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

How did I practice today the mercy I would like to receive?

How have I been harsh or impatient in thought, word, or gesture?

Did I give others the "benefit of the doubt" today? When did I not do so, and why?

Did I pray for others today, especially for those who irritate me?

Did I reflect on how I irritate others?

Do I ask for the gift of loving as God loves?

What can I do tomorrow to make someone's life a little better?

6. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

What motivated my words and actions today? Did I forget to put pleasing God first?

Did I remember today to frequently turn my thoughts to God?

Did I see God in other people? If not, why was that?

What led me away from God today?

Did I clutter my mind with harmful or useless distractions? (TV, books, websites, video games)

What drew me closer to God today?

How can I stay closer to Him tomorrow?

7. "Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called children of God."

How did I promote peace today?

How did I add to conflicts?

Did I think or speak uncharitably of anyone? Did I gossip?

Did I dwell today on past injuries?

Who can I make peace with in my own life? How?

Do I pray for an end to strife?

Do I pray for the gift of a forgiving heart?

8. "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account." ...

How have I been an example of Christian discipleship today? How have I not?

Did I bear my crosses patiently today and unite my sufferings with Christ?

Do I have the wisdom to know when to speak and when to bide my time? How can I learn that?

Did I lose an opportunity to encourage others in their pursuit of holiness or justice? Why?

Do I pray for those who are persecuted?

Do I pray for the conversion of those who persecute others?

... "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven."

Did I behave today as a person who has confidence in the promises of Jesus?

Did I turn to God for help in anxiety?

Do I want my reward here on earth – praise or recognition for my good deeds?

Did I rejoice today over someone else's goodness? Was I happy to see them praised?

Do I pray for the gift of Hope?