

NIGHTLY EXAMEN FOR HUSBANDS AND WIVES

BY ANGIE @ YELLOW PELICAN / MARRIED LIFE

Here's a short reflection based on what I pray about to examine my day and how I've loved my spouse. When praying with this, it might be helpful to reflect first on the following excerpt from Fr. John Hardon, S.J. in his *Catholic Prayer Book* speaking about particular examens:

"Before applying the particular examen to my own spiritual life, it is well to first ask myself, 'What are the virtues that I know from experience I most need to develop?'

*The reason why this question should first be answered is that no two of us are equally prone to commit the same kind of sins. Nor are we personally always tempted in the same direction. **There is wisdom in first knowing enough about myself to be able to get to the root of my own moral weakness.** Otherwise, I may be ignoring what really needs attention in my spiritual life, and concentrating on what is not so necessary for me, at this time, in my service to God.*

*Moreover, it would be a mistake to suppose that by attending to my moral failings, I am being 'negative' in my pursuit of holiness. On the contrary, in God's providence, **He allows us to fail in those areas in which He especially wants us to grow in virtue.** We can fail in the practice of these virtues either by commission or omission, or by tepidity in not acting as generously as we might in responding to the grace we have received from God."*

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"Set me as a seal upon your heart...for love is strong as death...Its flashes are flashes of fire, a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it." -Song of Songs 8:6-7

- Have I said *I love you* today both in words and actions?
- Do I speak with words that are good, true, lovely, and beautiful? Or do I use harsh, judgemental, and condemning words when speaking to him/her?
- Have I complained about my spouse (interiorly or aloud)?

- Do I share with others information about my spouse that isn't meant to be shared? Specifically failings or faults?
- Do I give him/her the benefit of the doubt or do I always assume the worst?
- Do I offer loving patience when my spouse is having a difficult time or do I lose patience and lack compassion?
- Am I empathetic with my spouse's sufferings?
- Have I held on to small hurts or harbored resentment or anger?
- Do I choose to smile and bring peace to the home even when I don't feel like it?
- Am I a reflection of the unconditional love of God to my spouse?
- Did I use my spouse in any way today as a means to an end?
- Have I loved him/her as a child of God with intrinsic value?
- Have I worked to make life more bearable for my spouse today?
- Have I prayed with and for him/her?
- Have I forgiven wrongs immediately or do I hold on to them?
- Have I taken myself or my spouse too seriously and failed to be a source of joy?
- Have I read, listened to, prayed about, or watched at least one small thing today to build up the relationship?
- Did I do any acts of love or service for my spouse today?
- Was I pure in thought while away from my spouse?
- Have I kept unhealthy friendships or allowed others to take priority over my married relationship?
- Have I supported or watched any shows or media that devalue Christian marriage?
- Do I say I'm sorry and admit wrongs openly?
- Do I blame my spouse for my own failings?
- Do I cling to pride when my spouse brings up grievances or do I bear wrongs patiently?
- Have I honored my spouse with my presence and time today?
- Has gambling, video games, novels, movies, or other created things taken precedence over my marriage today?
- Do I love as Christ would have me love?

Disclaimer: This is a personal spirituality post and should be taken as such. If you have questions about your marriage, are in an abusive relationship, or need help with specific situations, please seek counsel from a trusted priest, spiritual director, or counselor.