

An Examen of our Pandemic Year

It does not always feel good to reflect on challenging times, suffering, or loss, but our Ignatian tradition constantly reminds us that reflection is a practice that can impact our present. This has been a peculiar year, and so taking some moments, one year from when the World Health Organization declared Covid-19 to be a global pandemic, may give you insight on how to keep moving forward.

PREPARE & GIVE THANKS

Make actual room—set up your physical space, make time on your calendar.

Get supplies—writing supplies, your phone, music, whatever you need.

Pray: God of love and God beyond time, give me the clarity of mind and strength of heart to reflect on the last year. Give me wisdom to see my life as you do. Thank you for your presence through it all.

If you don't pray, use a favorite centering technique, like focusing on your breath.

REVIEW

With gratitude, consider the whole last twelve months. Note your feelings. When were you drawing closer to God or to the good? When were you moving farther away from God or the good?

Where were you on Spring Break or in early March of 2020?

How did the transition unfold?

Where and with whom did you spend the earliest locked down weeks?

How did the school year end?

What was your summer like?

How has the struggle for racial justice impacted you?

How and when did you return to campus last fall?

Walk through the ups and downs of last semester.

How did the election impact you?

How did you spend the long winter break?

How is this semester so far?

What are you grieving?

What has brought you joy?

LOOK DEEPER

Having reviewed all that time, look back again, with honesty.

Pray: Sovereign God, remind me with grace what I could not have changed, but challenge me with love to see how I might acknowledge and repair what wrong I have done.

Ask yourself

What did you learn?

What would you have done differently knowing what you know now?

When did you operate out of fear?

*When did you operate out of love?
Whom have you hurt?*

LOOK AHEAD

The pandemic is not over, whether you have had Covid or not, whether you have been vaccinated or not. The struggle for racial justice is certainly not over.

Ask yourself

What do you need to sustain myself in the year ahead?

Ask God for that, or if you don't pray, consider how those needs might be met.

Ask yourself

What spirit do you want to bring with you into the next year?

Pray

God of all people, remind me that it is not I alone who has suffered in the last year. Our world has been rocked by many crises. As I learn from where I have been, as I take stock of how far I have come, challenge me to also bring others along with me. Show me a way forward that walks in the knowledge of our intertwined futures. Remind me of the kinship of all people every day. Nourish my soul with your Spirit and open my eyes to your Movement around me. Amen.

If you don't pray, articulate the values you seek to live by in the days to come, and close with a final centering moment.

Rev. Abby King-Kaiser

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