**Family Examen**

**Introduction**

The examen is a prayer practice that was developed by Ignatius of Loyola in the 16th Century. It helps us to develop gratitude and think about where God is experienced in everyday life. It can be a wonderful practice for parents or carers to use with children at the end of the day. Done regularly, it can help them to develop reflective skills, to share their feelings, to talk about worries and to connect faith to everyday life. For younger children it needs to be short and simple, as appropriate to their age.

**Exercise**

Light a candle and remember God’s presence with us.

An adult could say:

“Remember that God loves us and is with us.

Let’s be quiet for a moment and think about what has happened during the day.”

**Look back over your day:**

Were you at home? Did you go out? Where did you go and what did you do?

**Questions:**

What made you happy today? What did you find difficult or made you sad?

Other ways of asking these questions could be:

What was the best part of your day? What was the worst part of your day?

What moment today are you most grateful for? What moment are you least grateful for?

Is there anything you are worried about or that you need?

Each person is given time to speak in turn and listens when others are sharing their thoughts.

**Closing Prayer**

A simple prayer is offered, by an adult or child, giving thanks for the good things of the day, thanking God for being with us when things are hard or sad and offering the day ahead to God.

Your prayer might look something like this:

God of love, we thank you for………..

We know that you were with us, even when we felt sad or when ………..

Be with us tomorrow... (naming whatever is happening or any concerns for the next day).

Keep us in your loving care and give us the gift of sleep this night. Amen

**[Adapted from ‘Sleeping with Bread’ – Dennis Linn / Sheila Fabricant Linn, Matthew Linn]**