

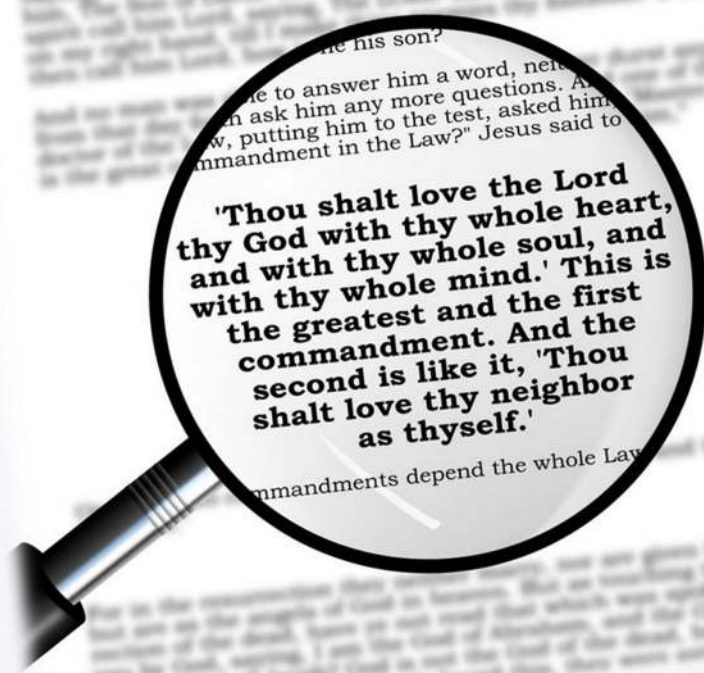
Compassion helps us love ourselves. It means showing gentleness and kindness to ourselves in heart, soul, mind, and strength. When we pay attention to and honor our own selves, we experience how God sees and loves us. Through Jesus' teaching of an ancient Hebrew commandment, we learn self-love is an essential form of compassion. We will be practicing this compassion through word and body, seeing how doing so connects our own self to God's Spirit within.

*Gentle One,
Thank you for your Spirit
within us
who guides, encourages, and
strengthens us.
Help us see ourselves through
your eyes -
with love, kindness, and deep joy.
May we love our bodies,
treasure our hearts,
and celebrate our spirits.
Amen.*

Session

3

for Myself

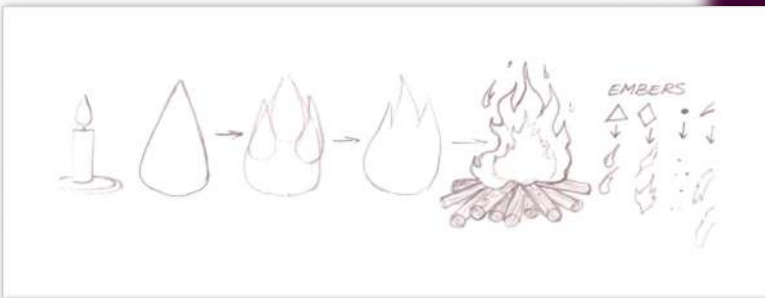


The Campfire

Mark 12:28-34

Look it up in your own Bible or use the one

included in this packet on the next page. The **1st Stone** is included below as a way to read and sit with this particular story!



1 LECTIO DIVINA

With others or by yourself, use the Lectio Divina to explore the text.. *EXPECT to hear God!*

- Step 1 ~ Read the Mark 12:28-34 a couple of times. Another option is to read different versions of the text. If there are more than one of you, Invite others to read different versions of the text.
- Step 2 ~ Sit quietly with the text for 5-10 minutes (called reflecting or ruminating, it means to “chew on” or “digest”). Pay attention to where your mind goes, wanders or is taken. Highlight words that stand out to you.
- Step 3 ~ Take some time to share with the others in your group what you are thinking ~ if you are by yourself, JOURNAL your thoughts and ideas.
- Step 4 ~ Pray silently, on paper or together about what you have heard or learned.
- Step 5 ~ End by sitting quietly in God’s presence.



Remember, the goal of the Lectio Divina is simply to spend time with God and God’s story and word.

The Greatest Commandment

²⁸ One of the scribes came near and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, he asked him, “Which commandment is the first of all?” ²⁹ Jesus answered, “The first is, ‘Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; ³⁰ you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ ³¹ The second is this, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.” ³² Then the scribe said to him, “You are right, Teacher; you have truly said that ‘he is one, and besides him there is no other’; ³³ and ‘to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength,’ and ‘to love one’s neighbor as oneself,’—this is much more important than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.” ³⁴ When Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” After that no one dared to ask him any question.

2

bible journaling

Keeping a **bible journal** helps you to pause and really process the word of God as you read. ... **Bible journaling** improves your memory and helps you remember **bible** verses better as you think about what they mean and how they apply to your daily life.

REMEMBER this is supposed to be fun! You have been provided a "journaling page".

The page preceding this, is like a page in the NRSV Bible.



What should I do
this time...

Take notes

Highlight stuff that "stands out"

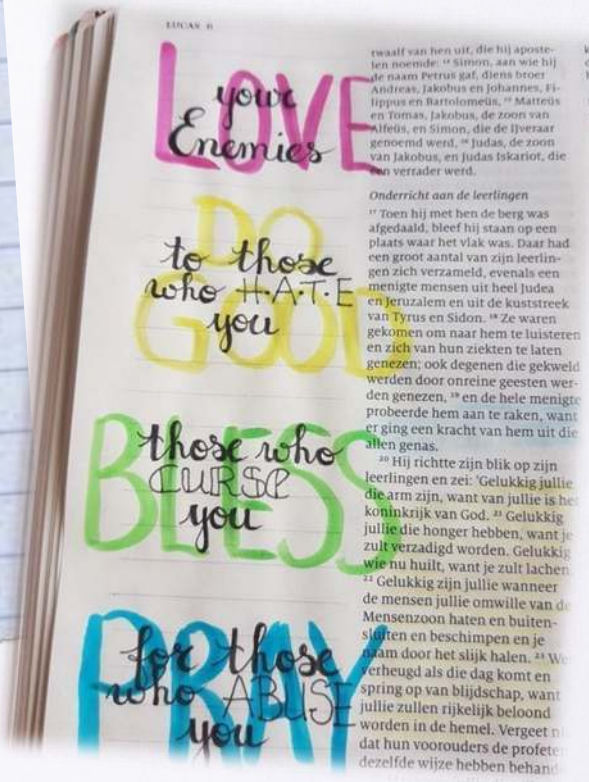
Pick three words you like and "draw" them or
write them large

Draw or color



Write all the commandments...

Use markers or colored pencils



3

Coloring for Myself



Zone out and let your worries melt away.

Listen for God in the serenity around you and
give thanks for the time you have to

just BE with God for a while.



GUIDES, ENCOURAGES, AND
STRENGTHENS US.

HELP US SEE
OURSELVES

THROUGH YOUR EYES ~

with

Love

KINDNESS,

A DEEP
JOY.

MAY WE

LOVE
OUR BODIES

TREASURE
OUR HEARTS

Celebrate
OUR SPIRITS

AMEN



questions & wonderings

- What are your first impressions of this story?
- What do you remember about learning the Ten Commandments?
- What things do you do now that you consider to be self care?
- What does it mean to love ourselves?
- Why is this important?
- How does having love for ourselves help us love others? To love God?
- What gets in the way of loving ourselves?
- When you are having a hard time loving yourself, what can you do to show compassion to yourself?
- How can we help others love themselves?

- Questions were often asked of Jesus to “trap” him. Why do you imagine religious leaders were so threatened by Jesus?
- What does Jesus mean when he tells the scribe that he is “not far from the kingdom of God”?
- What does that statement of Jesus’ mean for us?

Important Background Information: It is important to remember that for the Israelites, the Ten Commandments were the culmination of all the law. They provided the foundation for their very way of life. They were a very real gift of God. Did you know that there were two sets of the Commandments? Check out the story in Exodus 32:15-20 and Exodus 34.

We are pondering what it means to care for ourselves, and the challenge it presents. More often than not, we are given the message that caring for ourselves or thinking of ourselves is selfish. We worry that others might think we don't care enough for them. But it's so vital to have love and compassion for ourselves, that God includes it as part of the greatest commandment and what we need to do to carry out God's Kingdom. The story highlights something simple, yet often forgotten: a commandment to love God, love our neighbors, and yes, love ourselves.



5

Loving Self

Challenge yourself to some self love work

by completing the sentences below...

- I like who I am because...
- I'm super at...
- I feel good about my...
- I feel strong when...
- My friends think I have an awesome...
- Somewhere I feel happy is...
- I mean a lot to...
- Others reckon I'm a great...
- I think I'm a pretty good...
- Something I really enjoy is...
- I really admire myself for...
- My future goals are...
- I know I can achieve them because I'm...
- I'm naturally gifted at...
- Others often praise my...
- It makes me feel good when I...
- I have succeeded before at...
- Something that makes me laugh is...
- The characteristics I am most proud of in myself are...
- My greatest talent is...
- I am at peace when...



**BE BOLD. TAKE
RISKS. LIVE LIFE
FREELY. LEAD BY
EXAMPLE. TRUST
YOUR GUT. SAY
WHAT YOU FEEL.
MEAN WHAT YOU SAY.
EXPRESS GRATITUDE.
BELIEVE IN YOUR
POWER. EXCEED
YOUR EXPECTATIONS.
DANCE THE NIGHT
AWAY. SKIP DOWN
THE STREET.
DON'T TAKE NO FOR
AN ANSWER. BE
YOUR BEST SELF.
DON'T LOOK BACK.**



service

passing it on...



Campfire Kisses...

Compliments are so fun - when we get them and when we give them! So let's pass a few a long! You are going to need some scissors, markers, aluminum foil & paper!

1. Cut out the "chocolate" kisses on the next page.
2. Write a friends name on the tag
3. Write what you love, appreciate or admire about that person.
4. When you are done, wrap aluminum foil around the kiss.
5. Put it in an envelope and send it on, or attach it to a bag of the "real deals" and deliver it to a doorstep!
6. Happy readings and good feelings are guaranteed all the way around!
7. Finish the evening with a sweet treat for yourself.

HERSHEY'S

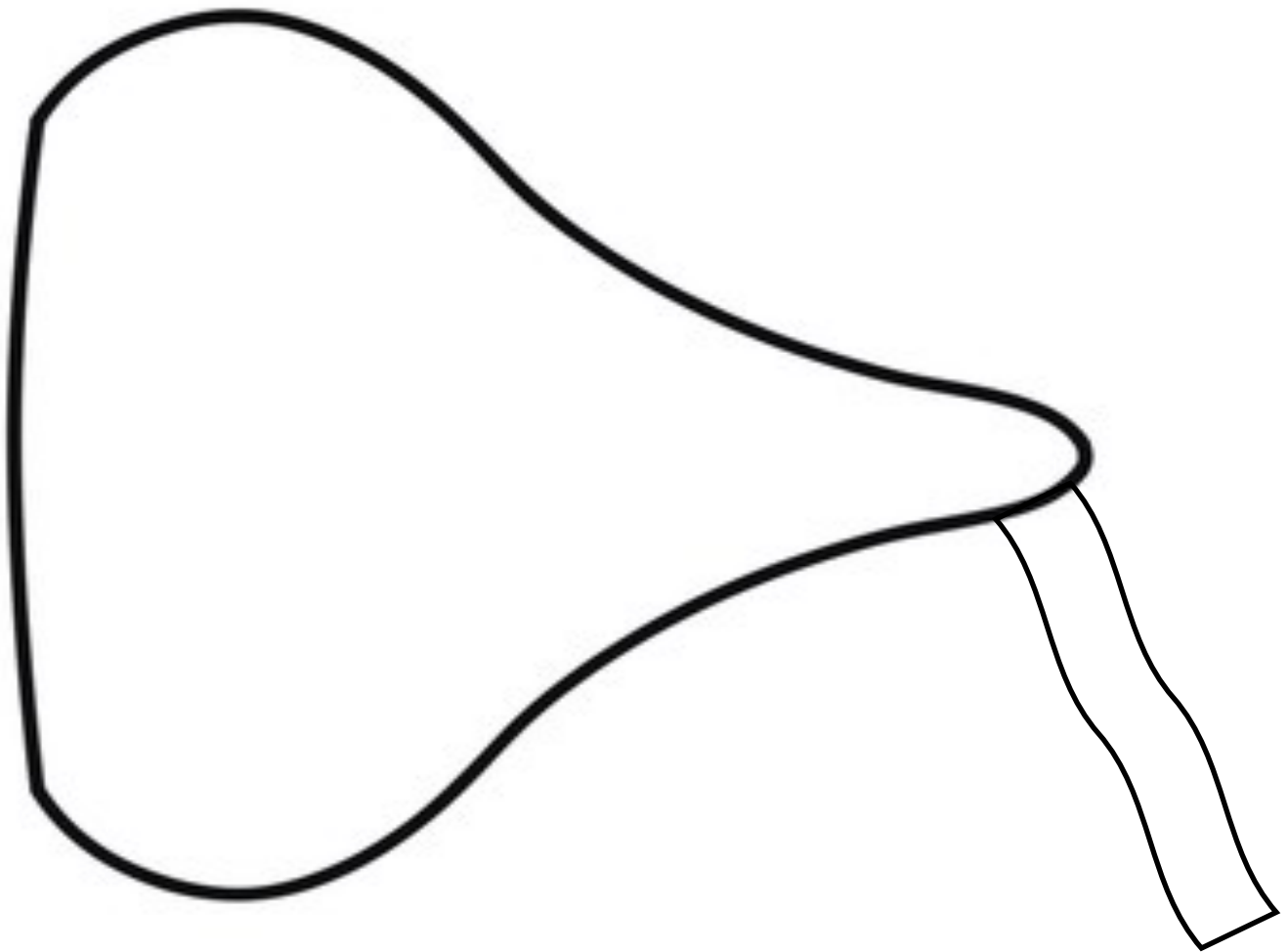
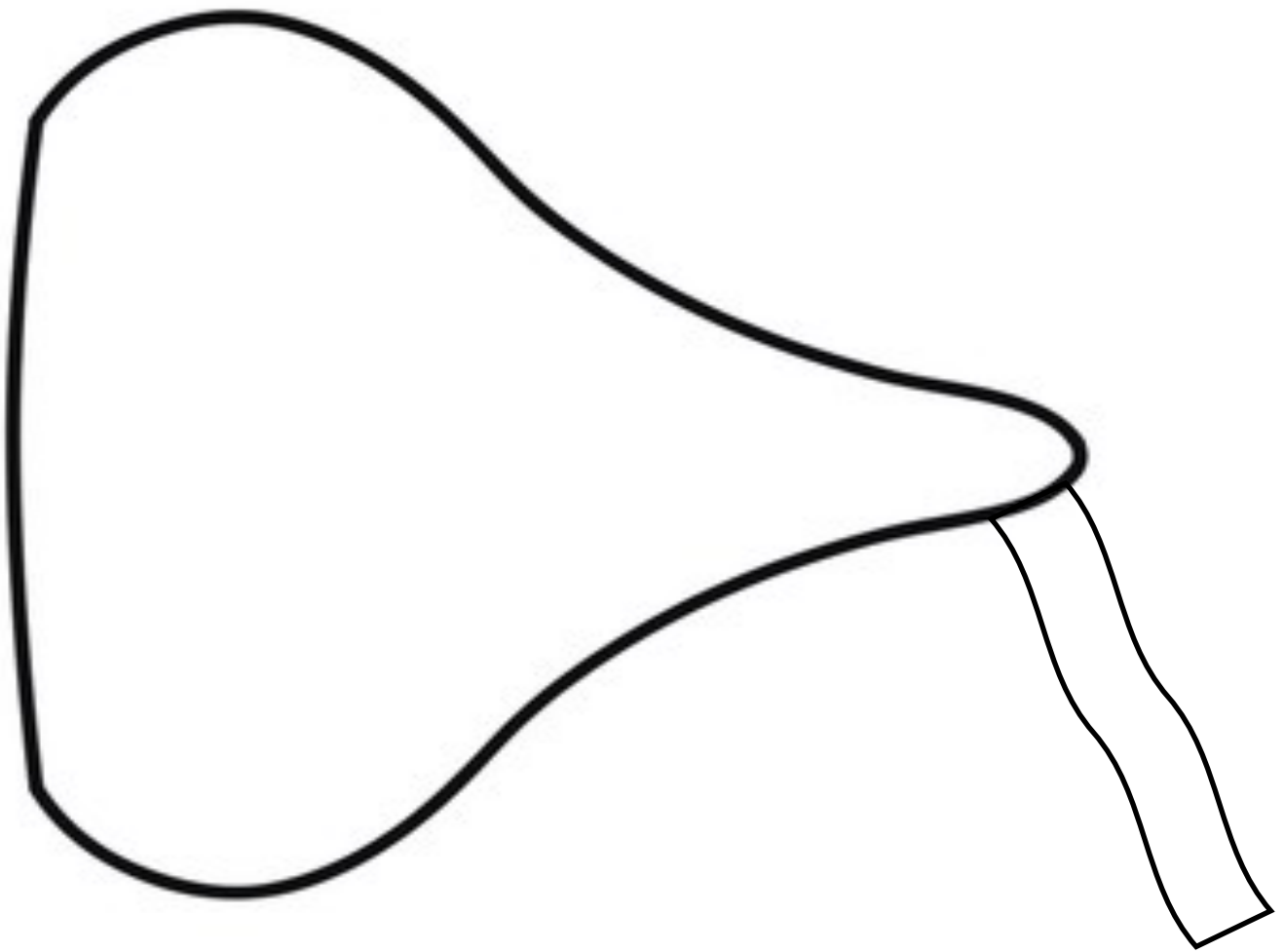
Go to the next page!

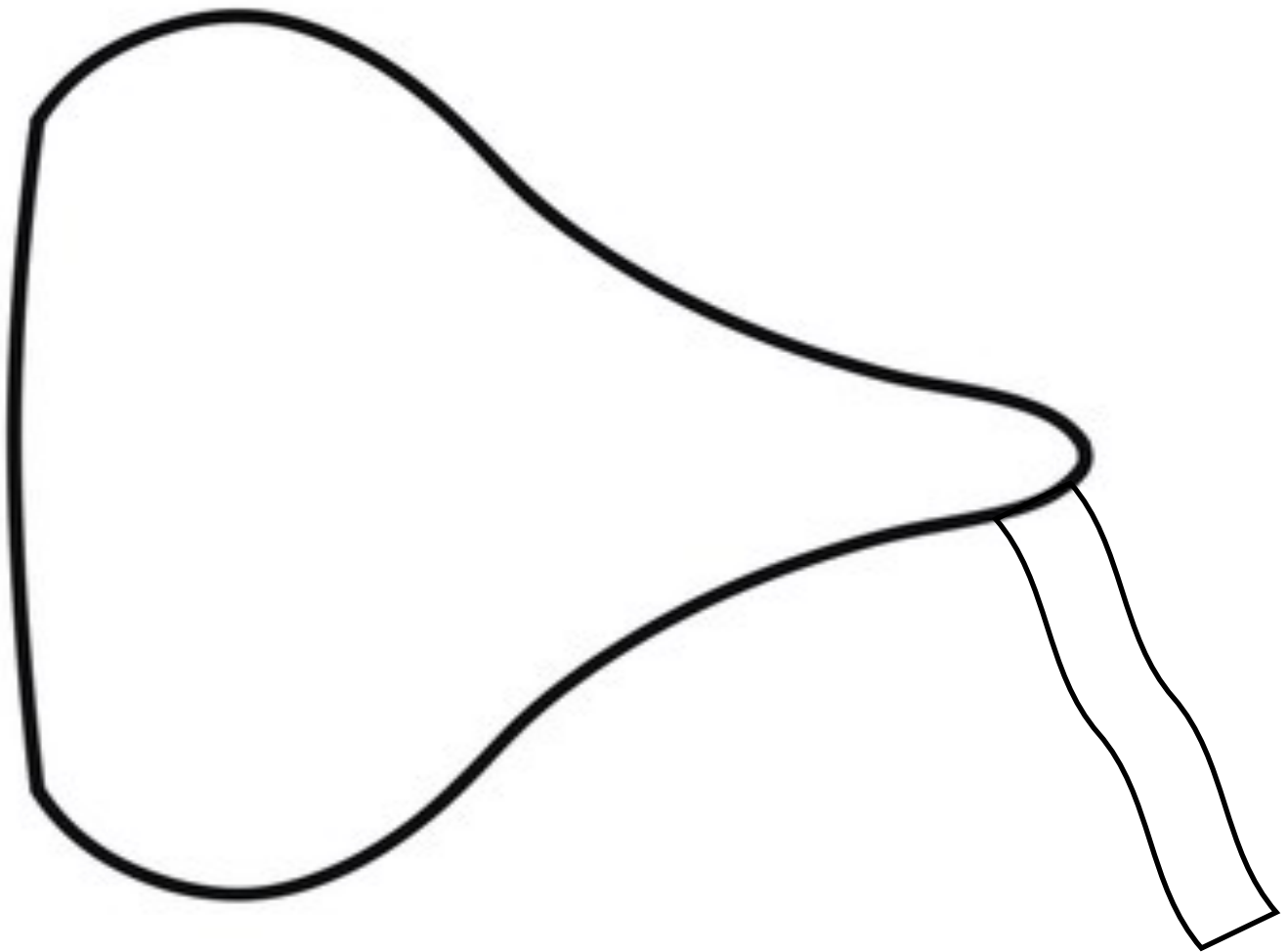
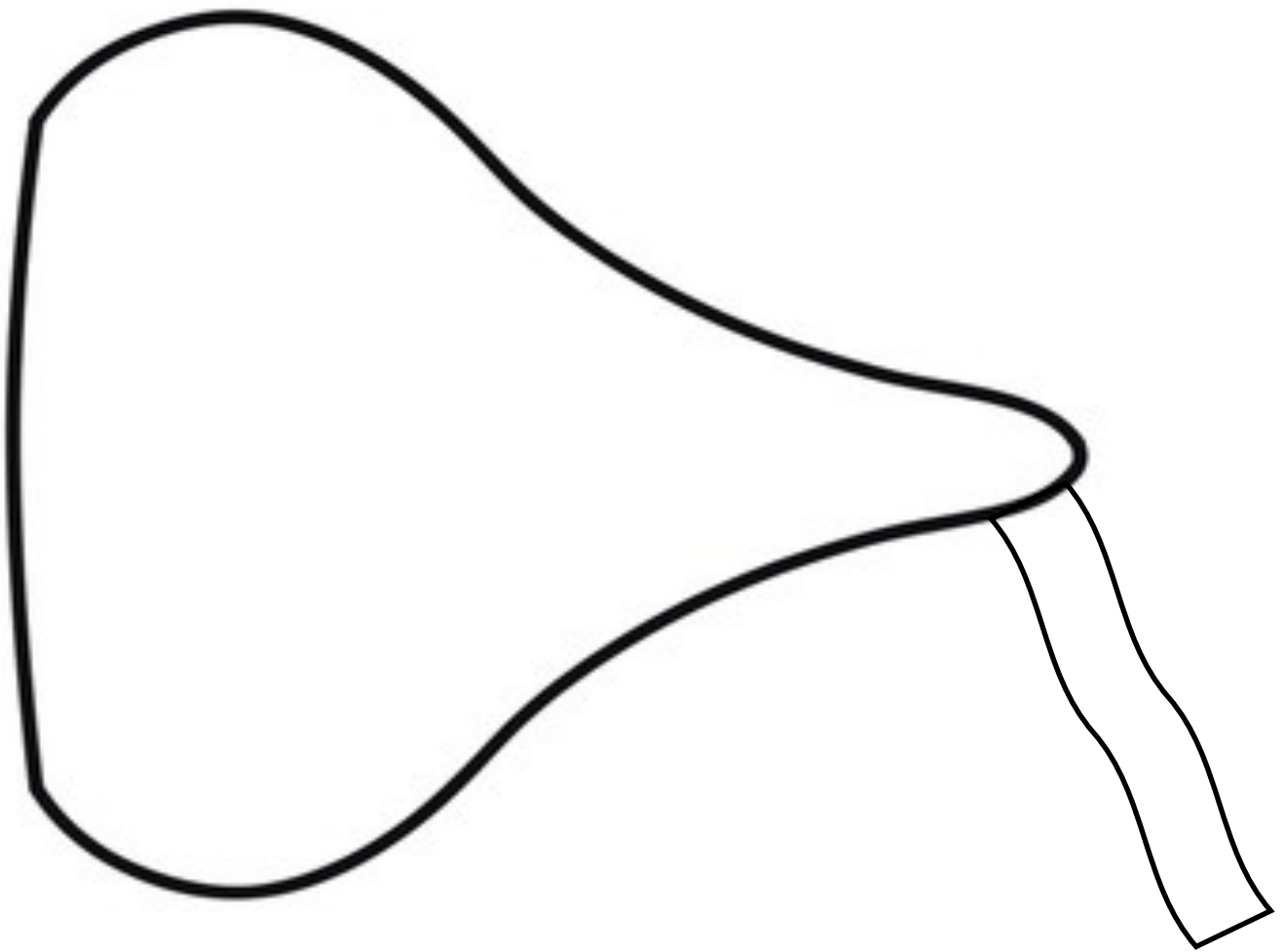


The fruit of love
is service,
which is
compassion
in action

Mother Teresa







the Examen

The Daily Examen is a technique of prayerful reflection on the events of the day in order to detect God's presence and discern his direction for us. The Examen is an ancient practice in the Church that can help us see God's hand at work in our whole experience.

The method that's presented here is adapted from a technique described by Ignatius Loyola in his *Spiritual Exercises*.

St. Ignatius thought that the Examen was a gift that came directly from God, and that God wanted it to be shared as widely as possible.

The Examen can also be called Blessings & Bruises and can be done daily or whenever you feel the urge. They are a great "around the campfire" conversation and way of connecting! You can even journal or draw them.

consolation

1. the act of consoling; comfort; solace
2. the state of being consoled
3. something or someone that consoles

Other words like consolation:

relief • help • support • cheer

*Where have you felt the presence of God?
What has brought you joy this day?
Where have you found peace?
What or who has blessed you today?*



desolation

1. an act or instance of desolating
2. The state of being desolated
3. devastation or ruin
4. deprivation of companionship; loneliness
5. sorrow; grief; woe

Where you have felt an absence of God?

Have there been moments of unrest?

Do you feel "bruised"?



8 yoga



Yoga began as a spiritual practice in ancient India and spirit into oneness with the Divine. This movement, with people of all faiths and belief systems finding nourishment - a powerful reminder of how we learn from one another. When we say, "I will not make lists while seeking peace," we connect with siblings across the world.

Breathing is the heart of yoga, and breath itself is a physical way to receive and release. As we reflect on the ways compassion makes us release, accept, and welcome, we will focus on breath alongside some basic yoga poses.



Sit on the floor, legs crossed. Take three deep, slow breaths together, with one person saying the following during inhales and exhales:

INHALE:	<i>I listen to myself...</i>	EXHALE:	<i>...with kindness.</i>
INHALE:	<i>I listen to myself...</i>	EXHALE:	<i>...with kindness.</i>
INHALE:	<i>I listen to myself...</i>	EXHALE:	<i>...with kindness.</i>



Slowly rise, stand in mountain pose (Tadasana), arms straight and strong by your side, feet firmly planted on the ground. One big breath in, one big breath out. One person can say:

"In mountain pose, we feel our strength. We are unshakeable."



Reach your arms up to the sky, then back down as you bend into forward fold (Uttanasana), hands on the ground or resting on your shins (wherever is comfortable). Take a breath in and raise your hands to your knees, head looking forward. One person can say:

"We prepare and focus our eyes forward."

Take a breath, and put your hands back to the ground in forward fold.



From forward fold, roll your spine up slowly, raise your hands above you, and lower your hips into chair pose (Utkatasana). “Sit” as low as you can, taking deep breaths. One person can say:

“We strengthen and stretch when we trust ourselves.”



Take one more deep breath, lower your arms to your side and stand up tall in mountain pose. Repeat this sequence with chair pose one more time. This time, one person can say:

“The more we trust ourselves, the stronger we grow.”

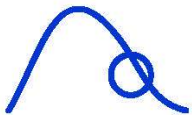


From mountain pose, jump both legs back (or step one leg, then the other) into plank pose (Phalakasana). Lower further to the ground.

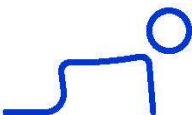


Straighten your arms and stretch your upper body, head toward the sky, into upward facing dog (Urdhva Mukha Svanasana). Hold this pose while breathing in and out a few times. One person can say:

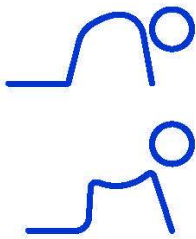
“We face the sun and welcome what this day holds for us.”



From upward facing dog, lower your upper body back to the ground, and push your hips and legs up into downward facing dog (Adho Mukha Svanasana).

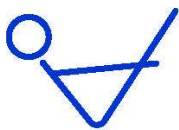


Take one big breath in, then exhale and lower your knees to table top pose (Bharmanasana).



From here, move into cat/cow pose. Breathe in, tuck your chin toward your chest, and arch your back. Breathe out, lift your head, and push your tailbone up. Repeat this three to four more times. One person can say:

"In cat/cow pose, we need times to draw inward and times to stretch outward. Everything we feel is welcome."



After finishing cat/cow, sit back on your heels, then roll your legs/feet to be out in front of you. Slowly bring your knees up, then straighten your legs into boat pose (Navasana). If you feel comfortable, take your hands off the ground and extend them in front of you, next to your legs, and hold. One person can say:

"Practicing balance is one way to be kind to ourselves."

You can lower your legs for a brief break, then extend back into boat pose one or two more times.



Following boat pose, roll slowly back to fully lie down. Breathe in, bringing knees into the chest and gripping each foot - right hand holding the outside of the right foot, left hand holding the outside of the left foot, in happy baby pose (Ananda Balasana). Try gentle rocking, side to side, if you'd like. One person can say:

"I celebrate being God's child and love myself."

From happy baby, stretch your legs back up, roll to your side, and move into a seated, cross-legged position.



Reach your arms up to the sky, then draw them into prayer form, right by your heart. End with a bow of your head and hands as you share the foundational yoga greeting - "Namaste" - a call to see one another the way God sees each of us. One interpretation of the phrase is, "The Light in me sees the Light in you."

I listen to myself with kindness