

Philippine's Journey  
continues through us.

# examining our hearts

“We cannot change our character, it is true, as easily as we change our clothes. It is the work of a lifetime. It is achieved with the grace of God and constant effort.” - Saint Madeleine Sophie

We listen to the words of invitation to all members of the Sacred Heart Kinship from Barbara Dawson, RSCJ, Superior General of the Society of the Sacred Heart, from her letter on the Feast of the Sacred Heart, 2020:

“This time of a common, global trauma is also an opportunity to assess what is important and what is not. It is a time to pay attention to what we are hearing among ourselves and from the people around us, to be humble enough to learn. **Perhaps now is the time to re-examine our own hearts and ask ourselves again how we too are complicit in the systemic sins of our world.** To acknowledge our complicity in systems that hurt, diminish, and disregard others and our earth is a sign of our capacity to respond to God’s call in a new way – that of strength in weakness.

Such awareness of our personal, communal, congregational, institutional complicity in unjust systems humbles us. It invites us to be more open to the transforming work of the Spirit in us and in the world. **We are called to listen and to be reconciled, to confront our own sins of racism, classism and sexism, and from this profound awareness of our weakness and complicity to take action with others to advocate for structural and systemic change.**

*(Artisans of Hope, p. 13)*

We are both a humble and important part of creation. It is the time to listen in silence, to become more human and to act in the radical style of Jesus, to be in SOLIDARITY with God’s plan and God’s people, to fulfill Jesus’ hope that they may all be one as you, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in US, so that the world may believe that You sent Me. (John 17:21)

Let us now turn our hearts and minds inward, as Sheila Hammond, RSCJ, Provincial of the United States – Canada Province, leads us in an Examen of our lives.



## Introduction to 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 God's 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.

In this week of honoring the contributions and challenges of Philippine Duchesne, we offer two "tools" to use the examen on a daily basis. The first, the outline of the Examen as used by the community of Newton Country Day School of the Sacred Heart and the second an Examen on the ways that we, like Philippine, participate in "othering" -- not standing up for the protection of the human dignity of each person.

With unflinching honesty we stand in the presence of God and "Examen" our lives in the last 24 hours with a fearless inventory that leads us to right relationship with God, one another and our call to act as God acts.



## The Examen as a Daily Practice

I take a moment to let my mind and body be truly calm and recognize that God is with me, here and now, and wherever I am.

- I ask God to help me be truly honest with myself as I pray now to be open to whatever God might show me about my attitudes and actions towards people who are different from me?
- Looking back over the last 24 hours, when did I celebrate the gift of difference, the gift of diversity, the gift of inclusion? Knowing that these moments are a gift of God's love, let me focus on them for a moment.
- During the same 24 hours, did I "other" any person? If I did, why and how? Did I fail to respect the innate human dignity of another person? Did I cut someone off? Has this awareness awakened in me a sense of contrition, a sense of sorrow for the hurt my action(s) caused?
- As I look forward, what actions will I commit to? What do I need from God to follow through on this decision?
- How might the Examen help us recognize the innate dignity in each person?
- How can our hearts become more sensitive to the impact our actions have on others?
- What are we being called to today?