

Diocese of St. Petersburg Diaconate
Formation [Internship](#) Program
Examen, Journal, and Reflection Paper

It is strongly recommended that you keep a journal during your internship to help process the experience with your supervisor and prepare for your final reflection paper. Additionally, you might consider using the Examen in maintaining this journal.

The Examen is a daily spiritual practice first put forward by St. Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Society of Jesus or Jesuits. As with all prayer, remind yourself that you are in God's presence, and ask God to help you with your prayer. The Examen consists of five parts:

1. **Gratitude:** Recall anything from the day you are incredibly grateful and give thanks.
2. **Review:** Recall the events of the day, from start to finish and in detail, noticing where you felt God's presence and where you accepted or turned away from any invitations to grow in love.
3. **Sorrow:** Recall any actions or dispositions you regret
4. **Forgiveness:** Ask God's forgiveness. Decide if you need to reconcile with anyone you may have hurt.
5. **Grace:** Ask God for the grace you need for the next day and an ability to see God's presence more clearly

For your internship, keeping this type of journal in the format of this five-step prayer will be invaluable in personal reflections and the reflection paper. It cannot be emphasized enough that the reflection paper should **not** be a diary of entries. Instead, the reflection paper should be a narrative integration of your journal.

The journal will be the building block for your reflection paper. However, the journal should **not** be forwarded to the Formation Team. If you complete the journal described above, it will likely contain some critical and deeply personal insights. Deep personal reflections would be best discussed with your spiritual advisor or confessor.

Instead, in developing the reflection paper, you might review your journal entries. It is helpful to ask yourself how you felt at the time of each incident. Was I scared? Bored? Excited? Sad? Comforted? Angry? Confused? Ask what these moments and feelings tell you about yourself in ministry.

The Reflection Paper

Once you have the "building blocks" with the assistance of the Examen and Journal, it will be time for you to write your Reflection Paper. Per the Aspirant & Candidate Internship Handbook, the paper should be between 10 and 15 pages long. Reflection is a primary mechanism the formation team uses to evaluate your internship.