

## **Spiritual Practice: Examen - Questions for Observing a Local Stream:**

Background: The following reflection draws upon an ancient Christian practice (from St. Ignatius of Loyola's Spiritual Exercises) called Examen: A daily practice used by Christians to reflect on their day with this question. "Where is / was God in this?"

1. Place yourself in God's presence. Give thanks for God's great love for you.
2. Pray for the grace to understand how God is acting in your life.
3. Review your day — recall specific moments and your feelings at the time.
4. Reflect on what you did, said, or thought in those instances. Were you drawing closer to God, or further away?
5. Look toward tomorrow — think of how you might collaborate more effectively with God's plan. Be specific, and conclude with the Lord's Prayer.

## **Adaptation for Observing a Local Stream:**

As we observe the natural world - a stream, a forest, any landscape - and our human impact upon it, we can ask ourselves these questions (with a pause between for quiet reflection):

1. What do I see and where do I see or how do I experience God in this?
2. Where or how does it seem that God is absent or that God's healing is needed? (e.g. brokenness or degradation in the environment that calls for restoration)
3. How can I contribute to God's plan for this place?