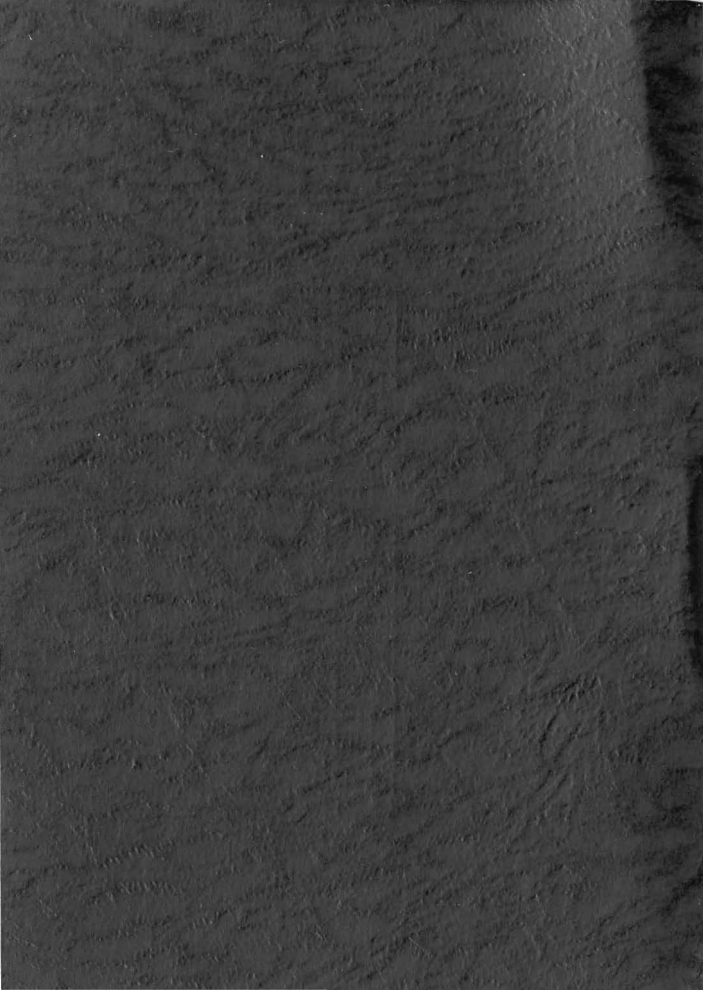


Lamm, William R.  
Particular Examen  
ADT 4787

# PARTICULAR EXAMEN





# Particular Examen

Rev. William R. Lamm, S.M., S.T.L.

To  
Rt. Rev. Msgr. Reynold Hillenbrand  
with the cordial homage  
of the author  
William R. Lamm, S.M.

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## Foreword

IT IS not easy for religious to make their particular examen day after day. The distractions, cares, and fatigues of the classroom, of the hospital ward, of other apostolic labors are partly the cause of the difficulty. But the principal cause is the fact that earnest effort to make particular examen too often reduces itself to a mere search for *faults*, for faults that usually are not sins, at least not serious sins, against some particular virtue. There is nothing very interesting in doing that, day after day, from ten to fifteen minutes. It can be and is very boresome, even disheartening. Moreover, to check on our faults, to find their cause and a definite way of really overcoming them, makes particular examen a burden for many of us. With the hope of making this important exercise more easy and profitable, the suggestions contained in this booklet are offered.

The essential point is to talk things over with

Christ, to see ourselves with His eyes, to make the examen not alone but always with Him, to listen to Him, to plan, to decide, and resolve with Him, finding out the last "why" of our failings and defects or success, and then the "how" of doing better. It is so much more easy to talk things over with someone; so much more safe to get suggestions and advice from someone who knows; so much more encouraging to know that someone understands, than to depend upon ourselves alone. It means much and is so effective to give an account, an exact account to someone who knows us through and through. To unburden ourselves to someone, even about our faults, is very profitable, and is the greatest help that we can have in trying to fulfill our obligations, and in keeping us from self-deception. And that Someone should be our Lord, first of all.

Some religious have been taught to count their faults, and to record them with some formal resolution in writing. If this is a help and is done together with Christ, it should be continued.

Only fourteen subjects and a special examen

for "Retreat" are offered in this first little booklet. The subjects treat of the essential obligations, virtues, and efforts common to all religious. It is hoped that the few thoughts suggested will in turn suggest others to be talked over with our Lord, and that each person who uses this booklet will add questions or thoughts that will suit his or her particular needs. We are much alike, and yet very different in our spiritual experiences and training, in temperament, in fidelity to grace. Many of the thoughts and especially the method here suggested can be applied to other subjects.

It may be profitable to meditate on the following prayer of Newman at the beginning of the particular examen: "How awful is the prospect of finding myself in the presence of my Judge! Yet, O Lord, I would not that Thou shouldst not know me. It is my greatest stay to know that Thou readest my heart. O give me more of that open-hearted sincerity which I have desired. Keep me ever from being afraid of Thy eye, from the inward consciousness that I am not honestly trying to please Thee."

May we learn to open our hearts to Him completely, being glad that He sees us as we are, and by being in His company often learn to know ourselves as He knows us.

W. R. L.

St. Mary's University,  
San Antonio, Texas,  
May 2, 1940.



## Trusting God

TRUSTING You, Good Master, in order to be like You —

You trusted Your Father completely . . . unquestioningly . . . and yet I find it so hard to trust You

— You are Wisdom

— You are Love

What more could I want.

Trusting You as Mary trusted You . . . in every detail of her life.

Trusting You in order to please You.

I conform my will to the will of others in order to please them . . . or because I fear that I might displease them — yielding to human respect

— fear of ridicule

— letting myself be led into sin.

I take their word and act upon it.

But when it comes to trusting You, I draw back. . . . What is the matter with me?

Trusting You in order to overcome myself  
— my selfishness  
— my self-will.

Trusting my own views, plans, and ways of doing things . . . even perhaps telling You how to run Your world.

Trusting You in order to win more souls for You.

I am doing Your work, and You know the *whole plan*, what is best for each soul. And I would try to tell You what to do. You let me help You in Your magnificent work.

Trusting You in my work.

Taking the bitter with the sweet  
— the heartaches with the joys.  
Following Your plan, not mine.  
Pleading with You not to let me spoil Your work . . . not to stand in Your way.

Trusting You in the physical condition in which I must work.

Trusting You in Your choice of those over

whom You have given me charge this year.

Oh, if I could only see into the future, how differently I would treat others . . . how I would keep myself from acting the fool in my preference for this one or my aversion toward that one.

Even though I do not accomplish much for these charges with whom I am actually working, why can't I realize that my wholehearted efforts for them may be benefiting some very elect souls elsewhere?

Trusting You in Your selection of my collaborators this year . . . knowing that I can turn *all* things to good, if I but love and trust You.

Good Master, give me a bit of common sense!

Grant that I may trust You completely, absolutely, always!

# Generosity

BEING generous in order to be like You.

You came down from heaven and shed every drop of Your Precious Blood for me.

You have been wonderfully good to me in so many ways . . . and then I would refuse You

—be stingy with You

—“drawing the line.”

Being generous in order to please You

I never hesitate to take endless pains to please other people . . . but when it comes to You . . . why?

and You love a cheerful giver.

Being generous in order to overcome selfishness—in order to be more thoughtful of You and others.

Being generous in order to do more good for souls . . . “Spending myself and being spent” for them . . . from love of You, my Lord.

Being generous in order to know myself better.  
How self-denial brings out my smallness . . .  
my “secret” attachments.

Being generous in my prayers

— preparing them

— really praying . . . not only for myself  
but also for others

— thanking You

— visiting You.

Being generous in my work

— doing my given work well, even if I don't  
like it

— volunteering for other things.

Being generous in mortification

— regular

— systematic

— out of love.

Keeping the Rule

— the whole Rule

— out of love . . . and not for other motives.

“To refuse You nothing, my Lord, please.”

# Mortification

DENYING myself in order to be like You . . .  
and Mother Mary . . . to follow You.

You were often hungry . . . thirsty . . . tired  
. . . had no place to lay Your Sacred Head.

And I would seek delicacies

- tasty or cold drinks
- comfortable chairs.

Denying myself a drink of water

- making myself wait a few minutes
- not eating between meals when unnecessary.

Keeping superfluous things . . . clothes . . .  
trinkets

- keeping silence
- guarding my eyes
- kneeling instead of sitting at prayers.

Doing this regularly . . . systematically

- out of love
- in a spirit of penance for myself and the world.

Really proving my earnestness in following You  
by my self-denial.

# Patience

BEING patient in order to be like You.

They scourged You

—mocked You

—insulted You

—crucified You

and You bore it with patience.

And I even let imaginary things upset me . . .  
or let inevitable things “get on my nerves.”

You have been so patient with me

yet I would be impatient with others . . .

with myself.

Charity is patient . . . is kind.

Being patient in order to please You.

Not pleasing myself in giving way to impatience

. . . Your will not mine

—in success or failure

—in happiness

—in sorrow

—in my work

—in my spiritual life even.

Being patient in order to bring souls to You.  
Blessed are the meek . . . Blessed are the  
peacemakers.

When I correct others, do I do it kindly

- patiently
- like You
- enduring faults
- praying for others
- calmly?

Being patient in order to know myself better  
. . . the *cause* of my impatience . . .  
bodily ailments . . .  
irritable because my plans or will were  
thwarted . . . when blamed or corrected . . .  
pride . . . self-love and selfishness . . .  
critical spirit . . . hardheartedness.

“Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make my  
heart like unto Thine.”



# Silence

SPEAKING with others instead of with You.

Listening to others instead of to You.

So anxious to speak with others . . . why

—just thoughtlessness . . . busybody.

Failing against charity by disturbing

—by criticizing

—by looking sad.

Keeping my passions silent through mortification.

Showing my temper by my exterior . . . lazy positions.

Keeping silence by avoiding absent-mindedness . . . really putting my heart and soul into my work.

Or failing by imagining all sorts of impossible situations

—daydreaming

—acting foolishly in consequence.

All this to imitate You, my Lord, and to be able to be Your companion; telling You instead of others.

# Prayer

“MORE good is done by prayer than this world dreams of.” If only I could really believe that. I pray so little . . . so poorly.

Sometimes glad when I am called away from prayer.

My vocal prayers

- using my book
- definite intentions
- Spiritual Communions
- thanking my Lord.

My posture . . . tone of voice . . . hurrying through them.

My meditation . . . the preparation.

Jotting down things to talk over with Jesus . . .

Mary . . . Joseph

- for the morning
- for the evening.

Real contact with Jesus . . . opening my heart to Him . . . thanking Him . . . adoring Him . . . planning with Him.

My visits

— how many

— what kind

— when?

Ejaculations.

Making up to You, my Lord, for prayers poorly said or omitted.

How seldom I really talk with You, heart to Heart.

# Charity

ATTITUDE toward others . . . toward those  
in my charge . . . toward equals . . . toward  
superiors

too strict . . . bitter . . . unforgiving . . .  
favoritism.

Looking for their affection because of my-  
self . . . not because of their good . . . to  
lead them to You, Good Master, and to Mother  
Mary.

Talking about them . . . what is good  
blameworthy . . . accusing . . . excusing.  
Thoughts about them when preferred to me . . .  
when they hurt me . . . when they cut me . . .  
brooding.

Or thinking over and talking over the faults of  
others with You, my Lord.

devotedness . . . unselfishness . . . only  
toward some

kind words

interested in others' work . . . health . . .

amusements . . . points of view.

Friendliness . . . one heart and one soul.

Praying for others . . . suffering for others.

Loving others not for their sake, but for You.

# Work

PREOCCUPATION . . . why.

Attachment . . . why.

Offering my liking for it often to You . . .

liking it too much . . . seeking myself in it.

Glad to be allowed to do things for You.

Really doing my work for You.

Glad to "spend myself and be spent" for You.

Anxiety . . . why.

Lack of interest . . . why.

Profiting from its "difficulty."

Letting it keep me from my prayers.

Careful preparation and planning

— systematic and regular

— methodic or haphazard

— prompt.

In *all* work whether I like it or not.

Doing it to please You, my Lord . . . Mother

Mary

— for souls . . . reparation . . . penance

. . . my own sanctification.

"Good Master, don't let me spoil Your work!"

# Humility and Simplicity

FORGETTING self for You, my Lord.

Trying to please You . . . and You alone . . .  
one end, not two, or three, or four.

Trying to please others and worrying about  
what they think . . . pleasing myself, secretly,  
perhaps.

Haughty in speech  
— in manners  
— in thoughts.

Self-seeking in obedience  
— occupations  
— food  
— clothing  
— doing things for others.

Bearing to have others preferred to me . . .  
in having them get credit due to me.

How do I feel when not consulted . . . when  
rebuked unjustly . . . justly . . . fooled by  
flatterers, perhaps.

Thanking You for the talents You have given

me . . . developing them as fully as I can  
. . . using them for You.

Telling You of my vain and proud thoughts  
. . . feelings.

False humility . . . proud of my humility.

“Enter my heart, O Lord, my God, and make  
it like to Thine.”



# Poverty

REALLY wanting to be poor like You . . .  
like our Blessed Mother . . . only what I  
need . . . in clothes

— in food

— in the room and articles given me for my  
use.

Asking permissions for things because my su-  
periors take Your place . . . because these  
things come from You . . . and asking per-  
missions reminds me of that.

Superfluous things . . . wasting things . . .  
or time.

Negligent with things given me for my use . . .  
for my care.

Gifts . . . taking and giving.

“Glad that I can do with less.”

“Glad to have *nothing* of my own.”

“Like You, my Lord, and Mother Mary in  
order to save souls.”

# Chastity

FOR MYSELF . . . a safeguard . . . taking no chances . . . reading . . . other liberties.

Watching over my eyes . . . curious . . . plainly unrestrained . . . natural . . . or affected.

Mindful of Your Presence within me, my Lord . . . Your companionship with me . . . that I am Yours.

Speaking with You . . . looking or not looking for You, to do Your work.

In order to be like You . . . and Mary.

For others . . . in order not to shock but to attract . . . the beauty of holiness.

Especially with my colaborers and charges . . . politeness . . . refinement . . . pleasing naturalness.

Mannerisms in speech

— in walking

— in posture

— in gestures.

Don't let me be untrue to You, Good Master.

# Obedience

OBEYING in order to be like You.

You obeyed . . . and how much it cost You at times . . . especially in the Garden of Gethsemane . . . the bloody sweat . . . the “aloneness” . . . which made You beg Your Father, and even three times, to release You from that for which You had expressly come down to earth.

You obeyed . . . your creatures.

You obeyed . . . your enemies.

You obeyed . . . hypocrites, weak-kneed men, because Your Father wanted You to do so.

And I must be like You . . . I vowed to do so.

I must obey for Your sake . . . it is foolish, useless to obey a mere man

for mere human motives

— through fear

— through insincerity and hypocrisy

— through politics

— through mere human affection

— or just because I have to.

You ask me to obey in faith  
— in love  
— in order to do *Your* will  
— in all that is not against the Rule and Your  
commandments  
— cheerfully and promptly.

You want me to ask my permissions  
— to show respect to my superiors  
— to report as soon as possible when I have  
presumed permissions.

You definitely do not want me to get permis-  
sions through flattery  
— through trickery or half-truth  
— through threats  
— through outbursts of temper  
— or in any way to “force” my superior to  
consent.

Good Master, help me to obey as You did, and  
for Your sake.

# Love of My Lord

MY MODEL . . . given me by God Himself  
. . . my Lord and Master . . . my Friend . . .  
my only true Friend.

Why is it so hard for me to love You . . . to  
know You intimately.

Is it because You are *too* good to me (I take  
things for granted) . . . or too big?

I must live intimately with You . . . make  
You *real* to myself . . . I must not miss the  
biggest thing that can come into my life . . .  
I must not "avoid" You.

I must read about You (as I do about others  
whom I admire and like)

- observe You closely and study You
- cultivate Your friendship (as I do others')
- be often in Your company and like to be  
in Your company
- learn to look at life as You do
- talk with You and listen to You often
- become like You

- do anything for You
- go more to Your Mother.

Is it really possible for *me* to like You?  
Am I concerned about whether I *like* You or  
not?

## Love of Mother Mary

OUR MOTHER, Good Master, Yours and mine.

At Mass and Holy Communion with her that she might prepare me for Your coming . . . thank You for and with me . . . be with us when You come.

Talking with her . . . thinking of her . . . consulting with her . . . telling her everything. Letting her form me into "another Christ" . . . becoming more and more like her . . . loving her.

Helping her to bring souls to You . . . trying to please her . . . because

I want to imitate You in Your love for Your Mother.

Coming to You through her because You want it that way.

# Particular Examen for Retreat

WITH YOU, my Lord . . . to find out the  
“why” . . . and the “how.”

Spending the retreat with You.

Finding it hard . . . pleasant . . . why.

“Avoiding” You . . . why

— sin

— attachments

— afraid of sanctity

— lack of full trust in You

— plain selfishness.

O Master, help me to surrender.

*Why do I find it so hard to love You? . . . Is*

it because I do not know what love means . . .

or because I cannot appreciate what You have  
done for me?

You *made* me . . . and so wonderfully.

Thank You for giving me . . . air

— food

— friends

— vocation



— Mother Mary

— Yourself, now and forever.

*Silence* . . . spoiling my chances of a good retreat . . . spoiling someone else's retreat . . . letting someone spoil mine.

Keeping *You* company . . . telling *You* instead of others . . . listening to *You* . . . You who are in my heart.

*Charity* . . . loving others because I love You so much . . . praying for others for a good retreat.

Making reparation for my colaborers . . . my charges during the past year . . . those who have wronged me . . . those whom I have wronged.

Giving good example

— I pray now for them . . . for every soul in the world

— “One heart and one soul.”

*Confidence* . . . upset . . . I cast myself upon Your Sacred Heart.

Please pity me.

“Even though You slay me, yet will I trust You.”

To whom else shall I go?

— You are Wisdom . . . and Mercy . . .  
and Love.

What more could I want.

Discouraged . . . “We two will win, You  
and I.”

This afternoon I will talk more with You . . .

Help me to know myself clearly . . . to  
open my heart to You in all sincerity.

Don't let me fool myself . . . or be insincere  
with others . . . and with You.

Help me to plan my life . . . all over again  
if necessary . . . for next year . . . forever.

I do trust You . . . my Maker . . . my  
Eternal End and Happiness.

Let me—I say it in all reverence—let me  
fall in love with You.

Mother of my Lord, help me; pray for me.



