Giving ourselves to God more and more

Every now and then, when I spend the night in a hotel or at a friend’s house, I awake in the morning and for a brief moment don’t know where I am. I’m confused and frustrated until I get my bearings, then I smile at my absentmindedness.

As creatures of habit, we take our bearings in a variety of ways, usually without awareness of how we are doing so. The location of the windows and the door; the sounds of the heating system and the neighbors’ dogs; the feel of the carpet or the cold tile on our feet.

These sense perceptions become so much a part of our personal landscape that we identify with them in an automatic, spontaneous way. They tell us whether we are at home or lost, safe or in danger, alone or with family and friends.

From a spiritual perspective, intentionally getting our bearings is a good, even necessary, thing to do. We call such an exercise “examen” or “examination of conscience,” and we use it as a means of probing and assessing our relationship with God and others.

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