



# The Holy See

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**POPE FRANCIS** MORNING MEDITATION IN THE CHAPEL OF THE  
*DOMUS SANCTAE MARTHAE*

*Five minutes for an examination of conscience*

*Thursday, 28 February 2019*

**[Multimedia]**

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(by [www.osservatoreromano.va](http://www.osservatoreromano.va))

In the whirlwind of everyday life, in which people may tend to rely on health, wealth and power, they may recklessly go about just doing as they please. Pope Francis cautioned against this, during Mass on Thursday morning, 28 February, and explained that setting aside five minutes each day for an examination of conscience can help us take stock of our failures and weaknesses.

The Pontiff's reflection drew from the day's passage from the Gospel of Mark (9:41-50), in which Jesus offers words of "advice", including: "have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another". The Pope explained that "to have salt in yourselves" means "to have wisdom, that your life is wise".

Turning to the first reading from the Book of Sirach (5:1-10), which advises against desiring "wealth" and following our own "inclination and strength", the Pope called for a change of heart and conversion to the Lord.

He pointed out that wisdom is achieved each and every day by reflecting on our lives and taking time to carefully consider our actions. "Do not follow your instincts, your strength, indulging in the passions of your heart", the Holy Father stressed. Everyone has desires, he acknowledged, but we "must be careful and dominate these passions" or they will end up "dominating you".

The Pope advised the faithful to “stop, think: you are not eternal”. We cannot continue to do just whatever we please, he said, trusting in God’s infinite mercy. We cannot be rash and reckless, believing we will get away with whatever we have been doing. And while we may have gotten away with something once, we do not know when the end will come.

“Do not say, ‘God’s compassion is great, he’ll forgive me my many sins, and so I continue doing what I want’”, the Pontiff urged. A father or grandfather’s advice might be: “Do not delay to convert to the Lord, do not postpone it from day to day, for suddenly the wrath of the Lord will burst forth”, he warned.

Recalling that no one knows when life will end, the Holy Father urged that we take five minutes at the end of each day to examine our conscience, to convert to the Lord, that we not put it off to tomorrow. If we submit to one of our passions, we must try to avoid succumbing to it again. By dominating ourselves — rather than by being controlled by our desires — we will become “responsible” for our “actions”. Taking five minutes at the end of each day, the Pope reiterated, “will help us consider a change of heart and conversion to the Lord”.