



# Daily Reflections

**February 28, 2017**

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## Scripture

### **Sirach 35: 1-12**

To keep the law is a great oblation,  
and he who observes the  
commandments sacrifices a peace offering.

In works of charity one offers fine flour,  
and when he gives alms he presents his sacrifice of praise.

To refrain from evil pleases the LORD,  
and to avoid injustice is an atonement.

Appear not before the LORD empty-handed,  
for all that you offer is in fulfillment of the precepts.

The just one's offering enriches the altar  
and rises as a sweet odor before the Most High.

The just one's sacrifice is most pleasing,  
nor will it ever be forgotten.

In a generous spirit pay homage to the LORD,  
be not sparing of freewill gifts.

With each contribution show a cheerful countenance,  
and pay your tithes in a spirit of joy.  
Give to the Most High as he has given to you,  
generously, according to your means.  
For the LORD is one who always repays,  
and he will give back to you sevenfold.  
But offer no bribes, these he does not accept!  
Trust not in sacrifice of the fruits of extortion.  
For he is a God of justice,  
who knows no favorites.

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## **Our Scripture Reflection**

Sirach teaches us through today's text how pleased God is when we live His way. When we avoid evil and live a good life, caring for others, God is happy. Living the life of faith, says Sirach, was never meant to be a drudgery. A faith filled life is meant to be a joyful life.

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## **Food for your Journey**

To be a witness for God is to be a living sign of God's presence in the world. What we live is more important than what we say, because the right way of living always leads to the right way of speaking. When we forgive our neighbors from our hearts, our hearts will speak forgiving words. When we are grateful, we will speak grateful words, and when we are hopeful and joyful, we will speak hopeful and joyful words.

When our words come too soon and we are not yet living what we are saying, we easily give double messages. Giving double messages -- one with our words and another with our actions -- makes us hypocrites. May our lives give us the right words and may our words lead us to the right life.

--Henri J. M. Nouwen, *Bread for the Journey: A Daybook of Wisdom and Faith*, entry for June 20 (HarperCollins, 2009).

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## **A Prayer from the Heart**

Precious Lord, Help me this day to seek a union as closely as possible with Your loving heart. May all that I do this day reflect my closeness to You. Amen.