

## Decalogue for the Sharing Group

1. Meetings are led by the Holy Spirit through Mary.
2. Purpose of the meeting:
  - To become aware of my weaknesses and the truth of being loved by God
  - To respond to the desire to deepen my faith
  - To be open to others (brothers and sisters) in the group
  - To share different experiences of my faith and how God is present in my life
3. When I go to the meeting, I will pray to God for others and myself.
  - Prayer of empty hands or that of the tax collector is recommended.
4. I will remember that I am God's child who has the right to trust and await miracles.
5. As a participant in our meeting I will:
  - Serve others and not count my own merits
  - Create the atmosphere of calm, focus/concentration and openness
  - Not impose on others my ways of thinking, reacting and perceiving
  - Avoid giving advice or solving others' problems
  - Speak from my personal "I" rather than use such terms as "we, us, people, we should, others do this."
  - Avoid discussion and criticism
6. By keeping what is shared in the meeting confidential, I will preserve each participant's freedom to share openly and protect their dignity as a child of God.
7. I will not be afraid of moments of silence, since I or somebody else may need time to reflect. Moments of silence provide us with unique opportunities for prayer and entrustment to God.
8. I will remember to attentively listen to what my brother or sister is saying in order to help them in the process of sharing.
9. When I give a witness talk or share my faith, God's grace is not only given to me but it is being multiplied and given to others.
10. Above all, God expects from me humility and openness. Even one person who is humble and open to God can create an appropriate climate during a given meeting that will spread to all participants. The most important and desirable goal is not the format of the meeting, but it is to be open to God's grace and presence.

*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, No.2616, footnotes 84: Cf. *Mk* 1:40-41; 5:36; 7:29; Cf. *Lk* 23:39-43; 85: Cf. *Mk* 2:5; 5:28; *Lk* 7:37-38; 86: *Mt* 9:27; *Mk* 10:48; No. 2617, footnote 88: Cf. *Lk* 1:38; *Acts* 1:14; No. 2618, footnotes 89: Cf. *Jn* 2:1-12; 90: Cf. *Jn* 19:25-27. <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/catechism/>

*New American Bible* © USCCB. All rights reserved. <http://www.usccb.org/nab/index.shtml>

André Daigneault, *The Way of Imperfection* (Ft. Collins, CO: In the Arms of Mary

Foundation, 2016). All rights reserved. – [www.inthearmsofmary.org](http://www.inthearmsofmary.org)

Families of Nazareth Movement – [www.familiesofnazareth.us](http://www.familiesofnazareth.us)

FEBRUARY 14, 2021 ~ SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME ~ YEAR B  
SPIRITUAL REFLECTION ON SUNDAY'S READINGS

PREPARED BY:  
FAMILIES OF NAZARETH MOVEMENT USA  
COMMUNION OF LIFE WITH CHRIST THROUGH MARY

Opening Prayer  
Read Decalogue  
Read Scripture  
Read Reflection

**Reading I** Lv 13:1-2, 44-46

**Responsorial Psalm** Ps 32:1-2, 5, 11

**Reading II** 1 Cor 10:31—11:1

**Gospel** Mk 1:40-45

### Opening or Closing Prayer

Listen,  
put it into your heart,  
my smallest child,  
that the thing that frightened you,  
the thing that afflicted you is nothing:  
Do not let it disturb you.  
Am I not here, I who am your mother?  
Are you not under my shadow and protection?  
Am I not the source of your joy?  
Are you not in the hollow  
of my mantle,  
in the crossing of my arms?  
Do you need something more?

*Words of Our Lady of Guadalupe,  
Mother of the Americas,  
to Saint Juan Diego, December, A.D.1531*

**Families of Nazareth USA**  
**Summer Faith Formation Experience 2020**

## Spiritual Reflection

*A leper came to Jesus and kneeling down begged him and said, "If you wish, you can make me clean." Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand, touched him, and said to him, "I do will it. Be made clean." Mk 1: 40-41*

From the depth of our poverty, how many times do we cry out to God and experience a prayer that seems to be without response – especially when we ask him to be freed of a misery that leaves us with suffering and humiliation. God does not seem to hear and we continue to cry out. Jean Lafrance gives an explanation that can enlighten us:

Undoubtedly it is this continual prayer that God awaits from us; it is more important than granting the request. After many years, when we have asked God to free us from this thorn in the flesh, we understand that if God had granted it immediately, we would have stopped begging. Paul gives us the ultimate reason for this prayer that is apparently not granted: "That I might not become too elated" (2 Cor 12:7).

. . . God sees humility and hears the cry of the poor. In order to cry out to God "Mercy!" one must really feel the need to be saved, to be healed. One must understand – and only the Holy Spirit, the Father of the poor, can explain it to us – that Jesus came for sinners, the poor and the sick, and the only way to experience the deepest and most mysterious face of God – His mercy – is to offer our misery to be transfigured through Him. "What happiness it is to acknowledge myself as miserable," says Origen. "God answers me and gives me a Savior." The only antidote to pride is humility. God alone is humble: "Who, though he was in the form of God/ . . . humbled himself" (Phil 2:6,8). We need to understand that there is no other path by which to search for God and find Him than the path of humility, which loosens the heart stiffened through pride and self-love, and transforms it into the heart of a child. "I give praise to you, Father, . . .for. . .you have revealed [these things] to the childlike" (Mt 11:25).

On this way of poverty and imperfection, we discover prayer as a cry, a cry for help: "O God, come quickly to help me, to rescue me," says Psalm 70. Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus helps us to rediscover the meaning of prayer as a cry of distress, the cry of the poor one in the depths of his misery. In her night of the soul, she takes up the cry of Christ crucified, I thirst! She makes us discover that our darkness, our fears, our doubts, and our anxieties are a thirst for God, a cry toward God. Sometimes our descent must be to the deepest so that the cry of our prayer may touch the heart of God.

To use the vocabulary of Alcoholics Anonymous, we must "reach the bottom" to cry out our distress and admit that we cannot get out of it on our own. It is at the bottom of the pit, when we have reached our poverty, that we finally – truly – understand that "without Him, we can do nothing." In the New Testament, to pray is therefore to cry out. "Will not God then secure the rights of his chosen ones who call out to him day and night?" (Lk 18:7). God is close to the poor and the brokenhearted who invoke him with confidence, but he distances himself from the proud and those wrapped in their self-sufficiency

André Daigneault, *The Way of Imperfection*, pp 55-57

## References from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

- 2616** Prayer to Jesus is answered by him already during his ministry, through signs that anticipate the power of his death and Resurrection: Jesus hears the prayer of faith, expressed in words (the leper, Jairus, the Canaanite woman, the good thief)<sup>84</sup> or in silence (the bearers of the paralytic, the woman with a hemorrhage who touches his clothes, the tears and ointment of the sinful woman).<sup>85</sup> The urgent request of the blind men, "Have mercy on us, Son of David" or "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" has been renewed in the traditional prayer to Jesus known as the *Jesus Prayer*: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner!"<sup>86</sup> Healing infirmities or forgiving sins, Jesus always responds to a prayer offered in faith: "Your faith has made you well; go in peace."
- 2617** Mary's prayer is revealed to us at the dawning of the fullness of time. Before the incarnation of the Son of God, and before the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, her prayer cooperates in a unique way with the Father's plan of loving kindness: at the Annunciation, for Christ's conception; at Pentecost, for the formation of the Church, his Body.<sup>88</sup> In the faith of his humble handmaid, the Gift of God found the acceptance he had awaited from the beginning of time. . .
- 2618** The Gospel reveals to us how Mary prays and intercedes in faith. At Cana,<sup>89</sup> the mother of Jesus asks her son for the needs of a wedding feast; this is the sign of another feast - that of the wedding of the Lamb where he gives his body and blood at the request of the Church, his Bride. It is at the hour of the New Covenant, at the foot of the cross,<sup>90</sup> that Mary is heard as the Woman, the new Eve, the true "Mother of all the living."

## Questions for Reflection

1. How I have experienced my sinfulness/leprosy while undertaking a job or task that was God's will?
2. To what is God calling me in such a situation? How can I follow the leper's example?
3. Blessed Mother's prayer was always in cooperation with God's plan. How willing am I to ask Her to pray for me? What is my prayer today?

## Prayer after Sharing

*Thank you, God, for allowing me to see the truth about my weaknesses and how it calls upon the abyss of your merciful Love.*