

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 "you, 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. 733, footnotes 124: 1 Jn 4:8,16; 125: Rom 5:5; No. 2658, footnotes 10: Rom 5:5; 11: St. John Vianney, Prayer.

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/catechism>

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Tadeusz Dajczer, *The Gift of Faith*, 4th ed. (Ft. Collins, CO: In the Arms of Mary

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Families of Nazareth Movement – www.familiesofnazareth.us

MAY 9, 2021 ~ SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER ~ 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 Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48

Responsorial Psalm Ps 98:1, 2-3, 3-4

Reading II 1 Jn 4:7-10

Gospel Jn 15:9-17

Opening or Closing Prayer

Dear Father, great is Your Mercy.

My true vocation is intimacy with You in the Kingdom of Heaven. May the new model of righteousness Your Son has given me, "as I have done, you should also do," open me more to Your mercy and transform me into Your divine likeness.

Dear Jesus, holy is Your Name.

May your prayer, "that they may be one as you, Father, and I are one," become my own desire. Teach me how to build up the unity of Your Mystical Body by embracing and living out my vocation to authentic holiness and happiness.

Dear Holy Spirit, amazing is Your Grace.

Grant me your gifts in order to "always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks" the reason for my hope. Thank you that, through You, I can encounter Jesus daily in the Eucharist, the source of my hope, even in the situations of my life that are most difficult to understand.

Dear Mother Mary, source of my joy.

"Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled." As a vessel of the Holy Spirit, teach me to live the Beatitudes of your Son. Wrap me in your mantle, where I can believe in His mercy and fulfill my vocation to be salt of the earth and light of the world.

I ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

*Families of Nazareth USA
Summer Retreat 2011*

Spiritual Reflection

*“As the Father loves me, so I also love you. Remain in my love.
If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love,
just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and remain in his love.
I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and your joy might be complete.”*
Jn 15: 9-11

The truth that Christ loves another person through you implies that you cannot love a person without loving God. You alone are unable to love. It is Christ who loves in you. By loving Christ and becoming open to Him – becoming open to the Divine agape that descends upon you – you allow Him to love you and to love others through you. Opening yourself to the descent of Christ, whether it is through the Holy Sacraments or in prayer, allows you to love others. **You can give Christ to others to the extent that you accept Him and to the extent that you allow Him to encompass you.** To love another person means to impart Christ to him. You cannot impart that which you do not have. The more you love God and accept Him in this love by allowing Him to live and act in you, the more capable you are of loving others.

To love means to give oneself, to impart good to others. However, it is not sufficient to give only material goods; in the light of faith, spiritual goods are more important. If you do not give them to those close to you, then a specific spiritual “theft,” a specific spiritual “harm,” takes place. Surely they have a right to these spiritual goods. Those around you have a right for you to become a pure channel of grace for them as you grow in sanctifying grace and in striving toward sanctity. Your growth in sanctity becomes, in the light of faith, the most precious gift for those close to you. You have to question your love, you have to stand in the truth and ask yourself whether you really love. You are most certainly convinced that you love your child because, not only are you concerned about temporal matters, but you also pray for them. Yet the value and efficacy of your prayer depends not on feelings, but on the greatness of your sanctifying grace, on the greatness of your faith in and love of God. If there is not spiritual life in you, if there is a lack of growth in faith and in God’s love, then, in a spiritual sense, you become a “thief” to those around you.

A mother who is a “lukewarm” Christian and has not adhered to Christ through faith should realize that, because she has not come to love Christ, she does not fully love her child...Every time you receive one of the other sacraments and every one of your prayers are always the giving of goods to others due to the “system of connected vessels.”...You love...those close to you, or those who are not, to the extent that that you yourself are converted to God, to the extent that you strive for sanctity, and to the extent that you no longer live, but that Christ lives in you...One cannot love man without loving God. In fact, only saints truly love

others, they are the ones who have fully opened themselves to Christ and in whom Christ can fully live and love. . .

Christ, who descends into your heart, wants to love; He wants to give Himself to others and desires their good. He wants to love more and more, and He desires the greatest good for others, which in the light of faith means desiring their sanctity. If you love someone, and worry only about their material, temporal matters then you must realize that you actually lack authentic love. It is not sufficient to be concerned about the affairs of temporal life, about education, health, and material wealth. **You can love fully only when you yourself long for sanctity and when you desire to engraft this longing into others.**

Fr. Tadeusz Dajczer, *The Gift of Faith*, pp.252-254, 252

References from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

733 "God is Love"¹²⁴ and love is his first gift, containing all others. "God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us."¹²⁵

2658 "Hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us."¹⁰ Prayer, formed by the liturgical life, draws everything into the love by which we are loved in Christ and which enables us to respond to him by loving as he has loved us. Love is the source of prayer; whoever draws from it reaches the summit of prayer. In the words of the Cure of Ars:

I love you, O my God, and my only desire is to love you until the last breath of my life. I love you, O my infinitely lovable God, and I would rather die loving you, than live without loving you. I love you, Lord, and the only grace I ask is to love you eternally. . .My God, if my tongue cannot say in every moment that I love you, I want my heart to repeat it to you as often as I draw breath.¹¹

Questions for Reflection

1. In the light of this reflection and the Catechism references, how do I perceive the love that I have for my family, friends, others?
2. Like a child who trusts his parents, who takes their love for granted, how do I trust in God’s love for me and how do I trust that His love will flow from me to all whom I love?
3. How deeply aware am I of Blessed Mother’s love for me? How can her dialogue of the Annunciation, Her Fiat to God’s request, be an example and pattern of my openness to God’s love for others around me?

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.