

### 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. 1822; No. 1823, footnotes 96: Cf. *Jn* 13:34; 97: *Jn* 13:1; 98: *Jn* 15:9,12; [www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/catechism](http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/catechism)  
*New American Bible* © USCCB. All rights reserved. <http://www.usccb.org/nab/index.shtml>  
S.C. Biela, *Open Wide the Door to Christ* (Ft. Collins, CO: In the Arms of Mary Foundation, 2005). All rights reserved. – [www.inthearmsofmary.org](http://www.inthearmsofmary.org)  
Families of Nazareth Movement – [www.familiesofnazareth.us](http://www.familiesofnazareth.us)

### October 31, 2021 ~ 31<sup>st</sup> 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

<b>Reading I</b>	Dt 6:2-6
<b>Responsorial Psalm</b>	Ps 18:2-3, 3-4, 47, 51
<b>Reading II</b>	Heb 7:23-28
<b>Gospel</b>	Mk 12:28B-34

### 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

*"He is One and there is no other than he. And to love him with all your heart, with all your understanding, with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is worth more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices." Mk 12:32-33*

Maybe, because of God's will, you are able to fulfill some sort of function that is a source of joy for you. Maybe you complete a project that gives you authentic satisfaction. Maybe you have built a house or established a family in accordance with God's will, such that now you are finally docked at your own quiet port. All of these accomplishments may lead you to feel quite rich before the Lord, and the deadly layer of decay will begin to grow on your faith.

In every aspect of your life, even those things that you do because it is God's will that you do them, you are in danger of seeking reliance apart from God. When you do this, **your own vision of God's will** may manifest itself and it will become your riches. . . The unique source of security and joy that you find is no longer in God. Instead, your security and joy are in what you do because it is God's will. In this way, you turn against God, disrespect Him, and show Him contempt. Even though it seems like you are walking on the tightrope of God's will, you use it to your own ends to fortify your pride.

When you begin to realize your perverseness, you may become terrified. . . . When the light of God reveals this truth about you, then you will begin to understand that unless you convert from your sinful ways, your life will be more and more deeply immersed in evil, and you will stray away from God. You will discover that although you see your evil, you still pursue it.

Is it not true that God has the right to take away the life of a person who has such an attitude at any moment? Would it not be an expression of His mercy? Such an act of mercy would end the person's life at the best moment – the moment when there is still a chance for the person to be saved. Therefore, what can you do in order to turn back and walk away from this path leading to damnation? Prayer and openness to God's mercy are necessary. . . . When someone lives as if God does not exist, his prayer is not in a position to change him because it cannot open him to the renewing action of the Holy Spirit. Understanding and acceptance of Christ's testament spoken from the Cross: "'Woman, behold, your son'. . . to the disciple, 'Behold, your mother'" (Jn 19:26-27), is the rescue in this situation. If you accept the testament Christ gave while dying on the Cross, then you will know where to find your rescue. Christ gives you Mary as your Mother. Ask Mary to intercede for you. Ask Mary to extend her hand to you: . . .

*Mary, please ask God for me, a sinner. On my own, I am incapable of rising above that which enslaves me. I even turn the fulfillment of God's will against Him. In my Phariseism, I am always closed to Him. I ask you to intercede on my behalf, so that I may attain the miracle of a transformed heart. I do not have to see this transformation, but I do ask for it. Please beseech and grant me the grace of mercy. Also, pray for all of those who, like me, are entangled in the spirit of this world and for all those who are closed to the Lord and His healing light.*

It is necessary for you to ask Mary as often as possible for Her intercession. She, your Mother, intercedes for you, even when you do not ask her to do so. But, when you do ask her, when you give her your consent – your "yes" – it is as if her hands are freed. When you entrust yourself to her, she can obtain everything from God. She can even ask for a miracle, such that you will begin to be poor in spirit, as someone who lives with the hunger for God and His holy will.

S.C. Biela, *Open Wide the Door to Christ*, pp. 129-132

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

- 1822** Charity is the theological virtue by which we love God above all things for his own sake, and our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God.
- 1823** Jesus makes charity the *new commandment*.<sup>96</sup> By loving his own "to the end,"<sup>97</sup> he makes manifest the Father's love which he receives. By loving one another, the disciples imitate the love of Jesus which they themselves receive. Whence Jesus says: "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you; abide in my love." And again: "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."<sup>98</sup>

## Questions for Reflection

1. In my daily life, what is my vision of God's will for me and how do I respond?
2. How is God present when/if I discover that I am living my own will as if God does not exist?
3. Mary poured her life into Christ and He poured Himself into hers. How can I call on her intercession for me to live a deeper understanding that He is One and I am not?

## 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.*