

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. 2547, footnotes 341: Lk 6:24; 342: St. Augustine, De serm. Dom. in monte 1, 1, 3: PL 34, 1232; 343: Cf. Mt 6:25-34. No. 2549; No. 227, footnote 52: St. Teresa of Jesus, *Poesias* 30, in *The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila, vol III*, tr. by K. Kavanaugh, OCD and O. Rodriguez, OCD (Washington DC) ; www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/catechism

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Tadeusz Dajczer, *The Gift of Faith, 3rd ed.*, (Ft. Collins, CO: In the Arms of Mary

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Families of Nazareth Movement – www.familiesofnazareth.us

November 7, 2021 ~ 32nd 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	1 Kgs 17:10-16
Responsorial Psalm	Ps 146:7, 8-9, 9-10
Reading II	Heb 9:24-28
Gospel	Mk 12:38-44

Opening or Closing Prayer

Dearest Father, Your Son tells us, "Unless you turn and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven." I long to be Your smallest child. Help me to rediscover You as the One Who delights in me, Who calls me as His own.

My Jesus, You say to us, "Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven." You are the way to heaven. Thank You for saving me and giving me Yourself in the Holy Eucharist. Reactivate the call of my Baptism to serve the Church in childlike humility, "boasting only in God."

Holy Spirit, reveal to me my weaknesses that I may seek Jesus' strength. Reveal to me my nothingness, that I may await all things from Him. Convince me of Jesus' words, "What is impossible for human beings is possible for God."

Blessed Mother, I entrust my prideful doubt, fear, discouragement and ingratitude to your intercession so that I will believe, as God's beloved child and yours, "Ask and you will receive; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you."

We 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 2010

Spiritual Reflection

"Amen, I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the other contributors to the treasury" Mk 12:43

Faith is relying on nothing apart from God. We cannot rely on any of His gifts, but only on Him alone – on His infinite power and His infinite love.

A moving scene took place in the courtyard of the temple when it was God who watched people put their donations into the money box. Every few moments the clink of falling coins could be heard, while at the side Jesus Christ and His apostles were sitting and observing those offerings. A widow put two small coins worth a penny in the box, and the Lord said, "This poor widow put more than all the other contributors...She, from her poverty has contributed all she had, her whole livelihood" (Mk. 12:43-44). She gave all while the rich gave only from their surplus wealth. Yet, to see just her gesture is not enough. It needs to be pointed out that by giving everything, she "sentenced" herself to death since she did not have any money and no longer had the means to live. She herself severed her material system of security – hence the amazement of God Himself as expressed through the solemn words, "Amen, I say to you...she from her poverty has contributed all she had, her whole livelihood: (Mk 12:43-44). Inconceivable is the faith of this woman!

A person who is stripped of everything – his whole system of security – is left with two options: he may either despair, or through faith completely entrust himself to God. That is the kind of faith the widow must have had. For her, God must have been everything – her only support. God can strip us of our system of security, but we can also do this ourselves. Then an active purgation of ourselves from enslavement takes place. This is what happened to the evangelical widow; she stripped herself of everything she had.

We can also talk about a similar self-entrusting to God of the widow from Zarephath who met with Elijah (cf. 1 Kings 17:8-16). . . This was really an acceptance of death since there was nothing left to count on, not even this handful of food. This was God, through Elijah, who took from the widow the remaining food that had given her a certain feeling of security. Then she had nothing.

What does God do with such people? . . . God cannot abandon a person who, by totally entrusting himself to Him, frees himself from mammon and cuts himself off from the systems of security that destroy his faith. **God watches with admiration the miracle of human faith, especially trusting childlike faith, which expresses itself in the act of giving up everything.** A person with such faith is capable of saying, *My God if this is your will I am even ready to die since I believe that you love me. Faith this deep begets saints. . .*

If your faith is not radical enough and if you do not completely trust God's love for you to the point of folly, then you will continue to advance on your way to faith at a snail's pace, or you will go backward. By building a human system of security, you will hinder your growth in faith. Your faith will deepen only when you allow God to be your only support and your only security. **God has the right to request that you give Him everything—everything in the sense of total self-entrusting to Him.**

From the point of view of faith, it is a very good thing that sometimes our support crumbles beneath us because grace is linked to this. You cannot rely on anything but God— not on any of His gifts, nor on any signs of His presence.

Tadeusz Dajczer, *The Gift of Faith*, pp.31-34

References from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

- 2547** The Lord grieves over the rich, because they find their consolation in the abundance of goods.³⁴¹ "Let the proud seek and love earthly kingdoms, but blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven."³⁴² Abandonment to the providence of the Father in heaven frees us from anxiety about tomorrow.³⁴³ Trust in God is a preparation for the blessedness of the poor. They shall see God.
- 2549** It remains for the holy people to struggle, with grace from on high, to obtain the good things God promises. In order to possess and contemplate God, Christ's faithful mortify their cravings and, with the grace of God, prevail over the seductions of pleasure and power.
- 227** *It means trusting God in every circumstance*, even in adversity. A prayer of St. Teresa of Jesus wonderfully expresses this trust:
Let nothing trouble you / Let nothing frighten you
Everything passes / God never changes
Patience / Obtains all
Whoever has God / Wants for nothing
God alone is enough.⁵²

Questions for Reflection

1. In my daily life, in what or in whom do I rely for security? Where do I place my hope, my expectations? Why?
2. When I look at these two widows with Jesus, what is He saying to me about my attitude of trust in Him and what is my response?
3. Our Blessed Mother has trusted God in all the circumstances of her life. Have I asked her to teach me this kind of trust and what do I hope to learn from her?

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.