

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.2610, footnotes 66: Mk 11:24; 67: Mk 9:23; cf. Mt 21:22; 68: Cf. Mk 6:6; Mt 8:26; 69: Cf. Mt 8:10; 15:28; No. 2830, footnotes 115: Cf. Mt 6:25-34; 116: Cf. 2 Thess 3:6-13; 117: St. Cyprian, De Dom. Orat. 21: PL 4, 534A.
Tadeusz Dajczer, *The Gift of Faith*, 3rd ed. (Ft. Collins, CO: In the Arms of Mary Foundation, 2012). All rights reserved. – www.inthearmsofmary.org
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April 24, 2022 ~ Second Sunday of Easter or Divine Mercy ~ Year C 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 5:12-16

Responsorial Psalm Ps 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24

Reading II Rev 1:9-11a, 12-13, 17-19

Gospel Jn 20:19-31

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

*"Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands
and put my finger into the nail marks
and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."* John 20: 19-31

The evangelical child awaits everything from God, literally everything. The childlike dimension of our faith means not depending on ordinary human calculations, but rather, the stirring of a hunger for something that a child would call a surprise. It is being hungry for a miracle. Your spirit is young only as far as you remain childlike. A person can be very old at the age of twenty. On the other hand, one can be eighty years old and remain young thanks to one's childlike spirit. God is always young, and the Church instituted by Christ is always young; that is why She needs the young in spirit. The Church needs within you the childlike attitude that is able to believe everything. An **"old" person** – someone who relies on his own calculations, who lists pros and cons – **limits the possibility for God to act and sets limits on His love and mercy.** Constantly calculating and predicting if one will be successful or not is a trait of old age. A child grasps for the moon and believes that he will get it – and God wants to give you more than the moon. He wants to give you His Kingdom, but if you do not become a child, His hands are tied.

Children are also the typical evangelical violent ones who Jesus speaks about, who are taking the heavenly kingdom by force (cf. Mt 11:12). When a child wants to get into his home, then he just has to get in. He will continue pounding with his fists or kicking with his feet until he is let in. Jesus said, "Knock and the door will be opened to you" (Lk 11:9). If we knew how to knock at the doors that are closed before us, pounding to get in the way children do, then the doors would have to be opened. **God needs your childlike faith in order to perform miracles in you and through you, since nothing is impossible for God.** "Everything is possible to one who has faith" (Mk 9:23); everything is possible for one who is an evangelical child.

God is always young and always amazes man. Experiencing God is experiencing an amazing reality. A person with the attitude of an evangelical child is able to be amazed. This kind of person looking at the world can be amazed by everything that surrounds him. **At the moment that you cease to be a child before the Lord, there will be a crisis in your spiritual life: you will begin to regress; you will stop believing and loving.**

Only two categories of people believe in miracles – saints and children. Actually, this is one category, because saints are children in spirit. **In Jesus Christ, God Himself became a child.** He became a child, not only in Bethlehem, but also on the

Cross completely defenseless and dependent upon people for everything. This God, who became a child, wants our helplessness and weakness to lead us toward the complete abandonment of ourselves to Him. He wants to lead us to a limitless trust in His mercy.

Tadeusz Dajczer, *The Gift of Faith*, 3rd ed., pp.64-65; 67

References from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

2610 Just as Jesus prays to the Father and gives thanks before receiving his gifts, so he teaches us *filial boldness*: "Whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you receive it, and you will."⁶⁶ Such is the power of prayer and of faith that does not doubt: "all things are possible to him who believes."⁶⁷ Jesus is as saddened by the "lack of faith" of his own neighbors and the "little faith" of his own disciples⁶⁸ as he is struck with admiration at the great faith of the Roman centurion and the Canaanite woman.⁶⁹

2830 "*Our bread*": The Father who gives us life cannot not but give us the nourishment life requires - all appropriate goods and blessings, both material and spiritual. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus insists on the filial trust that cooperates with our Father's providence.¹¹⁵ He is not inviting us to idleness,¹¹⁶ but wants to relieve us from nagging worry and preoccupation. Such is the filial surrender of the children of God:

To those who seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, he has promised to give all else besides. Since everything indeed belongs to God, he who possesses God wants for nothing, if he himself is not found wanting before God.¹¹⁷

Questions for Reflection

- 1 Reflecting on this reading, when have I experienced being an evangelical child? An old person?
2. How do I understand God's Divine Mercy versus His justice?
3. How does God's Divine Mercy show itself in my life? How does Mary play a role? How has been my amazement at this reality?

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.