

## 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. 2546, footnote 338: Mt 5:3; 339: Cf. Lk 6:20; St. Gregory of Nyssa, *De beatitudinibus* 1 PG 44, 1200D; cf. 2 Cor 8:9; 340: St. Gregory of Nyssa, *De beatitudinibus* 1: PG 44, 1200D; cf. 2 Cor 8:9. No. 544, footnote 253: Lk 4:18; cf. 7:22; 254: Mt 5:3; 255: Cf. Mt 11:25; 256: Cf. Mt 21:18; Mk 2:23-26; Jn 4:6-7; 19:28; Lk 9:58; 257: Cf. Mt 25:31-46.

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André Daigneault, *The Way of Imperfection: holiness for the poor* (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)

## October 2, 2022 ~ 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time ~ 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

<b>Reading I</b>	Hab 1:2-3; 2:2-4
<b>Responsorial Psalm</b>	Ps 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9
<b>Reading II</b>	2 Tm 1:6-8, 13-14
<b>Gospel</b>	Lk 17:5-10

### Opening or Closing Prayer

Mary, Virgin and Mother,  
you who, moved by the Holy Spirit,  
welcomed the word of life in the depths of your humble faith –

as you gave yourself completely to the Eternal One,  
help us to say our own "yes" to the urgent call,  
as pressing as ever,  
to proclaim the good news of Jesus.

Obtain for us now a new ardor  
born of the resurrection,  
that we may bring to all the Gospel of life  
which triumphs over death.

Give us a holy courage to seek new paths,  
that the gift of unfading beauty  
may reach every man and woman.

Mother of the living Gospel,  
wellspring of happiness for God's little ones,  
pray for us. Amen.

Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 288 [Abridged]  
*Families of Nazareth USA*  
*Summer Retreat 2014*

## Spiritual Reflection

*The Apostles said to the Lord,  
"Increase our faith." Lk 17:5*

What are the two main obstacles to faith and holiness? They are *pride* and the *search for human glory*. This is why Saint Ignatius said that we should choose poverty and disgrace, in order to put to death our pride and imitate Christ:

In order to imitate Christ our Lord in a closer way and to resemble him more realistically, I want to choose poverty with the poor Christ, rather than riches; disgrace, instead of honors, with Christ laden with disgrace. I desire to be considered as nothing and to be a fool for Christ – the first to be considered such a fool – rather than to be judged a wise and prudent man in this world (*3rd degree of humility*).

If we are entirely truthful, should we not admit that we would rather choose riches instead of poverty, honors instead of disgrace, and that we desire, above all, to be judged as wise and prudent in the eyes of men rather than as fools like Christ?

Without their knowledge, the poor and those wounded by life sometimes live the great purifications spoken of by John of the Cross: they are considered nothing, they are rejected and live with indignities of all kinds, and often are regarded as fools in the eyes of the world. Can we not say that they are humiliated with Christ humiliated, poor with the poor Christ, and crucified with Christ on the cross? They are *removed* from their belongings, stripped of all their pretenses – and they surrender themselves this way. Can we not say that they are *sanctified* by this way of weakness, imperfection, and *descent*?

What is the *future of Christianity* in this third millennium? In his last work, Stanislas Breton, philosopher and theologian, dares to articulate the future of Christianity in the context of the present world. He affirms that only *the folly* of the cross, which constitutes the essence of the evangelical message, can allow Christianity to situate itself among the proliferation of today's religious movements, and confront Buddhism without conflict. And he speaks of the kenosis of the cross and the kenosis of poverty that inspire the evangelical beatitudes. "Christ emptied himself," he said, "and, in summary, it is the absolute dispossession of his having and his being."

The apostle of tomorrow will be *poor, crucified*, and a *child*. It is necessary that the Christian and the apostle go through denudation, abandonment, and

neglect. He must experience his poverty and nothingness within himself, and his nothingness without God...

The true experience of God impoverishes, detaches, and often crucifies. *My ways are not your ways* the Lord tells us...

Throughout his life on earth, whichever way it is looked at, the trajectory of Christ is like a great stairway where the Lord *descends* – *descends* day after day into the depth of ignominy...

What the world needs is Christians and priests – poor, helpless, and crucified – who will be united to the wounded Lamb and, in him and with him, will save this world so loved by the Father of mercy.

André Daigneault, *The Way of Imperfection: holiness for the poor*, pp. 134-136

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

**2546** "Blessed are the poor in spirit."<sup>338</sup> The Beatitudes reveal an order of happiness and grace, of beauty and peace. Jesus celebrates the joy of the poor, to whom the Kingdom already belongs:<sup>339</sup>

The Word speaks of voluntary humility as "poverty in spirit"; the Apostle gives an example of God's poverty when he says: "For your sakes he became poor."<sup>340</sup>

**544** The kingdom belongs *to the poor and lowly*, which means those who have accepted it with humble hearts. Jesus is sent to "preach good news to the poor";<sup>253</sup> he declares them blessed, for "theirs is the kingdom of heaven."<sup>254</sup> To them - the "little ones" the Father is pleased to reveal what remains hidden from the wise and the learned.<sup>255</sup> Jesus shares the life of the poor, from the cradle to the cross; he experiences hunger, thirst and privation.<sup>256</sup> Jesus identifies himself with the poor of every kind and makes active love toward them the condition for entering his kingdom.<sup>257</sup>

### Questions for Reflection

1. How do I perceive the negative experiences of my life? How does God reveal Himself in these experiences?
2. When is my 'earthly strength' a spiritual weakness and not to my advantage in deepening my faith?
3. How can entrusting myself to Mary, model of the Evangelical Child, help me to choose poverty of spirit as a path to "increase my faith," a path of joy and peace?

### 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.*