

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. 1360, No. 2097, footnote 14: Cf. Lk 1:46-49;

No. 2781, footnote 33: Cf. 1Jn 1:3; No.1360.

www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/catechism

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André Daigneault, *The Long Journey toward Serenity* (Ft. Collins, CO: In the Arms of Mary

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Families of Nazareth Movement – www.familiesofnazareth.us

October 9, 2022 ~ Twenty-Eighth 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

Reading I 2 Kgs 5:14-17

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

Reading II 2 Tm 2:8-13

Gospel Lk 17:11-19

Opening or Closing Prayer

My Lord Jesus,

Thank you for Your gift of the Eucharist in which You desire to meet with me, accept me, and love me just as I am.

Forgive me for constantly submerging myself in the world, seeking its innumerable temporal treasures, proving that You are not my one true treasure.

O my Lord, during Holy Mass, and during every moment of this day, I entrust to You all my affairs, fears, uncertainties and distractions, and I beg You to...

Open my soul to ever deeper contrition for wasting so many graces, and to gratefulness for Your constant bestowals.

Help me to have the attitude of a helpless child and a contrite sinner in need of Your Mercy.

Heal me of my spiritual leprosy.

Help me to discover You in the Eucharist and to desire You as my only true treasure – my only Love.

Transform me that I may decrease and You may increase.

Unite me to You, my Eucharistic Savior.

May our Blessed Mother await and receive in me and through me Your kenosis – Eucharist – and may she always be grateful within me for Your Sacrament of Love.

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

Families of Nazareth USA
Summer Retreat 2007

Spiritual Reflection

And one of them, realizing he had been healed, returned, glorifying God in a loud voice; and he fell at the feet of Jesus and he thanked him. He was a Samaritan.

Lk17:15

Blessed are you for my life

It reverberates in me like soft music, this magnificent saying of St. Clare of Assisi at the moment of her death, words that I would like to repeat at my own death: "Blessed are you, my God for having given me life!" In order to utter such words, one needs to have loved life, to have loved it in spite of trials and sufferings. Those words reconcile us with the other image that we sometimes made of Christianity and holiness. The neurotic or masochistic image of which we are, at times, prisoners, speaks only of suffering in this poor life so, as a result, we should not love life too much since it is a *valley of tears*, and we should be waiting for another life.

As he went along, Francis of Assisi would be singing a hymn to Creation, chatting with birds, stroking a wolf, sleeping under the stars, in nature brimmed with flowers under an Italian sky. Here is a refreshing image of holiness. True holiness is an explosion, a poem, a wonderment and a jubilation. It tears the *old skins* to allow us to drink from the new and sparkling wine that revives us. St. Teresa of Avila asked her sisters to dance in the hallways of Carmel, speaking to God with a total abandon. Once, she answered a sister who told her of a novice who was having visions: "Well, cut her short, feed her some good chicken, and if her visions persist, bring her to me!" And Francis of Assisi undressed, naked as the day he was born, in front of the bishop of Assisi and his own father, which such simplicity and naivety that the people were touched. Then he said: "Now I have a father, Our Father in heaven." He traveled to Rome with his spiritual sons, wandering on the roads and repeating: "The Lord asks me to be a fool in this world." Francis loved life, sang about life, he, the poet of creation. In spite of his defects, his fragility, and the narcissism of his youth, his life is a masterpiece of grace, and he remains the model of a saint who touches our hearts today.

We are afraid to live and, at times, even to love life. Some Christians falsely think that loving life does not appear spiritual enough and one would almost need to disdain joy, pleasure, livelihood...

What happens when we do not live? We become tense like the "older son" of the parable, we are consumed by our duty, but without joy, and become jealous of

these "prodigal sons" who come from afar but are transformed by Forgiveness. We then take refuge behind rules and principles which are often only human precepts and provide a false security. Frustrated and discouraged by the high standard we have pursued, we are interiorly irritated (at best consciously, or at worst, unconsciously) with ourselves, with others and, sometimes with God. We live in a sort of existential *emptiness* that we find difficult to understand, and we tend to fill this emptiness in many different ways.

André Daigneault, *The Long Journey toward Serenity*, p.64-65; 81

References from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

2097 To adore God is to acknowledge, in respect and absolute submission, the "nothingness of the creature" who would not exist but for God. To adore God is to praise and exalt him and to humble oneself, as Mary did in the Magnificat, confessing with gratitude that he has done great things and holy is his name.¹⁴ The worship of the one God sets man free from turning in on himself, from the slavery of sin and the idolatry of the world.

2781 When we pray to the Father, we are *in communion with him* and with his Son, Jesus Christ.³³ Then we know and recognize him with an ever-new sense of wonder. The first phrase of the Our Father is a blessing of adoration before it is a supplication. For it is the glory of God that we should recognize him as "Father," the true God. We give him thanks for having revealed his name to us, for the gift of believing in it, and for the indwelling of his Presence in us.

1360 The Eucharist is a sacrifice of thanksgiving to the Father, a blessing by which the Church expresses her gratitude to God for all his benefits, for all that he has accomplished through creation, redemption, and sanctification. Eucharist means first of all "thanksgiving."

Questions for Reflection

1. In my daily life, how often do I turn away from the "gift" I receive in whatever form it may take, from a mere smile to an overwhelming blessing? How constant is my thanksgiving?
2. What is my reaction when I discover sadness instead of joy in my daily circumstances or that of others?
3. How can I envision Mary at my side singing the Magnificat together with me? Do I pray for this grace of joy and wonderment?

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.