

### 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. 654, footnotes 526: Rom 6:4; cf. 4:25; 527: Cf. Eph 2:4-5; 1 Pet 1:3; No. 658, No. 787, footnotes 215: Cf. Mk 1: 16-20; 3:13-19; Mt 13:10-17; Lk 10:17-20; 22:28-30; 216: Jn 15:4-5; 217: Jn 6:56.*

[catholicculture.org/culture/library/catechism](http://catholicculture.org/culture/library/catechism)

*New American Bible* © USCCB. All rights reserved. [bible.usccb.org/readings/calendar](http://bible.usccb.org/readings/calendar)

André Daigneault, *The Way of Imperfection* (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)

### APRIL 9, 2023 ~ EASTER SUNDAY ~ YEAR A SPIRITUAL REFLECTION

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>	Acts 10:34a, 37-43
<b>Responsorial Psalm</b>	Ps 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23
<b>Reading II</b>	Col 3:1-4 or 1Cor 5:6b-8
<b>Gospel</b>	Jn 20:1-9

#### Opening or Closing Prayer

**Lord Jesus,**

You were sent by the Father to gather together those who are scattered.  
You came among us, doing good and bringing healing,  
announcing the Word of salvation  
and giving the Bread which lasts forever.  
Be our companion on life's pilgrim way.

**May your Holy Spirit** inflame our hearts, enliven our hope and open our minds,  
so that together with our sisters and brothers in faith  
we may recognize you in the Scriptures and in the breaking of bread.

**May your Holy Spirit** transform us into one body  
and lead us to walk humbly on the earth, in justice and love,  
as witnesses of your resurrection.

**In communion with Mary,**  
whom you gave to us as our Mother  
at the foot of the cross,  
through you

may all praise, honor and blessing be to the Father  
in the Holy Spirit and in the Church,  
Now and forever. Amen

*50th International Eucharistic Congress Prayer, Dublin 2012*

*Families of Nazareth USA  
Summer Retreat 2012*

## Spiritual Reflection

*For our paschal lamb, Christ, has been sacrificed.  
Therefore, let us celebrate the feast, not with the old yeast...  
but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. 1 Cor 5:7-8*

To be rejected by one's friends, to be calumniated, to feel as an "object of scorn," and to see one's supposed virtues fleeting, is the way of humiliation that brings Light. The true fruitful apostolate must first pass through the cross: "the messenger is not greater than the one who sent him" (Jn 13:16). Since Jesus saved the world and resurrected after his Passion and painful death, the apostle cannot seek another way. The hours of darkness are a prelude to victory rather than a sign of defeat for him. They are confirmation that God is with him instead of having abandoned him, and this is precisely because he directs him in the same way of *descent* that his Son, the *Lowliest*, has also experienced.

It is at the bottom that woundedness is transformed into light, and the wounds of the soul and heart become wounds of love.

Saint John of the Cross says:

If the soul, already wounded through its sins and miseries, is touched by the wounds of love, it immediately affects it, and these wounds which came from another cause become wounds of love.

In fact, Jesus does not heal us by closing our wounds but in opening them so that, through weakness, love can be poured in from then on.

John of the Cross continues:

The same burning that created the wound must heal it; it heals it by increasing it. The more the lively flame of love heals, the more it increases the wound because the more the lover is wounded by love, the healthier he becomes. The healing produced by love consists of adding new wounds of love to the first ones until the soul finally becomes an immense wound of love...

God's love is a *consuming fire* that destroys and burns, and all that is an obstacle to union must disappear and die. Apostolic work needs to be purified of all motives that are too human in order to become fully supernatural...This purification of the apostolate is like a crucible, and includes "exterior trials, failures, contradictions from high places, sickness, persecutions, infirmities, loss of goods, painful doubts on the state of the soul, etc.

The best cross is always the one we have not chosen, but that God allows for our purification and sanctification. There is no resurrection without a preceding death by love. It is when we have nothing that God can give us everything...

...Very often we count too much on ourselves and, yet, it is in desperate situations, when no human solution is possible, that the glory of God manifests itself.

André Daigneault, *The Way of Imperfection*, pp.89-90

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

**654** The Paschal mystery has two aspects: by his death, Christ liberates us from sin; by his Resurrection, he opens for us the way to a new life. This new life is above all justification that reinstates us in God's grace, "so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life."<sup>526</sup> Justification consists in both victory over the death caused by sin and a new participation in grace.<sup>527</sup>

**658** Christ, "the first-born from the dead" (*Col* 1:18), is the principle of our own resurrection, even now by the justification of our souls (cf. *Rom* 6:4), and one day by the new life he will impart to our bodies (cf.: *Rom* 8:11).

**787** From the beginning, Jesus associated his disciples with his own life, revealed the mystery of the Kingdom to them, and gave them a share in his mission, joy, and sufferings.<sup>215</sup> Jesus spoke of a still more intimate communion between him and those who would follow him: "Abide in me, and I in you. . . . I am the vine, you are the branches."<sup>216</sup> And he proclaimed a mysterious and real communion between his own body and ours: "He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him."<sup>217</sup>

## Questions for Reflection

1. What keeps me from living the Paschal mystery? How do I react to personal trials and/or communal trials such as weather events and school violence in our country?
2. As Jesus comes to me with His light of truth, where is His love in what I experience? How open am I to His mercy?
3. I can forget about God, but He never forgets about me (Pope Francis). How can Mary, in her simplicity and trust, guide me to give myself wholly to the Father in union with Jesus Crucified? How can Mary's sacrificial attitude influence my will?

## 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.*