

### 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 my 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. 1996, footnote 46: Cf. *Jn* 1:12-18; 17:3; *Rom* 8: 14-17; 2 *Pet* 1:3-4; No. 2002, footnote 52: St. Augustine, *conf.* 13, 36, 51: PL. 32, 868; cf. *Gen* 1:31

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

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Tadeusz Dajczer, *The Gift of Faith*, 4th ed. (Ft. Collins, CO: In the Arms of Mary

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### Nov. 19, 2023 ~ Thirty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time ~ Year A 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** Prv 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31

**Responsorial Psalm** Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5

**Reading II** 1 Thes 5:1-61

**Gospel** Mt 25:14-30

#### 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

*Jesus told his disciples this parable:  
"A man going on a journey  
called in his servants and entrusted his possessions to them.  
To one he gave five talents; to another, two; to a third, one—  
to each according to his ability." Mt. 25:14-30*

God waits for us to look with the eyes of faith at all the experiences we live through, especially the difficult ones. In the parable of the talents, Jesus warns us not to close ourselves off from coming to know Him through faith and not to be slothful in using all things which God is continuously giving us. . .

There are two kinds of talents: those that are less precious and those that are more precious. If you are successful, if something comes out right for you, this is certainly a talent. However, if nothing turns out right, this is a more precious talent. **Failures are the priceless treasures given to you in your life...**

The parable of the talents is an evangelical call to conversion. You have to start looking at your life differently; you must look at it with the eyes of faith. Then you will see God's endless giving of graces; you will see your whole life as a multitude of hidden opportunities for continual inner transformation. You will come to know that everything is grace. It seems that God, granting you difficult graces, is forcing His gifts into your hands, but you resist and do not want to accept them. **Yet, difficult graces are the most valuable talents of your life.** Sometimes there are many of them because God wants you to have enough talents to make use of.

**Faith is sharing God's vision of reality**, but God looks at your life in a completely different way. If you have faith, it is like seeing every day of your life through the eyes of Jesus. Only then will you see the unceasing opportunities for your conversion and sanctification. Then, in the light of faith, you will also begin to understand suffering that is a cross and something that will therefore spiritually transform you to the extent that you accept it. If in your difficulties you recognize the cross as an opportunity toward transformation, then your difficulties truly become gifts for you. If you could see all the countless talents that God is continuously giving you, then you would never be sad. Talents such as poor health or situations filled with conflicts and failures would then bring joy to your heart – joy because God bestows something invaluable on you and shows you exceptional trust. He trusts that you will not bury or reject His gifts. **He counts on your faith** since it is only in the light of faith that you can recognize the talents given to you. A talent is everything that you have understood and remembered up to this moment. However, poor memory and the fact that you forget many things

is also a talent because everything brings grace and – in this meaning – everything is a grace.

Only a person who has faith is able to be grateful for everything. This gratitude will be visible on your face as joy, for everything may be changed into good. This reflection about talents refers to the teaching of St. Paul and to the famous thesis of St. Augustine, "We know that all things work for good for those who love God" (Rom 8:28) – even sin. Therefore, even a fall, which is a great misfortune and at the same time hurts Jesus, can be an opportunity within which is hidden some kind of talent given to you from which you can profit.

Tadeusz Dajczer, *The Gift of Faith*, pp. 9-13

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

**1996** Our justification comes from the grace of God. Grace is *favor*, the *free and undeserved help* that God gives us to respond to his call to become children of God, adoptive sons, partakers of the divine nature and of eternal life.<sup>46</sup>

**2002** God's free initiative demands *man's free response*, for God has created man in his image by conferring on him, along with freedom, the power to know him and love him. The soul only enters freely into the communion of love. God immediately touches and directly moves the heart of man. He has placed in man a longing for truth and goodness that only he can satisfy. The promises of "eternal life" respond, beyond all hope, to this desire:

If at the end of your very good works..., you rested on the seventh day, it was to foretell by the voice of your book that at the end of our works, which are indeed "very good" since you have given them to us, we shall also rest in you on the sabbath of eternal life.<sup>52</sup>

## Questions for Reflection

1. What are the most valuable talents that God has entrusted to me during the course of my life?
2. How have these 'talents' led me to a deeper faith in God?
3. Do I see my entrustment to Blessed Mother as a 'talent'? How can I share my discoveries?

## 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.*