

### 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. 544, footnotes 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; No. 2443, footnotes 232: Mt 5:42; 10:8; 233: Cf. Mt 25:31-36; 234: Mt 11:5; cf. Lk 4:18; No. 2444, footnotes 235: CA 57; cf. Lk 6:20-22, Mt 8:20, Mk 132:41-44; 236: Eph 4:28

*New American Bible* © USCCB. All rights reserved. <http://www.usccb.org/nab/index.shtml>

André Daigneault, *The Way of Imperfection: Holiness for the Poor* (Ft. Collins, CO: In the Arms of Mary Foundation, 2016). - [www.inthearmsofmary.org](http://www.inthearmsofmary.org) All rights reserved.

Families of Nazareth Movement – [www.familiesofnazareth.us](http://www.familiesofnazareth.us)

### Nov. 26, 2023 ~ Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe ~ 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

<b>Reading I</b>	Ez 34:11-12, 15-17
<b>Responsorial Psalm</b>	Ps 23:1-2, 2-3, 5-6
<b>Reading II</b>	1 Cor 15:20-26, 28
<b>Gospel</b>	Mt 25:31-46

#### 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

*“Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of the least brothers of mine, you did for me.” Mt 25:40*

The poor have a message to deliver to us. In their unique way, they are messengers of the Good News of the Gospel; they are the bearers of Christ.

They have a unique and primordial message because of their situation, the suffering they endure. We cannot be led to a sound reflection in the Church without using what the poorest tell us about the man humiliated, Christ crucified [. . .]. The more elementary the message is, the more it is filled with life experience, and the more it is indispensable for the Church. She cannot develop her theology, spirituality, nor liturgy without that message (Joseph Wresinski, *Blessed Are You The Poor!*). . .

The poor evangelize us. It is a fact, a reality. Who has not experience it? That child who one day made us understand the bible as no one had done before him; that poor who, at the crossroads of our life, allowed us to grasp the heart of the evangelical message more than several years of study...Who among us has not received the Gospel from a little one? Jean Vanier writes:

The poor one reveals Jesus Christ. He allows the one who comes to “help him” to discover his own poverty and vulnerability; he allows him to discover his capacity to love, the loving powers of his heart. The poor one has a mysterious power; in his weakness, he becomes capable of touching hardened hearts and revealing hidden living sources of water.

It is the little hand of the child whom we are not afraid of that reaches through the bars of our egoistic prison. It liberates. And God is hidden in that child.

The poor evangelize us. This is why they are the treasures of the Church (*Community and Growth*).

Therefore, we understand better why Paul VI says that the poor are like the sacrament of God; it is a powerful expression, but very real.

In each man there is a presence of Jesus. But there is a *particular* presence of Jesus in each person who suffers. “Amen I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me” (Mt 25:40).

Consequently, for Christians, the poorest one, the smallest, is in reality the greatest, because Jesus sided totally with him to the point where, when one receives one of these, he receives Himself.

The saints were always very conscious of this reality of Jesus Christ present particularly in the poor. For example, Saint Vincent de Paul says to his Daughters of Charity: “Know, my daughters, that when you leave prayer and holy Mass in service to the poor, you lose nothing, since serving the poor is to go toward God; and you need to see God in these persons.”

André Daigneault, *The Way of Imperfection*, pp. 75-77

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

**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>

**2443** God blesses those who come to the aid of the poor and rebukes those who turn away from them: "Give to him who begs from you, do not refuse him who would borrow from you"; "you received without pay, give without pay."<sup>232</sup> It is by what they have done for the poor that Jesus Christ will recognize his chosen ones.<sup>233</sup> When "the poor have the good news preached to them," it is the sign of Christ's presence.<sup>234</sup>

**2444** "The Church's love for the poor . . . is a part of her constant tradition." This love is inspired by the Gospel of the Beatitudes, of the poverty of Jesus, and of his concern for the poor.<sup>235</sup> Love for the poor is even one of the motives for the duty of working so as to "be able to give to those in need."<sup>236</sup> It extends not only to material poverty but also to the many forms of cultural and religious poverty.<sup>237</sup>

## Questions for Reflection

1. What situations reveal how open I am to the grace of Christ caring for others through me? How much do I ask for this grace?
2. How do I experience God's love when facing my lack of good will toward those materially or spiritually poor?
3. How can Mary's example help me to choose humility so that Christ can come and live in me and through me?

## 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.*