

### 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 "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.2616, footnotes 84: Cf. Mk 1:40-41; 5:36; 7:29; Cf. Lk 23:39-43; 85: Cf. Mk 2:5; 5:28; Lk 7:37-38; 86: Mt 9:27; Mk 10:48; No. 2617, footnote 88: Cf. Lk 1:38; Acts 1:14; No. 2618, footnotes 89: Cf. Jn 2:1-12; 90: Cf. Jn 19:25-27. <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/catechism/>

*New American Bible* © USCCB. All rights reserved. <https://bible.usccb.org/readings>

S.C. Biela, *Open Wide the Door to Christ* (Ft. Collins, CO: In the Arms of Mary

Foundation, 2005). All rights reserved. – [www.inthearmsofmary.org](http://www.inthearmsofmary.org)

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

FEBRUARY 11, 2024 ~ SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME ~ YEAR B  
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** Lv 13:1-2, 44-46

**Responsorial Psalm** Ps 32:1-2, 5, 11

**Reading II** 1 Cor 10:31—11:1

**Gospel** Mk 1:40-45

### Opening or Closing Prayer

#### Father of Mercy and of Love,

**Thank you for the gift of reconciliation** through the Redemptive Sacrifice of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Your love is more powerful** than my sin. There is no evil that surpasses Your infinite mercy.

**Send your Holy Spirit** to convince me of my weakness so that I may live with a truth of conscience and a certainty of redemption.

**Open me**, Gracious Father, to the graces of being personally responsible for my sins, longing for forgiveness, and of being obedient to the call to conversion.

**When I seek forgiveness**, give me the courage to reveal the abyss of my misery and to accept my sins as "happy faults" so that, as Your child, I may run to Your loving embrace.

**Through the help and intercession of Mary**, Mother of Mercy, may I learn true contrition for the wounds I have caused Her Son.

**And may my continual renewal**, through the grace of Your sacraments, work to revitalize the Church, so that, as One Body in Christ, we may proclaim Your dominion over all the earth.

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

*Families of Nazareth USA  
Summer retreat 2008*

## Spiritual Reflection

*A leper came to Jesus and kneeling down begged him and said, "If you wish, you can make me clean." Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand, touched him, and said to him, "I do will it. Be made clean." Mk 1: 40-41*

Often the Holy Scriptures compares sin, which destroys the human soul, to leprosy, which disfigures and kills the body. As described in the Old Testament, God's reaction to the behavior of Aaron and Miriam demonstrates that not only mortal sin, but also thinking and acting in a human way, as well as disobedience to God's will, destroy the soul like leprosy destroys the body.

When you look at your spiritual situation in the light of faith, you will discover that, although in the present moment you might not be committing any mortal sins for which your conscience may reproach you, your soul is still covered with the leprosy of unfaithfulness and thinking in a human way – the **leprosy of spiritual riches**. Your soul is destroyed by the "leprosy" of seeking your own will instead of what God expects from you.

When you undertake some job because of God's will, and **you burn out due to your excessive involvement**, which stems from your lack of detachment from work, this too causes spiritual leprosy. You concentrate too much on the task at hand or on the goal that has been set, rather than on the Person of Jesus Christ who, by knocking on your door, asks you to allow Him to enter into the Kingdom of your action. If you remembered about the Lord, who desires to enter into your emptiness, then you would invite Him into everything you undertake and you would ask Him to act through you. Perhaps, when you "work very zealously," you think that you are doing God's will. God, on the other hand, does not want you to become so involved in this way at all. Whoever gives his entire heart to a particular matter or job, and forgets about God becomes like a moth that flies into a flame and is destroyed by it, rather than benefitting from the flame's warmth and light.

Our Lord desires that we try to discern His will by examining the situation, circumstances, and conditions in which we find ourselves. Certainly, when we walk in the darkness of faith, we do not always know what God's will is. Regardless, we should always seek it.

Even when Christ achieves very authentic signs through us, we still manage to forget about Him. By this attitude we cause others to close themselves off to the Lord and we destroy God's action. Our spiritual leprosy can then infect those around us, and will be reflected in the spiritual lives of those with whom we have come in contact.

When we discover how the leprosy of thinking in a human way destroys our interior life, even if this leprosy is intertwined with the good that God accomplishes through us, we will begin to await the Eucharist or confession as the time during which we may be purified of leprosy. This is how the lepers from the Gospel awaited their encounter with Jesus. They awaited their encounter with Christ because they knew that He was their only hope since leprosy was an incurable disease at that time.

S.C. Biela, *Open the Door to Christ*, pp 70-73

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

- 2616** Prayer to Jesus is answered by him already during his ministry, through signs that anticipate the power of his death and Resurrection: Jesus hears the prayer of faith, expressed in words (the leper, Jairus, the Canaanite woman, the good thief)<sup>84</sup> or in silence (the bearers of the paralytic, the woman with a hemorrhage who touches his clothes, the tears and ointment of the sinful woman).<sup>85</sup> The urgent request of the blind men, "Have mercy on us, Son of David" or "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" has been renewed in the traditional prayer to Jesus known as the *Jesus Prayer*: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner!"<sup>86</sup> Healing infirmities or forgiving sins, Jesus always responds to a prayer offered in faith: "Your faith has made you well; go in peace."
- 2617** Mary's prayer is revealed to us at the dawning of the fullness of time. Before the incarnation of the Son of God, and before the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, her prayer cooperates in a unique way with the Father's plan of loving kindness: at the Annunciation, for Christ's conception; at Pentecost, for the formation of the Church, his Body.<sup>88</sup> In the faith of his humble handmaid, the Gift of God found the acceptance he had awaited from the beginning of time...
- 2618** The Gospel reveals to us how Mary prays and intercedes in faith. At Cana,<sup>89</sup> the mother of Jesus asks her son for the needs of a wedding feast; this is the sign of another feast - that of the wedding of the Lamb where he gives his body and blood at the request of the Church, his Bride. It is at the hour of the New Covenant, at the foot of the cross,<sup>90</sup> that Mary is heard as the Woman, the new Eve, the true "Mother of all the living."

## Questions for Reflection

1. How I have experienced my sinfulness/leprosy while undertaking a job, a task or service that was God's will?
2. To what is God calling me in such a situation? How can I follow the leper's attitude and example?
3. Blessed Mother's prayer was always in cooperation with God's plan. How willing am I to ask Her to pray for me? What is my prayer today?

## 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.*