

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. 2052, footnote 1: Mt 19:16-19; **No. 2053, footnotes 2:** Mt 19:21, **3:** Cf. Mt 5:17, **4:** Cf. Mt 19:6-12, 21, 23-29.

www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/catechism

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André Daigneault, *The Way of Imperfection*. (Fr. Collins, CO: In the Arms of Mary

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OCTOBER 13, 2024~ 28TH 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	Wis 7:7-11
Responsorial Psalm	Ps 90:12-13, 14-15, 16-17
Reading II	Heb 4:12-13
Gospel	Mk 10:17-30

Opening or Closing Prayer

Dear Lord,

The world of temporality constantly pulls on my heart, although I want to seek only God's will for my life.

Thank you for giving me your Mother who teaches me, first of all, how to discover Your Love, and then how to trust in Pure Love.

Transform me with the power of the Eucharist, giving me your Divine Light to penetrate my heart and reveal its deepest truths.

Through Mary, give me hope and lead me to contrition. May my contrition give birth to gratitude for Your constant bestowals, given to me because You Love me just as I am ~ a sinner.

Let every act of gratitude multiply in my heart into new acts of gratitude as Blessed Mother carries me securely under Her mantle toward You, my Redeemer.

I beg for these graces through You, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

*Families of Nazareth USA
Summer Retreat 2006*

Spiritual Reflection

"How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!...[but]all things are possible for God." Mk 10:23,27

Not for the Elite, but for the Little Ones

Prayer and even invocations are not reserved for the *elite*; they need to be accessible to the poor, the little ones, the wounded, the simple, and the children. One could think: is it right to pray when I experience my misery and my weakness on a daily basis, when I do not succeed in overcoming my problem – whatever it may be – and when I fall very often? Is the path of prayer forbidden to the poor, the alcoholic, and the wounded of all kinds? On this subject, Teresa of Avila says that the necessity of prayer is primarily for the weak and the sinners, and she declares that if they persevere in prayer – even the prayer of the poor – they will, one day, abandon their life of sin. This is why God impels us to *descend* to the bottom of our poverty, so that he may fill us completely. . .

The prayer of the poor is a cry that comes from a desire and a thirst. Despite our weakness, our woundedness, our problems, and our poverty, we must desire holiness, because holiness is a gift offered to the poor. Are we less worthy of obtaining the grace of holiness than the good thief? We sometimes think: "Holiness is impossible for me with all my problems." But it is exactly *the impossible* that God wants to give us, and the more we feel our poverty, the more we must ask the impossible from God. "When we pray," according to Charles de Foucauld, "we must always ask for the impossible because only He is the Divine One".

"My Jesus, mercy." Is this prayer formula not one of the most evangelical? Is the name of *Jesus* not the easiest, the shortest, and the most efficacious of all prayers? Everyone can say it in his heart – anywhere – during the day, at night, or during trials. Saint Francis de Sales does not hesitate to say that those who repeat the name of *Jesus* frequently, with faith and trust, can be assured of a holy death. Furthermore, when this name is associated with *His mercy*, then one can obtain everything. . .

Obstacles to Holiness

What are the two main obstacles to faith and holiness? They are *pride* and *the search for human glory*. . .

If we are entirely truthful, should we not admit that we would rather choose riches instead of poverty, honors instead of disgrace, and that we desire, above all, to be judged as wise and prudent in the eyes of men rather than as fools like Christ?

Without their knowledge, the poor and those wounded by life sometimes live the great purifications spoken of by John of the Cross: they are considered nothing,

they are rejected and live with indignities of all kinds, and often are regarded as fools in the eyes of the world. Can we not say that they are humiliated with Christ humiliated, poor with the poor Christ, and crucified with Christ on the cross? They are *removed* from their belongings, stripped of all their pretenses – and they surrender themselves this way. Can we not say that they are *sanctified* by this way of weakness, imperfection, and *descent*?

André Daigneault, *The Way of Imperfection*, pp. 58-59;136-137

References from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

2052 "Teacher, what good deed must I do, to have eternal life?" To the young man who asked this question, Jesus answers first by invoking the necessity to recognize God as the "One there is who is good," as the supreme Good and the source of all good. Then Jesus tells him: "If you would enter life, keep the commandments." And he cites for his questioner the precepts that concern love of neighbor: "You shall not kill, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother." Finally Jesus sums up these commandments positively: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."¹

2053 To this first reply Jesus adds a second: "If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me."² This reply does not do away with the first: following Jesus Christ involves keeping the Commandments. The Law has not been abolished,³ but rather man is invited to rediscover it in the person of his Master who is its perfect fulfillment. In the three synoptic Gospels, Jesus' call to the rich young man to follow him, in the obedience of a disciple and in the observance of the Commandments, is joined to the call to poverty and chastity.⁴ The evangelical counsels are inseparable from the Commandments

Questions for Reflection

1. What do I consider obstacles to my holiness, and what is my attitude towards those obstacles?
2. How is God present in these situations and what is His will for me?
3. How can I learn from Mary, the lowly handmaid, who gave up everything to follow the Lord?

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.