

## 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. 2822, footnotes 95: 1 Tim 2:3-4; 96: 2 Pet 3:9; cf. Mt 18:4; No. 2824, footnotes 99: Heb 10:7; Ps 40:7; 100: Jn 8:29; 101: Lk 22:42; cf. Jn 4:34; 5:30; 6:38; 102: Gal 1:4; 103: Heb 10:10; No. 2825, footnotes 104: Heb 5:8; 105, Cf. Jn 8-29. [www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/catechism](http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/catechism)*

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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)

## December 8, 2024 ~ 2nd Sunday of Advent ~ Year C 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>	Bar 5:1-9
<b>Responsorial Psalm</b>	Ps 126:1-2, 2-3, 4-5, 6
<b>Reading II</b>	Phil 1:4-6, 8-11
<b>Gospel</b>	Lk 3:1-6

### Opening or Closing Prayer

*Listen. Put it into your heart,  
my smallest child,  
that the thing that frightened you,  
the thing that afflicted you is nothing:  
Do not let it disturb you...  
Am I not here, I who am your mother?  
Are you not under my shadow and protection?  
Am I not the source of your joy?  
Are you not in the hollow of my mantle,  
in the crossing of my arms?  
Do you need something more?*

– Our Lady of Guadalupe, 1531 A.D.

## Spiritual Reflection

*“Prepare the way of the Lord,  
Make straight his paths.” Lk 3:4*

You constantly meet God in your daily life. He is present to you through everything that He creates. You encounter God in people and events. In a special way, you also come across Him through His will. Through His will, God comes to you as if in His own Person. God’s will is not only something, it is also Somebody. God Himself comes to you with a concrete call. God reveals to you all that is salvific and, simultaneously, the best for you.

In answer to His call, what attitude does the Lord expect from us? This becomes clear when we take a look at what kind of attitude Jesus assumed when fulfilling the Father’s will. Jesus said, “...I do not seek my own will, but the will of the one who sent me,” and “My food is to do the will of the one who sent me and to finish his work” (Jn 5:30,4:34). . .

Christ’s extraordinary hunger to do God’s will is the ideal example and role model for us to imitate. The person who hungers to fulfill God’s will is the one who widely opens the door to the One who is knocking. The more you **empty yourself of your own will** and become poor in spirit, the wider you will open the door. As a result, you will be free for the coming of the Lord and His will, which is love. He desires to heal you and fill you with Himself.

The poorer you are, the hungrier you will be for God’s will. The word “hunger” is ideal to use here. Hunger does not place conditions: the hungrier you are, the less picky you are about the food you eat. Sometimes it is enough to hunger for only half a day in order to eat everything that you are given, without being picky at all about what kind of food it is, even if you do not like it.

If a true hunger for God’s will existed in us, then we would receive His will with joy and longing. More precisely, the plans and designs of each one of us would be secondary...In other words, the less we are attached to our own designs and conceptions, the more we become free to fulfill God’s will. Consequently, it is easier for us to renounce everything that is not in accordance with His will.

The poverty of a person’s own desires opens his heart to fulfilling God’s desires. Such an attitude is salvific. It frees us from excessive self-preoccupation and fear about the future. If we truly believe that God desires that we assume precisely this attitude, then is there anything to fear? Can our merciful Father desire anything other than what is good for His beloved children?

It is necessary for you to hunger for everything that God wants to give you, regardless of whether it is joy, suffering or even death. Even if God wants to give

you success or difficulties, praise or unjust accusations, human friendship or loneliness and misunderstanding, you should hunger for it, because, if these gains and losses in life are according to His will, then they are salvific.

If a hunger for God’s will arises within you, then you will discover, with much surprise, that it no longer matters to you what it will be. Is anything else as important? There is only one essential question: What could be more important than God’s will, especially if God, who loves you and gave His life for your salvation, desires and planned precisely this for You?

S.C. Biela, *Open Wide the Door to Christ*, pp.146-149.

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

**2822** Our Father "desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." <sup>95</sup> He "is forbearing toward you, not wishing that any should perish." <sup>96</sup>

**2824** In Christ, and through his human will, the will of the Father has been perfectly fulfilled once for all. Jesus said on entering into this world: "Lo, I have come to do your will, O God." <sup>99</sup> Only Jesus can say: "I always do what is pleasing to him." <sup>100</sup> In the prayer of his agony, he consents totally to this will: "not my will, but yours be done." <sup>101</sup> For this reason Jesus "gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father." <sup>102</sup> "And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." <sup>103</sup>

**2825** "Although he was a Son, [Jesus] learned obedience through what he suffered." <sup>104</sup> How much more reason have we sinful creatures to learn obedience - we who in him have become children of adoption. We ask our Father to unite our will to his Son's, in order to fulfill his will, his plan of salvation for the life of the world. We are radically incapable of this, but united with Jesus and with the power of his Holy Spirit, we can surrender our will to him and decide to choose what his Son has always chosen: to do what is pleasing to the Father. <sup>105</sup>

## Questions for Reflection

1. What is my attitude towards God’s will? fear – fervent desire – passive acceptance?
2. How can I become more open so I may fulfill God’s will? How is this manifested in my daily life?
3. How do I recognize Blessed Mother doing the work of salvation in my soul? How can I become more aware of her intercession and beg to allow her to carry me? How do I cling to her?

## 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.*