

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. 27, footnote 1: Vatican Council II, GS 19 S1; **No.**

1826, footnotes 103: *1 Cor* 13:1-4; **104:** *1 Cor* 13:13.

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Tadeusz Dajczer, *The Gift of Faith, 3rd ed.*, (Ft. Collins, CO: In the Arms of Mary Foundation, 2012). All rights reserved. – www.inthearmsofmary.org

Families of Nazareth Movement – www.familiesofnazareth.us

November 11, 2018 ~ 32nd 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 1 Kgs 17:10-16

Responsorial Psalm Ps 146:7, 8-9, 9-10

Reading II Heb 9:24-28

Gospel Mk 12:38-44

Opening or Closing Prayer

Dearest Father, Your Son tells us, "Unless you turn and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven." I long to be Your smallest child. Help me to rediscover You as the One Who delights in me, Who calls me as His own.

My Jesus, You say to us, "Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven." You are the way to heaven. Thank You for saving me and giving me Yourself in the Holy Eucharist. Reactivate the call of my Baptism to serve the Church in childlike humility, "boasting only in God."

Holy Spirit, reveal to me my weaknesses that I may seek Jesus' strength. Reveal to me my nothingness, that I may await all things from Him. Convince me of Jesus' words, "What is impossible for human beings is possible for God."

Blessed Mother, I entrust my prideful doubt, fear, discouragement and ingratitude to your intercession so that I will believe, as God's beloved child and yours, "Ask and you will receive; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you."

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen

Families of Nazareth USA
Summer Retreat 2009

Spiritual Reflection

"She, from her poverty, has contributed all she had, her whole livelihood."
Mk 12:44

When Mother Teresa of Calcutta left her convent of sisters of the Loreto Order in India to care for the dying at the temple of the goddess Kali, she obviously had few possessions and little money. However very quickly, she gave all that she had to the dying. What then? When night came there remained only one thing: *God, if You wish, then I will die...* Mother Teresa of Calcutta understood that she might not find anyone willing to help her. At the same time, however, she believed that God was by her side and that, from then on, she would rely only on Him... There were days and nights when, after giving everything away, she fell asleep in horrible exhaustion. She slept with the certainty that she had nothing for tomorrow - nothing for her few postulants in the new order and nothing for the mass of dying people who had to be helped. These were lessons of faith and lessons of holiness for Mother Teresa of Calcutta. She had nothing. In these conditions, in the absence of any human system of security, Mother Teresa of Calcutta emerged as one whom the world looks upon with honor and respect. She is a person who had faith, who believed to the point of folly, who went through difficult lessons to gain faith in situations where humanly speaking there was nothing to rely on...

We can also talk about a similar self-entrusting to God of the widow from Zarephath who met with Elijah (cf. 1 Kings 17:8-16). The widow had a small child and there was a famine in her country. The only things left in her supplies were a handful of flour and a few drops of oil. It was under these conditions that Elijah said to her, "Make me a little cake." The comment of the widow, that this was their last handful of flour, changed nothing. Elijah repeated his request, "Make it for me." The woman replied, "Yes, I will do as you ask and then we will starve to death – my child and I." This was really an acceptance of death since there was nothing left to count on, not even this handful of food. This was God who, through Elijah, took from the widow the last remaining food that had given her a certain feeling of security. Then she had nothing...

A person who is stripped of everything – his whole system of security – is left with two options: he may either despair or, through faith, completely entrust himself to God. That is the kind of faith the widow must have had. For her, God must have been everything – her only support. God can strip us of our system of security, but we can also do this ourselves. Then an active purgation of ourselves from enslavement takes place. This is what happened to the evangelical widow; she stripped herself of everything she had...

If your faith is not radical enough to completely trust God's love for you to the point of folly, then you will continue to advance on your way of faith at a snail's pace. Or, you will go backward. Faith will deepen only when you allow God to be your only support and security. **God has the right to request that you give Him everything – everything in the sense of totally self-entrusting to Him.**

From the point of view of faith, it is a very good thing that sometimes our support crumbles beneath us; because grace is linked to this. You cannot rely on anything by God – not on any of His gifts, nor on any signs of His presence.

Tadeusz Dajczer, *The Gift of Faith*, pp.33-34; 32; 31-32; 34

References from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

- 27 The desire for God is written in the human heart, because man is created by God and for God; and God never ceases to draw man to himself. Only in God will he find the truth and happiness he never stops searching for:

The dignity of man rests above all on the fact that he is called to communion with God. This invitation to converse with God is addressed to man as soon as he comes into being. For if man exists it is because God has created him through love, and through love continues to hold him in existence. He cannot live fully according to truth unless he freely acknowledges that love and entrusts himself to his creator.¹

- 1826 "If I . . . have not charity," says the Apostle, "I am nothing." Whatever my privilege, service, or even virtue, "if I . . . have not charity, I gain nothing."¹⁰³ Charity is superior to all the virtues. It is the first of the theological virtues: "So faith, hope, charity abide, these three. But *the greatest of these is charity.*"¹⁰⁴

Questions for Reflection

1. What does the word 'purgation' mean to me? How am I being stripped from enslavements in my daily life?
2. What was the driving force behind St. Teresa of Calcutta's and the widow from Zarephath's charity? How is God speaking to me in this reflection?
3. How can Mary's total entrustment to God be the perfect example for me to obtain the theological virtue of Charity? Do I pray for this grace?

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.