

### 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. 305, footnote 167: Mt 6:31-33; No. 2677, footnotes 36: Cf. Lk 1:43; 37: Lk 1:38.*

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Tadeusz Dajczer, *The Gift of Faith*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Ft. Collins, CO: In the Arms of Mary Foundation, 2012). All rights reserved.

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### March 29, 2017 ~ 5th Sunday of Lent ~ 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

**Reading I** Ez 37:12-14

**Responsorial Psalm** Ps 130:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8

**Reading II** Rom 8:8-11

**Gospel** Jn 11:1-45

#### 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

*Summer Retreat 2010*  
*Families of Nazareth USA*

## Spiritual Reflection

“Whoever lives and believes in me will never die.” Jn 11:26

### FAITH AS RELYING ON CHRIST AND ENTRUSTING OURSELVES TO HIM

Faith is participation in the life of God; it is adherence to Him as the only Lord, as well as relying on Him alone. Relying on Christ and totally abandoning ourselves to Him expresses our complete confidence in Him. A person is made to seek out a feeling of security, to seek something to rely on, which means he is directed toward self-entrustment to God. He is directed toward having a system of security, toward counting on something, and entrusting himself to something or someone. A feeling of security is the basic, most elementary need of the human psyche. Lack of security, creates fear, whether in a threatening situation, or in a situation when something we rely on is taken away. This fear that arises in us causes us to intensify our efforts to feel secure.

When we count on our possessions, such as money, talents and abilities, we are referring to relying on things, and feelings of security in a personal sense when we count on our contacts and interpersonal relationships aimed toward the realization of our plans. Often feeling secure in the material sense is connected with our being oriented toward the future. A person with a strong psychological resonance tries to prepare for everything, so that he is not taken by surprise. In this way, it is as if he wants to control the future, and he seeks in this something to rely on and a feeling of security.

This kind of search for security is always present in our lives. A student taking an exam bases his security on his memory of what he has learned or on his abilities. He can also count on what is called “luck,” but he will always try to rely on something, whether it is in the material or personal sense. Nevertheless, all human systems of security cannot be perfect since they are based solely on our plans or calculations; that is why they have to fail, and then a crisis comes. If you trust in yourself, in your abilities, in your possessions, or in people with whom you are connected, sooner or later you will have to be disappointed.

In order for our faith to be reliance on Christ and entrustment of ourselves to Him, we have to accept Him as our only true security. Flowing from faith in Christ’s Word, a complete abandonment to Him is the only adequate response to His unfathomable love for us.

Faith is relying on nothing apart from God. We cannot rely on any of His gifts, but only on Him alone – on His power and infinite love

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 but God – not on any of His gifts, nor on any signs of His presence. The Old Testament relates to us that after a terrible defeat of the Israelites by the Philistines that took place during the time of Judges, the Ark of the Covenant got into the hands of the enemy...

This text is very important since it allows us to form a deeper understanding of what it means to rely exclusively on God. The Ark of the Covenant was not God; it was only a sign of His presence. The Israelites had tried to manipulate this principal sign of God for their personal use...

Christ, who expects us to entrust ourselves to Him, teaches us with His whole life the attitude of total self-entrusting to Him...

Tadeusz Dajczer, *The Gift of Faith*, pp. 29-30; 34-36.

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

**305** Jesus asks for childlike abandonment to the providence of our heavenly Father who takes care of his children’s smallest needs: “Therefore do not be anxious, saying, “What shall we eat?” or “What shall we drink?”. . . Your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well.”<sup>167</sup>

**2677** *Holy Mary, Mother of God*: With Elizabeth we marvel, “And why is this granted me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?”<sup>36</sup> Because she gives us Jesus, her son, Mary is Mother of God and our mother; we can entrust all our cares and petitions to her: she prays for us as she prayed for herself: “Let it be to me according to your word.”<sup>37</sup> By entrusting ourselves to her prayer, we abandon ourselves to the will of God together with her: “Thy will be done.”

### Questions for Reflection

1. Looking at my daily life, and looking at the present health crisis throughout the world and my country, what does surrendering everything to the Lord mean to me? In what ways do I hold back?
2. How can I experience God’s love in my present situation and my country’s situation? How do I want to respond?
3. During her whole life and especially at the foot of the Cross, Blessed Mother’s attitude was to await with trust the fulfillment of God’s redemptive plan. Through this humble awaiting, how can Mary guide me to ‘await’ with trust the miracles that God wants to perform in my life and the life of others?

### 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.*