

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. 517, footnotes 179: Cf. *Eph* 1:7; *Col* 1:13-14; *1 Pet* 1:18-19; **180:** Cf. *2 Cor* 8-9; **181:** Cf. *Lk* 2:51; **182:** *Jn* 15:3; **183:** *Mt* 8:17; cf. *Isa* 53:4; **184:** Cf. *Rom* 4:25; **No. 635, footnotes 485:** *Jn* 5:25; cf. *Mt* 12:40; *Rom* 10:7; *Eph* 4:9; **486:** *Heb* 2:14-15; cf. *Acts* 3:15; **487:** *Rev* 1:18; *Phil* 2:10.

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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
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April 21, 2019 ~ Easter Sunday ~ 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

Reading I Acts 10:34a, 37-43

Responsorial Psalm Ps 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23

Reading II Col 3:1-4

Gospel Jn 20:1-9

Opening or Closing Prayer

Mary, Virgin and Mother,
you who, moved by the Holy Spirit,
welcomed the word of life in the depths of your humble faith –

as you gave yourself completely to the Eternal One,
help us to say our own "yes" to the urgent call,
as pressing as ever,
to proclaim the good news of Jesus.

**Obtain for us now a new ardor
born of the resurrection,**
that we may bring to all the Gospel of life
which triumphs over death.

Give us a holy courage to seek new paths,
that the gift of unfading beauty
may reach every man and woman.

Mother of the living Gospel,
wellspring of happiness for God's little ones,
pray for us.
Amen.

Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 288 [Abridged]
Families of Nazareth USA
Summer Retreat 2014

Spiritual Reflection

*Then the other disciple also went in,
the one who had arrived at the tomb first,
and he saw and believed. Jn 20:8*

Faith, as expressed in poverty of spirit, has its example in the life and person of Jesus. To be poor means to be dependent. In the life of Jesus, we see three moments when His poverty became extreme. **God became entirely dependent and showed Himself in his powerlessness, as if in defeat, in these moments: Bethlehem, Calvary, and the Most Blessed Sacrament.** If poverty means dependence, then Jesus became completely dependent in **Bethlehem**, where there was a situation of powerlessness – one could even say defeat – because Jesus was not accepted by His own people and had to be born in conditions that were inhumane. Every one of your experiences of powerlessness and the inability to cope with something is partaking in the powerlessness of Jesus.

Terrifying in its expression, **Calvary** is the second situation of the denudation of Jesus. Here He was also unable to do anything to help Himself, since His hands, those hands that had blessed the crowds, were now nailed to the Cross, bleeding. He could not use His feet because those feet, which before had brought love and good news, were now nailed down. Jesus on Calvary was stripped of everything. **The Cross is an expression of the folly of God's love. Here the nakedness of Jesus was extreme.**

Yet another expression of the nakedness of Jesus is the **Most Blessed Sacrament**. Here there is also a situation of powerlessness and defeat, similar to that on Calvary. But of course, this only seems to be a defeat. Jesus is silent in the Most Blessed Sacrament, even when people pray to Him. In the tabernacle He remains naked to the extent that someone can take Him out and move Him wherever they want; one can accept Him as well as desecrate Him. Therefore, someone can do with Him whatever they want, literally whatever they want. **And this is the amazing mystery of the nakedness and poverty of Christ – His kenosis – His complete offering of Himself to man.**

These three situations – Bethlehem, Calvary, and the Most Blessed Sacrament – are situations in which the love of Jesus really reaches the point of folly by leading Him to extreme poverty. But it is through this folly and this poverty that Jesus brings you your redemption, brings you faith. God's silence, His powerlessness, His "defeat," is a scandal for the world that wants a God full of visible power. The Cross was and continues to be a stumbling block for those who do not believe, but for those who have faith, it is the highest power. Your cross,

which is your nakedness and poverty, makes room for grace in you – room for the grace of faith...

...**Open yourself up to the redeeming action of Christ through faith like that of an evangelical child.** You must believe that Jesus redeemed you from everything that threatens you, that you are truly free. You should say to yourself; *There is no threat since He has redeemed me and has freed me from everything. I need only to accept this. Faith is acceptance – the process of accepting the redeeming action of Christ.* Tadeusz Dajczer, *The Gift of Faith*, p 54-55,60.

References from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

- 517** Christ's whole life is a mystery of *redemption*. Redemption comes to us above all through the blood of his cross,¹⁷⁹ but this mystery is at work throughout Christ's entire life:
- already in his Incarnation through which by becoming poor he enriches us with his poverty;¹⁸⁰
 - in his hidden life which by his submission atones for our disobedience;¹⁸¹
 - in his word which purifies its hearers;¹⁸²
 - in his healings and exorcisms by which "he took our infirmities and bore our diseases";¹⁸³
 - and in his Resurrection by which he justifies us.¹⁸⁴
- 635** Christ went down into the depths of death so that "the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live."⁴⁸⁵ Jesus, "the Author of life", by dying destroyed "him who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and [delivered] all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong bondage."⁴⁸⁶ Henceforth the risen Christ holds "the keys of Death and Hades", so that "at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth."⁴⁸⁷

Questions for Reflection

1. In what recent event have I felt my own powerlessness, nakedness or dependence?
2. How can I know I am open to the redeeming action of Christ like an evangelical child? Do I yearn for this attitude?
3. What event this week resulted in my crying out to our Blessed Mother: "Mary, help!" "Mom, I need you!"?

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.