

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. 618, footnotes 452: 1Tim 2:5; 453: GS 22 S5, cf. §2; 454: Mt 16:24; 455: 1 Pet 2:21; 456: Cf. Mk 10:39, Jn 21:18-19; Col 1:24; 457: Cf. Lk 2:35; 458: St. Rose de Lima, cf. P. Hansen, Vita mirabilis (Louvain, 1668).

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S.C. Biela, *In the Arms of Mary* (Ft. Collins, CO: In the Arms of Mary Foundation, 2002).*

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April 14, 2019 ~ Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord ~ 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	Is 50:4-7
Responsorial Psalm	Ps 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24
Reading II	Phil 2:6-11
Gospel	Lk 22:14 – 23:56

Opening or Closing Prayer

Dear Father, great is Your Mercy.

My true vocation is intimacy with You in the Kingdom of Heaven. May the new model of righteousness Your Son has given me, "as I have done, you should also do," open me more to Your mercy and transform me into Your divine likeness.

Dear Jesus, holy is Your Name.

May your prayer, "that they may be one as you, Father, and I are one," become my own desire. Teach me how to build up the unity of Your Mystical Body by embracing and living out my vocation to authentic holiness and happiness.

Dear Holy Spirit, amazing is Your Grace.

Grant me your gifts in order to "always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks" the reason for my hope. Thank you that, through You, I can encounter Jesus daily in the Eucharist, the source of my hope, even in the situations of my life that are most difficult to understand.

Dear Mother Mary, source of my joy.

"Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled." As a vessel of the Holy Spirit, teach me to live the Beatitudes of your Son. Wrap me in your mantle, where I can believe in His mercy and fulfill my vocation to be salt of the earth and light of the world.

I 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 2011*

Spiritual Reflection

Rather, he emptied himself, ...he humbled himself, becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Phil 2:7-8

By praying before the Crucified Christ, you will receive the answer to the question: *Why do I suffer injustices in my life?* You will understand that God can permit something unjust, from a human point of view, to happen to you – because God sees things differently than men. The human injustice that you confront may be something just in God's eyes. As a sinner, all you deserve is rejection and punishment.

When you do not experience any injustice, you cannot understand with depth what Christ went through, whose death also had something to do with the injustice he experienced.

Someone who is condemned justly – like the good thief – can find a rational motive to accept suffering. However, someone who is unjustly accused and suffers despite his innocence, can only turn to the Cross of Christ for his motivation. Only when your resort to the Cross of Christ can you be grateful for the injustice that you suffer:

I give thanks to You, my God, for sharing with me your most precious treasure

Thank You for permitting me to understand better the mystery of your Cross.

On your way to sanctity, you may not expect that God will preserve you from injustice, and that nothing will happen to you, from a human point of view, that you do not deserve...

In all your experiences, even those which you do not understand, God conceals some special gift for you. You will understand this as you pray before the Cross and immerse yourself deeply in the mystery of the actions of God.

When you are crushed by suffering and suffer some injury
You become closer to the Crucified Christ.

Your cross enables you to be more united with the Crucified Christ, and it helps you understand in a deeper way the mystery of Christ's passion, death, and resurrection. Therefore, do not be surprised to encounter one suffering after another or to be rejected more often by people.

The thought of suffering is horrifying,
But, in fact, this was the way of Christ.

In the light of faith, you will understand that the greatest distinction that you can receive from Him, is when Christ shares His suffering with you...

Difficult experiences, trials of faith, or the problems of daily life will always be hard to bear. It is possible that your cross may have new situations that can afflict you...

All of these can become difficult experiences, but in the light of faith, Christ's yoke is easy and His burden light. Your cross permits you to unite yourself with the Crucified Christ. Therefore, try to look at all your difficulties and experiences with peace and trust.

S.C. Biela, *In the Arms of Mary*, pp. 32-35

References from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

618 The cross is the unique sacrifice of Christ, the "one mediator between God and men".⁴⁵² But because in his incarnate divine person he has in some way united himself to every man, "the possibility of being made partners, in a way known to God, in the paschal mystery" is offered to all men.⁴⁵³ He calls his disciples to "take up [their] cross and follow [him]",⁴⁵⁴ for "Christ also suffered for [us], leaving [us] an example so that [we] should follow in his steps."⁴⁵⁵ In fact Jesus desires to associate with his redeeming sacrifice those who were to be its first beneficiaries.⁴⁵⁶ This is achieved supremely in the case of his mother, who was associated more intimately than any other person in the mystery of his redemptive suffering.⁴⁵⁷ Apart from the cross there is no other ladder by which we may get to heaven.⁴⁵⁸

Questions for Reflection

1. God allowed His son to suffer death on a cross for me. From a human point of view, how do I see this event as an injustice? How do I see God's justice in the same event?
2. Do I expect that I will be preserved from injustice and suffering? How do I react to such events? How do I express my gratitude to Jesus for His sacrifice for me?
3. How can I allow Blessed Mother to help me to accept this kind of merciful love and to desire extending this kind of mercy to my neighbor?

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.