

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. 2657, footnotes 8: 8 Ps 40:2; **9:** Rom 15:13; **No. 2659, footnotes 12:** Cf. Mt 6:11, 34; **13:** Ps 95:7-8. [Catechism of the Catholic Church | Catholic Culture](#)

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[Angelus, 28 November 2010 | BENEDICT XVI \(vatican.va\)](#)

Families of Nazareth Movement – www.familiesofnazareth.us

November 29, 2020 ~ First Sunday of Advent ~ 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 Is 63:16b-17, 19b; 64:2-7

Responsorial Psalm Ps 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19

Reading II 1 Cor 1:3-9

Gospel Mk 13:33-37

Opening or Closing Prayer

Dear Lord,

The world of temporality constantly pulls on my heart, although I want to seek only God's will for my life.

Thank you for giving me your Mother who teaches me, first of all, how to discover Your Love, and then how to trust in Pure Love.

Transform me with the power of the Eucharist, giving me your Divine Light to penetrate my heart and reveal its deepest truths.

Through Mary, give me hope and lead me to contrition. May my contrition give birth to gratitude for Your constant bestowals, given to me because You Love me just as I am ~ a sinner.

Let every act of gratitude multiply in my heart into new acts of gratitude as Blessed Mother carries me securely under Her mantle toward You, my Redeemer.

I beg for these graces through You, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Families of Nazareth USA
Summer retreat 2006

Spiritual Reflection

*“Be watchful! Be alert!
You do not know when the time will come.”* Mk 13:33

Expect/Await – Awaiting everything from God in a good way.

Today, the first Sunday of Advent, the Church begins a new Liturgical Year, a new journey of faith that on the one hand commemorates the event of Jesus Christ and, on the other, opens to its ultimate fulfilment. It is precisely in this double perspective that she lives the Season of Advent, looking both to the first coming of the Son of God, when he was born of the Virgin Mary, and to his glorious return, when he will come “to judge the living and the dead,” as we say in the Creed. I would now like to focus briefly on this evocative theme of “waiting,” for it touches upon a profoundly human aspect in which the faith becomes, so to speak, completely one with our flesh and our heart.

Expectation or waiting is a dimension that flows through our whole personal, family and social existence. Expectation is present in thousands of situations, from the smallest and most banal to the most important that involve us completely and in our depths. Among these, let us think of waiting for a child, on the part of a husband and wife; of waiting for a relative or friend who is coming from far away to visit us; let us think, for a young person, of waiting to know his results in a crucially important examination or of the outcome of a job interview; in emotional relationships, of waiting to meet the beloved, of waiting for the answer to a letter, or for the acceptance of forgiveness.... One could say that man is alive as long as he waits, as long as hope is alive in his heart. And from his expectations man recognizes himself: our moral and spiritual “stature” can be measured by what we wait for, by what we hope for.

Every one of us, therefore, especially in this Season which prepares us for Christmas, can ask himself: *What am I waiting for? What, at this moment of my life, does my heart long for?* And this same question can be posed at the level of the family, of the community, of the nation. *What are we waiting for together? What unites our aspirations, what brings them together?* In the time before Jesus’ birth the expectation of the Messiah was very strong in Israel – that is, the expectation of an Anointed one, a descendent of King David, who would at last set the people free from every form of moral and political slavery and find the Kingdom of God. But no one would ever have imagined that the Messiah could be born of a humble girl like Mary, the betrothed of a righteous man, Joseph. Nor

would she have ever thought of it, and yet in her heart the expectation of the Savior was so great, her faith and hope were so ardent, that he was able to find in her a worthy mother. Moreover, God himself had prepared her before time. There is a mysterious correspondence between the waiting of God and that of Mary, the creature “full of grace,” totally transparent to the loving plan of the Most High. *Let us learn from her, the Woman of Advent, how to live our daily actions with a new spirit, with the feeling of profound expectation that only the coming of God can fulfill.*

Angelus, 28 November 2010, Benedict XVI

References from the Catechism of the Catholic Church

- 2657** The Holy Spirit, who instructs us to celebrate the liturgy in expectation of Christ's return, teaches us to pray in *hope*. Conversely, the prayer of the Church and personal prayer nourish hope in us. The psalms especially, with their concrete and varied language, teach us to fix our hope in God: "I waited patiently for the LORD; he inclined to me and heard my cry." ⁸ As St. Paul prayed: "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope." ⁹
- 2659** We learn to pray at certain moments by hearing the Word of the Lord and sharing in his Paschal mystery, but his Spirit is offered us at all times, in the events of *each day*, to make prayer spring up from us. Jesus' teaching about praying to our Father is in the same vein as his teaching about providence: ¹² time is in the Father's hands; it is in the present that we encounter him, not yesterday nor tomorrow, but today: "O that *today* you would hearken to his voice! Harden not your hearts." ¹³

Questions for Reflection

1. What am I waiting for? What, at this moment of my life, does my heart long for?
2. Do I place my expectations on the created or on the Creator?
3. Has God spoken to me in anything I've heard or read during this Experience?

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.