

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. 950, footnote 483: Roman Catechism 1, 10, 24; No. 953, footnotes 489: Rom 14:7; 490: 1 Cor 12:26-27; 491: 1 Cor 13:5; cf. 10:24. American Bible © USCCB. All rights reserved.

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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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January 27, 2019 ~ Third Sunday in Ordinary Time ~ Year C Spiritual Reflection on Sunday's Readings

Prepared by:
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Communion of Life with Christ through Mary

Opening Prayer
Read Decalogue
Read Scripture
Read Reflection

Reading I Neh 8:2-4a, 5-6, 8-10

Responsorial Psalm Ps 19:8, 9, 10, 15

Reading II 1 Cor 12:12-30 or 1 Cor 12:12-14, 27

Gospel Lk 1:1-4; 4:14-21

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

“Now you are Christ’s body, and individually parts of it...” 1 Cor:12:27

An important redemptive consequence of baptism is the **incorporation of the newly baptized into the community of the Church**. The faith that is born in Baptism causes us to come out of the seclusion of our own self, and allows us to enter into communion with Jesus, as well as with those who are parts of His Mystical Body. The Church becomes the place of our faith. Our faith becomes a part of the Church’s faith. If we were separated from the Church, our faith would have no chance of development.

According to the statements of the Second Vatican Council, the Mystical Body of Christ is built by the Christian sacraments of initiation. Through Baptism we are incorporated into it, and subsequently we are strengthened by Confirmation and the Eucharist. However, the perception of our belonging to the Mystical Body of Jesus and our gaining life from this belonging is impossible without living faith...

One cannot build or deepen one’s personal faith, of which Baptism is the source, only through private dialogue with Jesus, because **faith has the dimension of communion with others**. And, in this dimension, faith is also to be born and developed...

Through the sacrament of Baptism one enters the communion of saints. The grace of Christ, like a powerful river of life, penetrates all who belong to His Mystical Body. The same Holy Spirit acts in everyone. His graces are received not only for oneself, but also for others – spreading these graces through thought, word and works of love. Growth in grace through a greater faithfulness to God intensifies one’s specific influence on others like invisible radiation...As Romano Guardini has said:

The prayers of others belong also to you just as their actions, spiritual growth, and purity of heart do. Have you ever reflected on the community of the suffering, on the fact that the graces flowing from somebody’s suffering are transferred to others? **If, united with the suffering of Christ, you offer your painful experiences to God for others, then your experiences become a living, beneficial, redemptive power for them.** Beyond all obstacles and distances, you bring help where nothing else can be of help. (“Il senso della Chiesa” in *La realtà della Chiesa* [Brescia, Italy: Morcelliana, 1979], p. 38)

...As the Mystical Body of Christ, we constitute a unique network system, similar to a system of connected vessels. Your good as well as your evil has a social dimension, because it creates a specific supernatural pressure of good or evil on others. Prayer, seen in the light of faith, situates itself within a closed system of

connected vessels. In such a system, there is never a solitary prayer. As a member of the mystical organism of the Church, you either enrich or impoverish it through your prayer of faith. This determines the ecclesial dimension of prayer and defines your responsibility toward the Church and toward others. It is not the thoughtless saying of prayers, but authentic prayer that, as a form of actualization of faith, reaches God Himself. In order to have an effect on others, prayer does not have to have the character of a clear intercession for someone. It is enough that faith, hope, and charity grow in you at the same time as your prayer life intensifies. The Church and the whole Mystical Body of Jesus will be able to feel the beneficial, saving influence of your prayer.

Fr. Tadeusz Dajczer, *The Gift of Faith*, 3rd ed., pp. 172-175

References from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

950 *Communion of the sacraments.* "The fruit of all the sacraments belongs to all the faithful. All the sacraments are sacred links uniting the faithful with one another and binding them to Jesus Christ, and above all Baptism, the gate by which we enter into the Church. The communion of saints must be understood as the communion of the sacraments. . . . The name 'communion' can be applied to all of them, for they unite us to God. . . . But this name is better suited to the Eucharist than to any other, because it is primarily the Eucharist that brings this communion about."⁴⁸³

953 *Communion in charity.* In the *sanctorum communio*, "None of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself."⁴⁸⁹ "If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it."⁴⁹⁰ "Charity does not insist on its own way."⁴⁹¹ In this solidarity with all men, living or dead, which is founded on the communion of saints, the least of our acts done in charity redounds to the profit of all. Every sin harms this communion.

Questions for Reflection

1. How do I perceive the unimaginable event that took place in my soul at the time of my Baptism and how active is its influence in my daily life events now?
2. Immersed as I am through Baptism in the “powerful river” of grace flowing through the mystical Body of Christ, in what ways is God calling me to be a specific influence of love within the connected vessels of the Communion of Saints?
3. How do the words of Mary to the Archangel Gabriel provide guidance in responding to my own role, my position, in Christ’s mystical Body?

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.