

Faith Sharing Group ~~ Rethinking Catholic Devotions
Week 5 Chapters 9 & 10

Opening prayer:

Angel of God, my guardian dear,
To whom God's love commits me here,
Ever this day, be at my side,
To light and guard,
To rule and guide.
Amen.

Check in Question

As we move through the holiday season, what prayers, traditions, or devotions do you find yourself turning to? Are there particular practices that help you draw closer to God and make this season more meaningful?

Reflection questions for Chapters 9 & 10

1. Do particular devotions help you experience God's presence in your life? If so, which ones, and how have they deepened your relationship with God?

2. Carl Jung speaks of the importance of holding the tension between two opposing choices long enough for a third possibility to emerge. Have you ever experienced this in your own life? Were you able to resist choosing between two options and remain open to a new way forward?

3. Fr. Clarke, quoting Merton, suggests that there can be a sin in sadness. What do you think he means? Can sadness sometimes keep us from recognizing God's presence, receiving grace, or embracing life? How do we distinguish between honest grief and a sadness that holds us captive?

4. Fr. Richard Rohr suggests that instead of continually piling on more prayers, we might sometimes need simply to stand vulnerable before God—with nothing to prove, nothing to hide, and nothing to ask. Have you experienced this kind of prayer? Can one simple prayer sometimes be enough?

5. We don't pray to escape our challenges; we pray to find the strength, wisdom, and grace to move through them. Can you recall a time when prayer didn't change your circumstances but changed how you faced them?

6. Clarke, quoting Ilia Delio, challenges us to recognize that we are living in a new reality that calls for new ways of thinking and being Christian. Rather than clinging to familiar structures and assumptions, how might we, as people of faith, create something new while remaining rooted in the Gospel? What might that look like in our lives and in the Church?

7. Is there a particular saint who holds a special place in your heart? Who is this saint, and what is it about their life, witness, or spirituality that speaks to you?

8. Is there a particular Bible passage or verse that has become especially meaningful to you? Why does it resonate with you, and how has it influenced your faith or your life?

9. Have you ever considered adding your own life experiences—the joys, sorrows, struggles, and turning points—to the mysteries of the Rosary? How might praying the Rosary through the lens of your own story deepen your connection with God?

10. What if you placed your personal struggles, losses, disappointments, or difficult decisions alongside the fourteen Stations of the Cross? Could this help you recognize Jesus walking with you through your own suffering?

11. Have you ever considered praying a novena focused on forgiveness? Is there someone you need to forgive, something for which you need to seek forgiveness, or perhaps something within yourself that you need to release? How might nine days of intentional prayer open a path toward healing?

Closing Prayer:

For Whom and what shall we pray?

Loving and gracious God,

Thank you for bringing us together and for the ways you reveal yourself in our everyday lives—in moments of joy, in times of uncertainty, and even in the midst of our struggles.

Help us to listen more deeply, to trust more freely, and to recognize your presence in places we might otherwise overlook. When life feels complicated, give us patience and the wisdom to see possibilities we may not have imagined.

May our faith continue to grow and take new shape. Through the wisdom of those who have gone before us and the grace of your Spirit, help us become people of greater compassion, forgiveness, and hope.

Send us forth with open hearts, renewed spirits, and the courage to embrace whatever lies ahead, knowing that you walk beside us.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**