

FAITH SHARING GROUP ~~ RETHINKING CATHOLIC DEVOTIONS CHAPTERS 1 & 2

Opening prayer:

Loving God,
we come before you today not simply to learn about you, but to draw closer to you. Open our hearts to your presence. Help us move beyond words, ideas, and information and discover the deeper place where faith becomes relationship, trust, and love.

Jesus, meet us where we are. Give us the courage to be honest about what is in our hearts—the questions, the hopes, the doubts, and the desires. Help us to know you more deeply and to allow your love to change us from within.

Holy Spirit, lead us into that quiet place where we can listen to God with our hearts. May our time together deepen our devotion, strengthen our trust, and awaken in us a greater desire to love God and live our faith each day.

Amen.

Check in Question

> What is your favorite Catholic devotion, such as the Stations of the Cross or the Rosary? What makes this devotion meaningful to you?

Reflection questions for Chapters 1 & 2

1. Father Clarke talks about coming to a life of prayer through the Charismatic Renewal. How did you first encounter God's incredible love for you?
2. What kind of devotional prayer do you practice or find meaningful?
3. Father Clarke suggests that prayer challenges us to image more closely the God of intimate love and mercy. How does that idea resonate with you?
4. Have you ever participated in devotions such as the Rosary, Stations of the Cross, the Christmas crèche, or Eucharistic processions? What has been your experience?
5. Have you ever participated in or witnessed a public performance of a religious drama or a sacred musical work? Describe your experience.
6. Describe the crèche that you use in your home. Where did you get it? How has it evolved over the years? How do you put it out each Christmas?
7. Do you have a particularly meaningful religious icon, image, or painting? Where did you get it, and what is the story behind it?

8. Do you appreciate or dislike the use of bells at the elevation of the Host during the Eucharist? Why?
9. Nicholas of Cusa suggested that the Eucharist was instituted as food, rather than as an object of display. How do you understand that idea in light of the practice of Eucharistic adoration?
10. Are there any devotions or forms of prayer traditionally associated with or reserved to clerics that you would like to engage in or learn more about?

Closing Prayer:

For whom and what shall we pray…

Loving God,
thank you for meeting us in the many ways we pray—in silence and song, in the Rosary and the Eucharist, in sacred images and traditions, and in the simple things that draw our hearts toward you.

Help us remember that devotion is not simply something we do, but a way of opening our hearts to your intimate love and mercy. Deepen our desire for you, and help us recognize your presence in the ordinary moments of our lives.

May our prayer draw us ever closer to Jesus, so that what we believe with our minds may become something we live with our hearts.

Amen.