

# SHARING of HEARTS

*Each of the 9 coloured cards represents a 'state of heart'. One side of each card speaks of 'a struggle' in our spiritual journey and the other side speaks of 'the grace' that grows from it. Both are essential to maturing in the spiritual life.*

- At each gathering, sit in silence to choose the sacred WORD that represents a particular spiritual space that YOU have been experiencing over the past month. Let it arise from within you. The 'WORD' will draw you. Simply let it speak to you and your present situation.
- Share your story in your own words with your small faith community. Place your card around the Christ candle. Pray for each other. Celebrate your uniqueness.
- At the end of the meeting, be sure to return your card to its plastic folder. Observe the MOVEMENT of the SPIRIT within you over time.
- You will see how God working within you will be emptying you of all that is false, illusory and wounded within yourself and "at the same time" God will be filling you with Great Love and all the other virtues. Yes, we will be made able to "Bear the beams of LOVE"... and radiate that compassion to all others.

*Introduction* - Our founder, Father Jean-Pierre Medaille SJ gave us a wonderfully simple and effective way to gather in community and do spiritual sharing of the heart... so that it doesn't become counseling, a twelve steps recovery meeting, a bible sharing, a book club, or just idle conversation. This simple graced way of conversation facilitates getting to the 'heart of the matter' in great simplicity, candour and gentleness.

## SHARING OF HEARTS

Every four weeks the women/men of The Little Design Communities will plan to meet in small gatherings in each other's homes. Ideally, the groupings will be of three to six persons (maximum) so as to more easily deepen trust and ease in communicating with each other the interior stirrings of their hearts. After an opening prayer and/or song, there may be a reading from Scripture or some other sacred text (e.g. Eucharistic Letter, contemporary spiritual author, a Maxim) ... which is followed by a **period of contemplative silence**. (5-7 minutes or more if your small community wishes)

Sharing of the heart will flow in great gentleness and peace as each person is invited to share from the heart: **CHOOSE THE CARD FROM THE PACKAGE THAT SPEAKS TO YOUR STATE OF HEART**. Place your coloured card around the Christ candle after your sharing.

- ✓ **A gratitude for some growth in grace/virtue** that I have experienced over the past few weeks in some area of my life. (e.g. endurance, courage, faith, transformation, living in the present moment, conversion, independence, surrender, limitations)

**OR**

- ✓ **A struggle with some vulnerable area** that invites a new challenge to grow in some virtue or mature in some area of functionality that is impeding my inner freedom. (e.g. fear, isolation, change, boredom, exhaustion, pain, darkness, vulnerability, powerlessness)

This little way demonstrates how God delights to: "*Empty me and fill me with Your great love.*" The small community simply listens to each other's story with love and deep respect for God's work within each one's unique journey. There is no need to comment, advise or make suggestions. The Spirit alive within the sharing will instruct and counsel and each will come to "*a knowing in their heart*" that God's infinite love is calling them into 'the more'.

**Enjoy these special times together for mutual support and friendship** ... always with a cup of tea and some refreshments. Cherish each other in your hearts and pray daily for God's Love to deepen and expand within our homes and neighbourhoods and cities... yes, all around the world.

## FAITH

*Believe the truths of the Gospel with a stronger faith the more incomprehensible they are.*

*Believe them with a living faith which grasps the inexpressible and awesome mysteries revealed to us.*

*Maxim of Love 13:1*

## INDEPENDENCE

*Never go ahead of grace through imprudent eagerness but await its moment in peace, and when it comes to you, follow it with great gentleness and courage.*

*Maxim of Love 6:9*

## LIVING THE PRESENT MOMENT

*Give your full attention to the actions you perform. One action done well is worth a thousand done half-heartedly.*

*Maxim of Love 14:4*

## TRANSFORMATION

*When you have died to the false self... Then you can say with St. Paul: 'I live; no, not I; it is Christ who lives in me.'*

*Maxim of Love 2:4*

## COURAGE

*Be courageous in all that God desires of you for God's glory and the good of others.*

*Maxim of Love 11:5*

## CONVERSION

*Have only one desire throughout your life: to be and to become the person God wants you to be in nature, in grace, in glory, for time and eternity.*

*Maxim of Love 10:6*

## SURRENDER

*Sufferings accepted well are like the wood which serves to kindle the fire of love. Endure faithfully and make good use of your crosses, you will see the sacred fire of love grow in your heart.*

*Maxim of Love 5:2*

## LIMITATIONS

*However pure your views and intentions may appear, be persuaded that you seek yourself in some recess of self-love. Nature is always intermingled with the workings of grace.*

*Maxim of Love 3:14*

## ENDURANCE

*In everything you do, seek only to please God, and make no account of anything else.*

*Maxim of Love 4:7*

## BOREDOM

*Continue to the end, gently and thoroughly,  
what you have once decided on  
and prudently judged  
to be for God's greater glory.  
Maxim of Love 11:6*

## ISOLATION

*If it happens that you are abandoned  
by others and even by God,  
through the withdrawal of sensible grace,  
remember the abandonment of Jesus on the cross  
and willingly embrace your cross.  
Maxim of Love 5:3*

## DARKNESS

*Remember in times of sickness, desolation,  
persecution and similar trials in life, to desire only  
what is pleasing to God and not to be concerned  
about your own interests.  
Maxim of Love 4:7*

## CHANGE

*A heart that is empty of everything  
is at the same time filled with God.  
Maxim of Love 2:2*

## FEAR

(insecurity, doubts)

*Live in peace and inner tranquility.  
Show this by acting without rush  
or too great eagerness.  
Maxim of Love 7:1*

## PAIN

(woundedness, hurt)

*Die to all self-love and to every movement of the heart  
that comes from a wounded nature.  
Maxim of Love 2:4*

## EXHAUSTION

*No matter what disagreeable things  
happen to you, never see them,  
as obstacles but as profitable and necessary  
to your daily life. Consider them as effects  
of the tender and loving Providence of God.  
Maxim of Love 7:3*

## VULNERABILITY

*See often the greatness of your soul in God  
and its nothingness in itself.  
Maxim of Love 1:4*

## POWERLESSNESS

*Anyone who knows how to let God act in and  
through him/her without too much interference on  
his/her part does many things in a short time and  
never loses peace of heart.  
Maxim of Love 7:5*