

*Just*Faith

*Purpose. From a
new perspective.*

JustFaith Week 10

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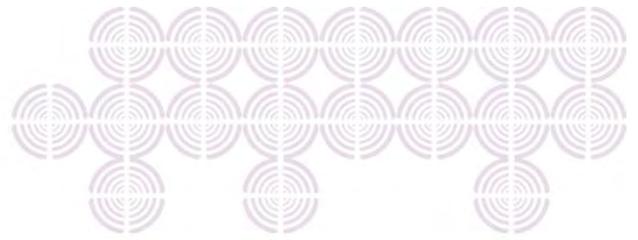


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Note to Co-Facilitators

As you come to the end of the first third of the JustFaith process, we encourage you to take stock of your group's experience so far. Has it been engaging, challenging and life-giving? If the answer is an unqualified "yes," you can skip over the rest of this note. However, if your answer is less confident, read on.

JustFaith is a complex process that engages people on questions of faith that touch on many difficult areas. The chances are that your group has experienced some awkward moments and perhaps some conflict. All of this might have you second-guessing the process.

In fact, all of this is what should probably be happening. As the Gospels attest, the Good News often encounters difficulty, resistance and conflict. Most of us have been trained to see and respond to the world with a particular lens given to us by a culture that does not typically pay attention to the poor and, instead, identifies wealth, power and prestige as most desirable. It is no wonder we struggle to embrace the Good News!

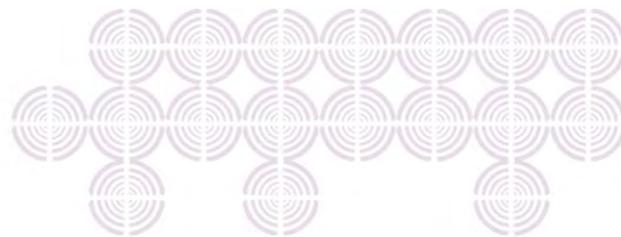
If there is going to be a serious encounter with the Gospel, it will involve excitement and enthusiasm. Often, participants in JustFaith become so excited to *do* something that they become impatient with the process. However, it is important that your group not leap into action . . . yet. Our advice is to allow the process to unfold and not rush into action.

Encourage your group to stay committed to the process, to stay connected with the JustFaith community, to continue to learn and grow and to make decisions about next steps as the process concludes with discernment and a call to action. There is still much ahead in these thirty weeks of JustFaith.

Also, by this point in JustFaith, consistent group dynamics will have emerged. Many groups discover deep bonds, but tensions are also normal; do not be discouraged by some tension in the group. Consider whether the tension in the group is also accompanied by a general spirit of care and kindness. If so, let the process unfold. It is likely that your group will grow and discover some new possibilities for their faith and love. It is a common JustFaith story to hear of people who saw themselves as opposed to one another to discover, over the course of the process, that they have grown and changed and become close to each other.

On the other hand, if your group is experiencing tension that seems burdensome beyond some people's ability to tolerate, this would be a good time to call our office to talk things through. Remember that when you register for JustFaith, you are provided access to the JustFaith Ministries staff for support and consultation. Therefore, please do not hesitate (ever) to contact our office if you have a concern about group process or any other difficulties.

Again, we look forward to hearing from you, whether you call to share struggles or excitement.



Week Ten Components

Participants Are to Have Completed

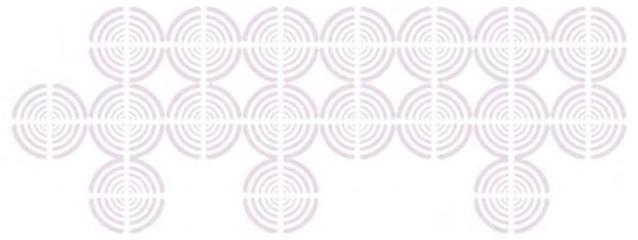
“Budget Activity”

Prepare for Week Ten

- Review Week Ten session information.
- Copy Week Ten handouts.
- Bring copies of Rising to Common Ground to distribute.
- For the Budget Activity discussion, visit The Pennsylvania State University’s website (<http://www.livingwage.geog.psu.edu/>), which details the cost of living and expenses in various cities across the US. Find the following information for your location:
 - Living Wage for your city/county: \$ _____
 - Minimum Wage for your city/county: \$ _____
- Gather prayer items.
- Select music for opening prayer, if desired.

Timing of the Session

Activity	Minutes
Prayer	15
Discuss reading	50
Break	15
Business	10
Budgeting Activity	50
Closing prayer	10
Total	150



Welcome

Greet participants and welcome them to the session. Describe what the group will be doing together using these or similar words: “Today we will finish our discussion of Ash Barker’s book, Make Poverty Personal. In the second portion of the session, we will discuss the budgeting activity assigned from last week. Let us begin with prayer.”

Opening Prayer (15 minutes)

Items needed: A city map; a long, thin stick of burning incense and holder; three readers; Bible marked at Matthew 25:31-40

Symbol(s): Map – We follow Jesus to the places where our brothers and sisters suffer.

Environment: Have the incense burning and, if possible, the lights dimmed.

Introducing the Symbol/s

(Slowly and deliberately)

When the group has gathered, bring the folded map into the center of the circle. Unfold it, hold it up, and briefly introduce the symbol with these words:

Map – directions to get us to where we want to go, places where people live, neighborhoods, community . . . God’s people.

Place the opened map in the center of the circle.

Bring in the burning incense and introduce it with these words:

Incense – cleansing, purifying, fragrant and pungent . . . God’s presence.

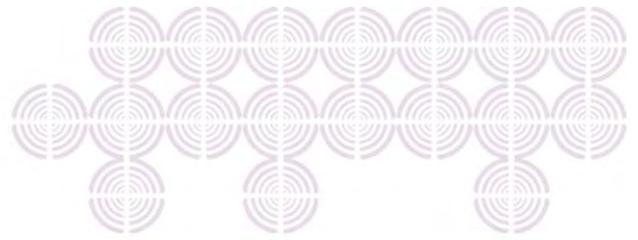
Call to Prayer

(With quiet reverence)

The leader sits in the circle holding the map and prays aloud:

Loving Jesus, we desire to follow you to those places where you were drawn.

Pass the map (fold if needed) to the person seated on the right; invite participants to hold it for a brief moment and pray silently before passing it on to the right.



The leader prays the call to prayer while the map moves around the circle:

**Jesus, in your name we gather. You are here in our midst.
In the presence of your Spirit we become your body,
to listen, to share, to learn, to care, and to pray for one another.
Move within us. Move among us.
Spirit of Compassion, bind us to one another.
Propel us out into your world to be your compassionate justice.**

When the map has gone around the circle, return it fully opened to the center.

Distribute **Week 10: Participant Handout A** and follow the directions for prayer.
Continue afterward with the Communion of Silence.

Communion of Silence

After a short pause introduce the moment of silence with these words:

**In honest silence, gentle truths begin to surface.
In stillness, reflections make themselves clear.
We pause and still ourselves to share in the prayer of silence together.**

Prayer of the Heart

After a couple of minutes of silence, introduce the mantra prayer in this way:

Let us take prayer to heart. Echo this simple prayer from Psalm 34:18 line by line. Then echo the whole prayer:

Leader: **The Lord is near to the brokenhearted...**

Participants: The Lord is near to the brokenhearted.

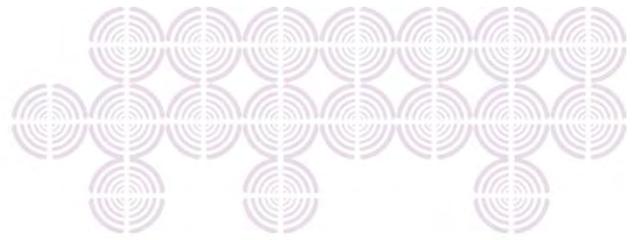
Leader: **Blessed be the Lord.**

Participants: Blessed be the Lord.

Leader: **The Lord is near to the brokenhearted. Blessed be the Lord.**

All: The Lord is near to the brokenhearted. Blessed be the Lord.

Leader: **Let this prayer echo in our hearts.**



Blessing

Leader: **Holy Spirit, inspire our thoughts. May we speak your truth.
May our hearts be opened. Amen.**

First Half (50 minutes)

Discussion Questions

- Make Poverty Personal, pages 136-157
- Cloud of Witnesses, “Henri Nouwen,” pages 72-77

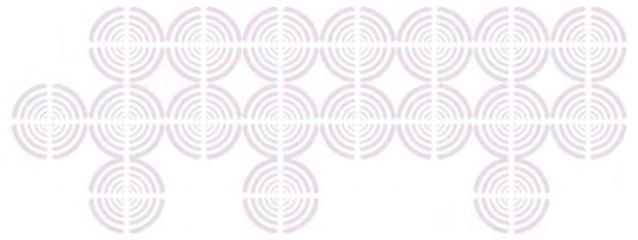
1. On page 139, Barker writes “Pentecost enabled ordinary people not to have to live under oppression, but rather be empowered to create a new identity and belonging. Whereas previously the poor were only eaten away by despair, the Holy Spirit filled them up with the hope to live as God’s family.” How does this interpretation of Pentecost compare with your own understanding of Pentecost? How might Pentecost be transformative for one in poverty? Under oppression? Living securely?

2. Barker explains that the disciplines of the early church – disciplines such as apostolic teaching, fellowship, breaking bread, and praying – were responses to poverty. However, on page 141, Barker contends that they have been lost, becoming “rituals to get through, rather than revolutionary practices to change the world.” How have you experienced these disciplines? How might these disciplines be *revolutionary*? How might you and your faith community *reclaim* these disciplines?

3. In comparing the early church to faith communities today, he explores the differences between radical Christian commitment and Christianity focused around relevance in society. Barker asks “Will we be diligent in focusing more on being faithful as God’s people with the poor rather than being “relevant”?” (p. 145) What do you think he means by this?

4. Talking about mission, Barker suggests that Christians are often resistant to go beyond “relief”-type work (p. 148). Why would he say this? How would you describe Christian mission? How might mission look beyond “relief”?

5. Have someone read the Henri Nouwen quotation at the bottom of page 75 in Cloud of Witnesses. What do you think Nouwen means by this statement?



Break (15 minutes)

Business Items (10 minutes)

1. Share with participants: “Next week we will have a guest speaker (name the speaker) who will be sharing his/her experience with working on issues of racism and his/her insights on the challenges associated with that kind of work.”
2. Assign reading for next session: Rising to Common Ground, pages vii – 35; Cloud of Witnesses, “Martin Luther King, Jr.,” pages 81-89 and “Note to Participants for Week Eleven.”
2. Distribute “Note to Participants for Week Eleven”.
3. Distribute copies of Rising to Common Ground.
4. Review plans for upcoming immersion experience if needed.
5. Let participants know that you will be sending them an email with a weblink to a brief, online evaluation of the first ten weeks of the JustFaith program. Ask them to complete the evaluation as soon as they receive it. This feedback is vitally important to the JustFaith Ministries staff as they begin planning for revisions to next year’s program.

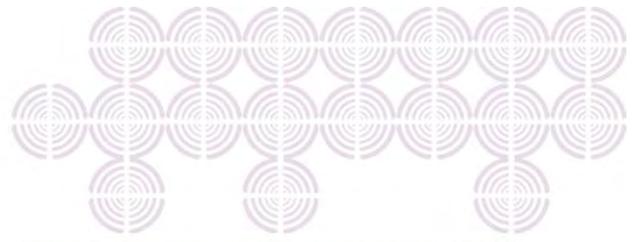
Second Half (50 minutes)

Discuss Budget Activity

Beginning in small groups of 3 or 4, ask group members to gather to share their experiences of budgeting for their scenario. It may be helpful to ensure that each small group member has a different scenario. Have the group members each take 4-5 minutes to present their scenario as well as the budget they developed. Ask them to address the reflection questions from the Budget Activity after each member has presented. (25 minutes)

Invite everyone to join back in the larger group. Engage in discussion, using the following questions as a guide (25 minutes):

1. When considering one’s ability to live from their income, many find it helpful to distinguish a “minimum wage” from a “living wage.” Many economists define a “living wage” as the minimum income needed to provide housing and basic nutritional needs for each member of the household. The federal “minimum wage” is \$7.25. In your community, the living wage is _____.



- a. Why might it be helpful to distinguish between a “minimum wage” and a “living wage”?
 - b. Given what you know about your own expenses, how do you imagine budgeting on this “living wage” in your community? How do you imagine budgeting on the “minimum wage” in your community?
2. How would you distinguish between a “minimum wage,” a “living wage,” and a “poverty level wage”?
 3. It can often be very emotionally challenging for low income people to visit charitable organizations. Why do you think people find it difficult to seek out charitable social services, such as food pantries, for example?
 4. What is the American dream? Are you living the American dream? How might people facing these and other scenarios experience the American dream?

Closing Prayer (10 minutes)

Removing the Symbol

Hold up the incense and take it out of the circle with this blessing:

May we be purified and blessed to walk where Jesus walks.

Hold up the map and take it out of the circle with these words of blessing:

May the map of our work and lives take us to the places ignored.

A Circle of Prayer

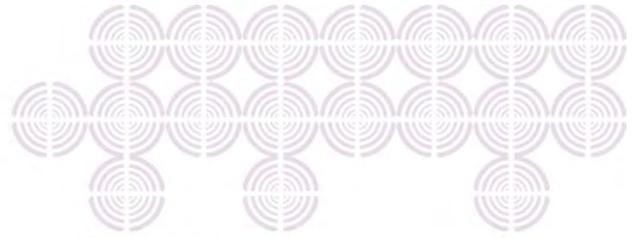
Invite the group to form a tight circle and link hands. Invite any participants who have a prayer, a concern, or a request to briefly share it with the group:

We are disciples on a journey.

We are the body of Christ, broken for this world.

Let us quietly pray for one another. (Pause)

If someone has a concern, a word of encouragement, or a short prayer to offer, please do so.



Words to Live By

Leader: **Let us again take prayer to heart. Repeat the prayer after me:
The Lord is near to the brokenhearted. Blessed be the Lord.**

All: The Lord is near to the brokenhearted. Blessed be the Lord.

Leader: **May this prayer echo in our hearts throughout the week, as we
walk, while we work, as we rest, and when we pray for one another.
Call to mind those who are suffering in despair or fear.**

A Sign of God's Peace

Leader: **Now we share in the peace for which our world hungers.
With a sign of peace we affirm one another for the journey.
May we extend God's peace to all!**

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JustFaith Week 6

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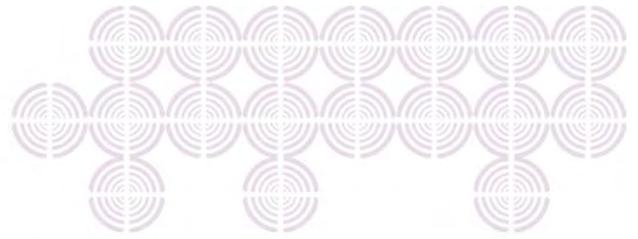


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Note to Co-Facilitators

One concern that gets expressed each year by some co-facilitators is that there is not enough time in the session to cover all of the material. This concern is sometimes accompanied by anxiety or frustration since the assumption is that there is a certain body of material that *must* be covered, that every page of every book *must* be discussed, that every discussion question *must* be addressed by everyone in the group, etc. However, we encourage you not to let this be an annoyance.

First, remember that JustFaith groups vary significantly in size and in talkativeness; what it takes one group to do in an hour, another group might do in ten minutes. It is important that the materials include enough discussion questions for even the quickest of groups. That means the same amount of material that will be just enough for one group but will simply be more than many groups can get through.

Second, the purpose of each session is to engage the group in a thoughtful, prayerful and interesting consideration of how and where the Gospel is inviting each of us. That means that if the group has had a session that was characterized by good prayer, some stimulating content, and compelling and important dialogue, it was a success regardless of how many discussion questions were covered. Whether the group covers one question or all of the questions, if the interaction is challenging, respectful and provocative, then it has been a very good use of two and a half hours. Choose questions that you believe will be most stimulating for your group and allow the conversation to develop around them.

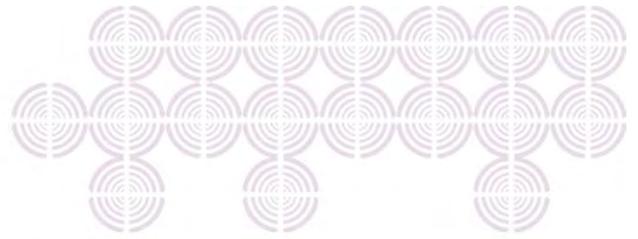
Third, JustFaith is not a course. There is not a body of material that has to be covered to complete the “class.” It is more about community building than it is about information. Encourage your group to think of each session as a social engagement or a prayer experience instead of a task to be accomplished. This will help everyone savor the time together instead of worrying about what supposedly did not get accomplished. Remember, enjoy the journey.

Thank you for the generosity of your commitment to this experience!

Week Six Components

Preparation for Week Six

- Review Week Six session information.
- Copy Week Six handouts.
- Gather prayer items.



Timing of the Session

Activity	Minutes
Prayer	15
Discuss Group Process	60
Break	15
Business	10
Discuss reading	40
Closing prayer	10
Total	150

Welcome

Welcome participants warmly, then begin with prayer.

Opening Prayer (15 minutes)

Items needed: A heart made of any kind of material (paper, stone, metal, clay, etc.), a small votive candle, and a Bible marked at Luke 10: 25-37

Symbol(s): Heart – a symbol of love, compassion, care for others
Flame – a symbol of the fire of compassion burning in our hearts

Environment: Play soft instrumental music in the background

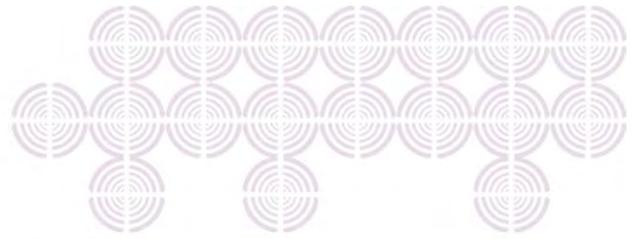
Introducing the Symbol

When the group has gathered, bring the heart into the center of the circle. Introduce the symbol with these words:

A heart – symbol of love, compassion, caring for others.

Place the heart in the center of the circle. Hold up the candle in the center of the circle. Introduce the symbol with these words:

A flame – symbol of the fire of compassion burning in our hearts.



Call to Prayer

Pick up both symbols and introduce the ritual with these words:

This is our heart that we open to our suffering brothers and sisters throughout our community and our world.

This is the flame of love for others, freely gifted from our God, burning in our hearts.

As symbols of the prophetic promise we each possess, we hold these up in prayer and ask for your grace, oh God.

Pass the heart and flame around the circle; invite participants to hold the symbols for a brief moment of prayer before passing them. As the symbols are passed, offer these words:

Jesus, in your name we gather. You are here in our midst.

In the presence of your Spirit, we become your body:

to listen, to share, to learn, to care, and to pray for one another.

Move within us. Move among us.

Spirit of Compassion, bind us to one another.

Propel us out into your world to be your compassionate justice.

When the heart and flame have gone around the circle, replace them in the center. Invite the group to join hands in a circle and offers this prayer:

God of love, let your compassion burn brightly within us so that we might see our brothers and sisters in need and join in their struggles.

(Pause for a minute of silence.)

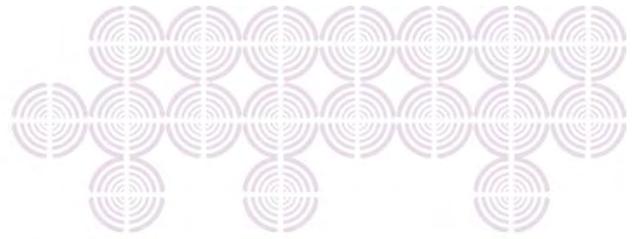
We pray in Your Name, AMEN.

Scripture Reading

Read Luke 10: 25-37. Pause for silent reflection.

Leader: **We have heard this parable many times in our lives, and each time it reveals something new. In one reading, it shows us how Jesus and his teachings were tested. At another reading, it displays the seeming simplicity of Jesus' command to love God and neighbor. In another reading, it unveils a story of how people react to one in need. Where do we see ourselves in this parable?**

(Pause)



Can we love our neighbor who looks like the dirty, smelly stranger begging for money on the street? Or do we walk by like the priest and Levite? How can we grow into the love that Jesus talks about and become more like the Samaritan?

(Pause)

Re-read verses 36-37. Pause once more for silent reflection.

Distribute **Week 6: Participant Handout A**. Share Dom Helder Camara's prayer together.

Prayer of the Heart

After a brief pause, introduce the mantra prayer in this way:

Echo this simple prayer from the Gospel of John.

Leader:

**I give you a new commandment:
That you love one another...
Just as I have loved you.**

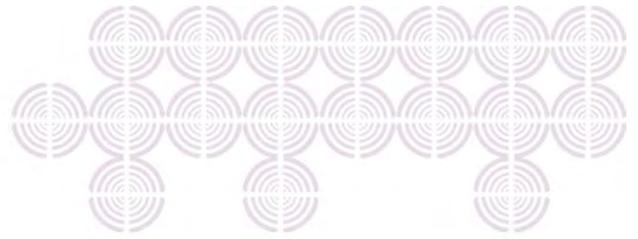
Participants:

**I give you a new commandment:
That you love one another,
Just as I have loved you.**

Leader: **I give you a new commandment: That you love one another, just as I have loved you.**

All: **I give you a new commandment: That you love one another, just as I have loved you.**

Leader: **Holy Spirit, inspire our thoughts. May we speak your truth. May our hearts be opened. Amen.**



First Half (60 minutes)

Discuss Dialogue Exercise (30 minutes)

Revisit the Information on Dialogue in **Week 5: Participant Handout B**. Ask the group:

- Was the information on dialogue new to you?
- What is your response to this information?
- In what ways do you find this information helpful?
- In what ways do you find this information challenging?

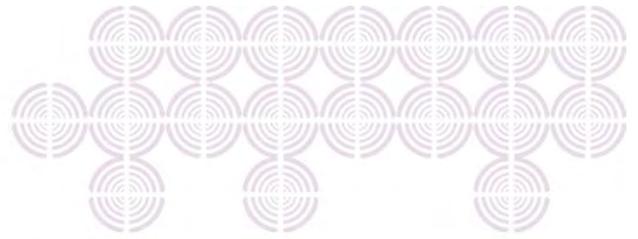
Break the group in small groups of three people each. Have each participant share information about the personal conversation that they analyzed with the desired behaviors list. Also have them answer the question “Which desired behavior(s) will be most difficult for me?” (15 minutes)

Bring the group back together. Inform the group that we will try to use the desired behaviors in conversations during this program. Considering the difficulty of some of the topics we will discuss, this may be a challenge at times. We ask that each participant strive to help the group have good dialogue versus discussions or debates. These behaviors and the group guidelines will be our reference points for communication throughout the program.

Discuss Group Process (30 minutes)

Distribute copies of the group guidelines from **Week 6: Participant Handout B**. Allow a couple of minutes for participants to review the guidelines. Co-facilitators then pose the questions below to the group. During this discussion, discuss aspects of group process that are going well and ideas of how to improve the group’s process.

- What are the good aspects of our group’s process?
- Which guidelines does the group follow consistently?
- Which guidelines does the group need to pay attention to?
- Does the group stay on track or is it easily brought back to the topic at hand?
- Has there been conflict or tension during the meetings that could have been addressed differently?
- What recommendations do group members have for future meetings? How will these recommendations be implemented?



Break (15 minutes)

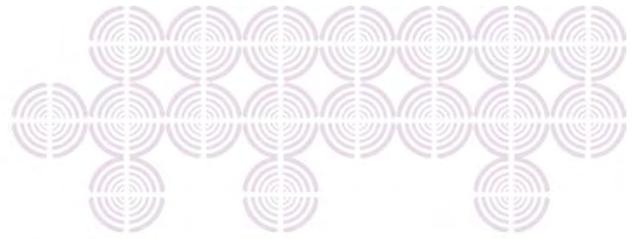
Business Items (10 minutes)

1. Assign reading for next week: Tattoos on the Heart, pages 61-128; Cloud of Witnesses, “Clarence Jordan,” pages 60-65; and “Note to Participants for Week Seven.”
2. Distribute “Note to Participants for Week Seven.”
3. Reminder of Spiritual Practice assigned last week: Ask participants to purposefully notice the diversity of incomes or socio-economic groups (or lack of) as they go through these weeks. Ask them to take particular notice in their immediate and extended family, neighborhoods, workplace, grocery store, school, church, theatre, gym, volunteer location, etc. Also ask participants to notice the economic diversity among those whom they talk to over the next two weeks. The group will be discussing this at the next session.
4. Provide information on upcoming immersion experiences, as needed.

Second Half (40 minutes)

Discussion Questions

- Make Poverty Personal, pages 83-135
1. People understand prophecy in a variety of ways. Barker writes of the “three prongs” of prophecy: critiquing rooted in knowledge of God, warning of God’s coming, and offering of a radical vision of *shalom*. How does Barker’s understanding of prophecy differ from others you have known? What definition of prophecy has been most influential for your faith?
 2. Who have you considered to be “prophets”? What characteristics qualified them as “prophetic” to you?
 3. To be prophetic, one must seek to *know* God. Barker writes, “really to know God is to engage with the Lord’s compassion and justice.” (p. 88) When in your life have you felt you really *knew* God?
 4. On page 98, Barker shares the following quote from Ron Sider: “If one is a member of a privileged class that profits from structural evil, and if one does nothing to try to change things, he or she stands guilty before God. Social evil is just as displeasing to God as personal evil. And it is more subtle.” In small groups of two or three, share your reactions to this quote. What does Sider mean by “structural evil”? Where have you seen it?



5. Barker's third prong of prophecy involves offering "an alternate vision, a hope for the future." (p. 99) What alternative vision would you offer for the world? What alternate vision might someone in poverty offer?
6. On page 116, Barker writes, "Many Christians are more like the rich young ruler than any other New Testament character. Well-resourced, bright, charming, able to engage in religious discussion – talk about poverty, even..." In what ways do you agree with this claim? Why might most Christians resemble the rich young ruler over and above other New Testament characters, like Peter?
7. In discussing how people approach faith, Barker writes that "too much contemporary Christianity is more like magic than true faith" (p. 119) because, like the rich young ruler, faith functions as a means to a particular end. When in your life have you approached faith in such a way? How did this vary from Jesus' call to "deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow me"?
8. On page 126, Barker writes about the "Reign" or "Kingdom of God" as central to the ministry of Christ. He writes, "Jesus' central concern was not socializing people into his church, but proclaiming the reign of God." How do you view the relationship between the role of "church" and the "reign of God"? What has your relationship been to each?
9. On page 132, Barker explores the risks in the statement, "We are blessed to be a blessing." He offers a different understanding of "blessing," saying "God's blessing today is not found in leather wallets, but among the cries of multitudes facing poverty. For there we find Jesus' presence, longing to intervene through his body, the church." Where in your community is God's blessing? How is Jesus longing to intervene there?

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

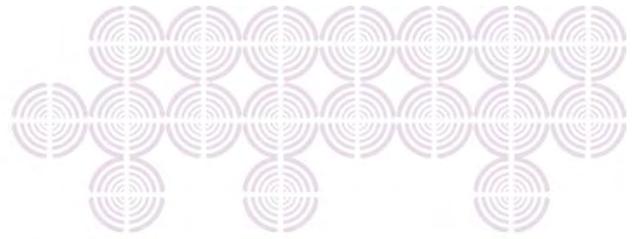
Removing the Symbol

Pick up the heart and with these words of blessing take it out of the circle:

May our hearts become filled with compassion.

Pick up the candle and with these words take it out of the circle:

May our hearts burn with a love for God's people.



A Circle of Prayer

Invite the group to form a tight circle and link hands:

We are disciples on a journey.

We are the body of Christ, broken for this world.

Let us quietly pray for one another and for our brothers and sisters in need. (Pause)

If someone has a concern, a word of encouragement, or a short prayer to offer, please do so.

Words to Live By

Leader: **Let us again take prayer to heart. Repeat the prayer after me:**

I give you a new commandment:

All: I give you a new commandment:

Leader: **That you love one another, just as I have loved you.**

All: That you love one another, just as I have loved you.

Leader: **May this prayer echo in our hearts throughout the week, as we walk, while we work, as we rest, and when we pray for one another. Call to mind those who are suffering, in despair or fear.**

A Sign of God's Peace

Leader: **Now we share in the peace for which our world hungers.**

With a sign of peace we affirm one another for the journey ahead.

May we extend God's peace to all!

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JustFaith Week 7

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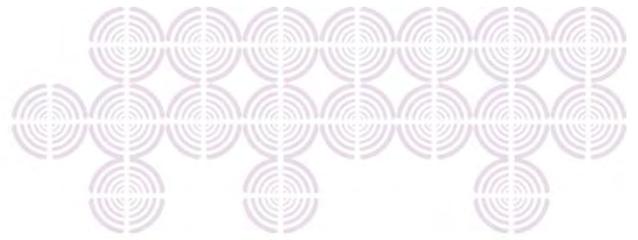


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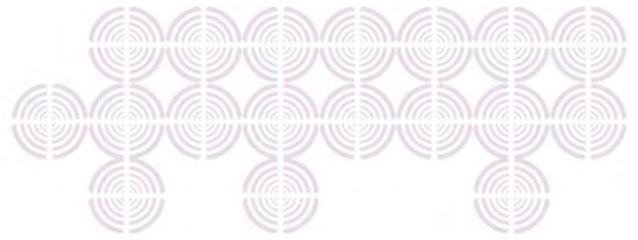


Note to Co-Facilitators

This week's session draws upon two powerful resources – Father Greg Boyle's experiences as shared in [Tattoos on the Heart](#) and Diane Sawyer's exploration into the experiences of children in Camden, New Jersey. Both of these resources convey real, lived experiences within very different regions of the United States. While much of the material—books, videos, speakers, immersion experiences—would seem to focus on what is going on in the world, the real focus of JustFaith is on how what is going on in the world touches the hearts of participants. JustFaith is interested in the interior journey of who do we care about and why, what commitments can we make, what kind of love do we have to share, what obstacles impede our embrace of God's invitation, and so on. It is not uncommon for JustFaith to touch places very deep in the participant, and there is both grace and danger in this. Because JustFaith addresses core values and core meanings, individual responses can be strong in one direction or another. It is not uncommon early in the process for some participants to put up great resistance, and this takes the form of all kinds of argument and criticism. This is very understandable and should be dealt with patiently. This is also a good time to review the Co-Facilitators Responsibilities document, especially the helpful hints for group process situations.

On the other hand, it is perhaps appropriate at this point in the JustFaith process to take careful notice if you have members of your group who simply are not ready for the rest of the journey. It is sometimes the case that someone has joined a JustFaith group for the wrong reasons or finds her/himself simply unready for the material or tends mostly to disrupt and impede the weekly sessions. In the last case, you might notice growing resentment in the group. These are all signs that it might be appropriate to ask this participant privately about his or her responses to the program and possibly ask the person if he/she would like to consider dropping out. It is often the case that people who really dislike the program continue anyway because they feel obligated. Gently encourage them to consider whether or not they feel like they can be an asset to the group or if it would be more helpful to discontinue.

Ultimately, our hope is that by weaving together rich resources – academic and experiential, theological and contemplative – the process of JustFaith will integrate the mind and heart, yielding wisdom and commitment.



Week Seven Components

Preparation for Week Seven

- Review Week Seven session information.
- Copy Week Seven handouts.
- Locate DVD “Waiting on the World to Change” and assure DVD player is available.
- Gather prayer items.
- Locate white board or flip chart paper and markers.

Timing of the Session

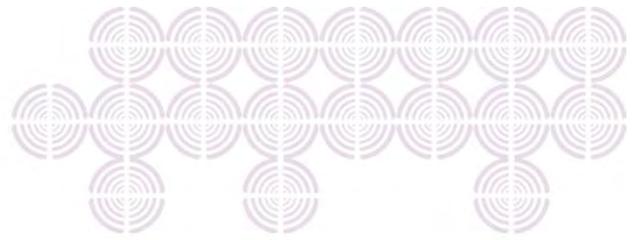
Activity	Minutes
Prayer	10
Discuss reading	30
Discuss Spiritual Practice	30
Break	10
Business	5
View Video	40
Discuss Video	20
Closing prayer	5
Total	150

Welcome

Welcome participants warmly. Begin with prayer.

Opening Prayer (15 minutes)

Distribute **Week 7: Participant Handout**. Follow the directions for prayer.



First Half (60 minutes)

Discussion Questions (30 minutes)

- Tattoos on the Heart, pages 61-128
- Cloud of Witnesses, pages 60-65

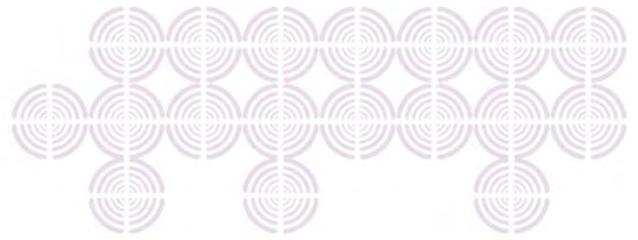
Begin by asking participants to reflect quietly on these three questions:

1. What are your early memories of poor people or of being poor yourself?
2. What did people close to you say to you about poverty, about poor people?
3. What experiences as an adult have you had of poverty in the world?

Invite participants to briefly share a response with the person sitting next to them. This one-on-one discussion allows participants to share their own experiences with poverty and their own emotional responses to the reading. (10 minutes)

In the larger group, consider these questions:

1. In our discussions of the book, *Compassion*, Nouwen offers his definition of compassion, and you have been encouraged to express your own understanding of this concept. What is your reaction to the prison inmate's definition at the bottom of page 62 and Fr. Boyle's reflection in the following paragraph? How does this insight change or enhance your own understanding?
2. Who in our society bears the weight of the "toxic shame" mentioned on page 70? [Facilitators: As the group responds to this question, post the list on a white board or flip chart paper.] Then ask the group: Would you be willing to eat with any of these people or groups of people? What fear or awkwardness would you need to overcome to bridge the gap and share a meal with them?
3. On pages 81-82, we read how Memo's compassion for the poor of Pritchard, Alabama, moved him to see the suffering of others. Whose suffering do you see? Has your compassion grown to embrace it? Has your "core wound" found solidarity with another's wound?
4. Christian writers throughout the centuries have variously described Christian hope. Fr. Boyle offers his insights at the bottom of page 86 and the top of page 87. How do you understand the virtue of hope?
5. Why is it so hard for those who have led lives of poverty to believe that they too are "the light of the world"? Why is it so hard for us to believe this of ourselves at times?
6. What is your response to the author's statement on page 124: "Meeting the world with a loving heart will determine what we find there." Reflecting on Pedro's story as told on



pages 125-128, who has held the flashlight for you? For whom have you held the flashlight?

7. Clarence Jordan described fear as “the polio of the soul which prevents our walking by faith” (p. 64). Share your own experiences of fear or breaking through fear.
8. How is Clarence Jordan’s witness instructive for those committed to addressing racism and poverty?

Discuss Spiritual Practice (30 minutes)

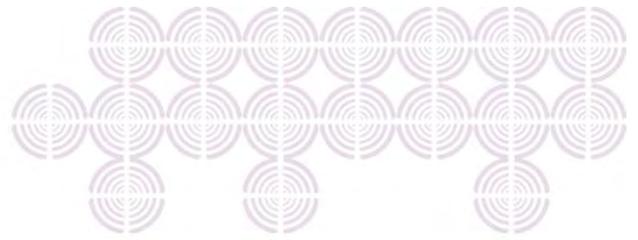
Go around the room and ask each person to briefly share their observations from the spiritual exercise assigned two weeks ago. (Participants were to purposefully notice the diversity of incomes and socio-economic groups (or lack of) and take particular notice in their immediate and extended family, neighborhoods, workplace, grocery store, school, church, theatre, gym, volunteer location, etc. Participants were also asked to notice the economic diversity among those to whom they talk over the last two weeks.)

Ask the group why they think they saw what they saw. That is, why is the world that they experience organized the way it is? Could it be different?

Break (15 minutes)

Business Items (10 minutes)

1. Assign reading for next week: Tattoos on the Heart, pages 129 - 212 and “Note to Participants for Week Eight.”
2. Distribute “Note to Participants for Week Eight.”
3. Investigation of Denominational/Nondenominational Resources on church social teaching: Ask all members of the group to do some research this week (via internet, if this is most convenient) to discover what resources are available within each person’s theological tradition that encourages the ministry of mercy and justice (declarations from leadership, creeds, policies, pastoral letters, etc.). Ask everyone to bring printed samples, if possible, of what they find.



Second Half (60 minutes)

View and Discuss Film

View “Waiting on the World to Change” (40 minutes). This film follows the lives of three young people living in Camden, New Jersey: 6-year-old Moochie, who dreams of becoming a judge; Billy Joe, a high school senior determined to be the first in his family to graduate from high school; and 4-year-old Ivan, a homeless boy whose one dream is to have a room of his own. Diane Sawyer follows a year in their lives through Camden – the poorest and most dangerous city in America, sometimes called “Murder City USA.”

When the video ends, invite the group to pause for a few minutes of silence. Within the silence, ask them to reflect: What are your prayers for these young people?

After the silent reflection, offer these questions for dialogue (20 minutes):

What did you find most hopeful in the film? What was most distressing?

How do the lives of children in your community compare with the lives of children in Camden?

How do you feel knowing that such experiences exist in America?

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

A Circle of Prayer

Invite the group to form a tight circle and link hands. Offer this prayer:

We are disciples on a journey.

We are the body of Christ, broken for this world.

Let us quietly pray for one another. (Pause)

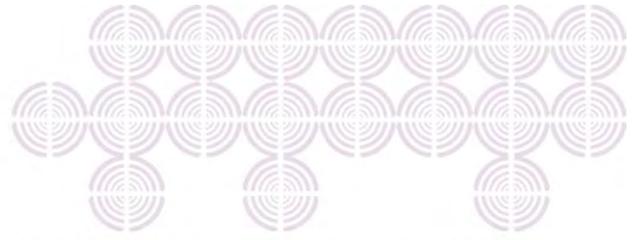
If you feel moved to share, please do so.

Words to Live By

Leader: **Let us take prayer to heart. Repeat this verse from Psalm 116:**

Gracious is the Lord and righteous; yes, our God is merciful.

All: **Gracious is the Lord and righteous; yes, our God is merciful.**



Leader: **I was brought low, and God saved me.**

All: I was brought low, and God saved me.

Leader: **May this prayer echo in our hearts throughout the week, as we walk, while we work, as we rest and when we pray for one another. Call to mind those who are suffering, in despair or fear.**

A Sign of God's Peace

Leader: **Now, we share in the peace for which our world hungers.
With a sign of peace we affirm one another for the journey ahead.
May we extend God's peace to all!**

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JustFaith Week 8

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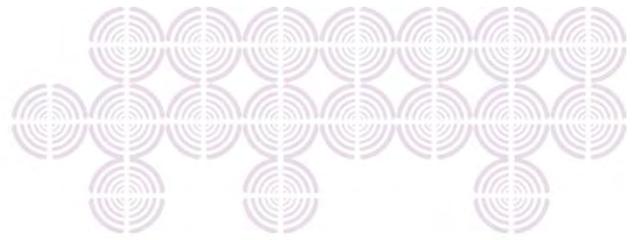


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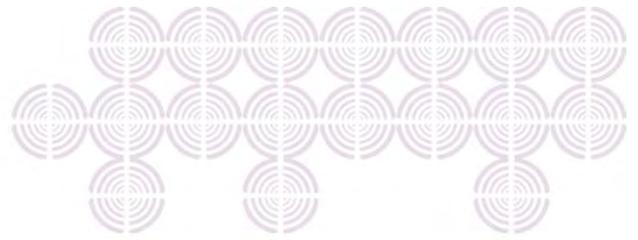


Note to Co-Facilitators

It is possible that someone in your group will say: “We don’t have gangs in our city, so it’s hard for me to relate to these young people in Tattoos on the Heart.” Even if there are not gangs in your community, the reality is that abject poverty exists in the United States that affects many children and young men and women, and these stories are profoundly important, poignant, and disturbing. Even if we do not experience regular drive-by shootings like the children of Camden, New Jersey experience all too often, we cannot turn away from the poverty that exists in our own back yards. By giving a face and voice to extreme poverty, the lived experience of the hell created by all forms of poverty is communicated.

The hope in sharing these readings and videos is to share the challenging and mostly unfamiliar language of justice. Many churches and people of faith can be counted on for charitable giving and works of charity; without demeaning those efforts, they are nonetheless inadequate unless paired with the work of changing systems that create pockets of poverty that exist in Los Angeles and Camden and Anytown, USA. By focusing on the lives of young people in Los Angeles, Father Boyle powerfully communicates the demise they are condemned to, not because they are “bad people” but simply because they are born into struggling communities. If any one of us were born where they were born, we would have before us the same tragic options and outcomes.

The questions are: How do we, as a church and a nation, change the environment in which these children are raised? How do we expand the options for their lives? How do we deconstruct the structures of injustice that the accumulated choices of generations have created? In an important sense, the Biblical narratives provide for us a set of values, insights, and applications that can guide us in contemporary decision-making. It is with earnest conviction that many Christians ask the question “What would Jesus do?” – indeed, the person of Jesus provides a powerful example for challenging social ills. Learning to wrestle with these questions and to discern helpful action and powerful witness is an important aspect of JustFaith. Hold these questions and these stories in prayerful meditation, watching for and listening to how the Holy Spirit leads you to respond.



Week Eight Components

Preparation for Week Eight

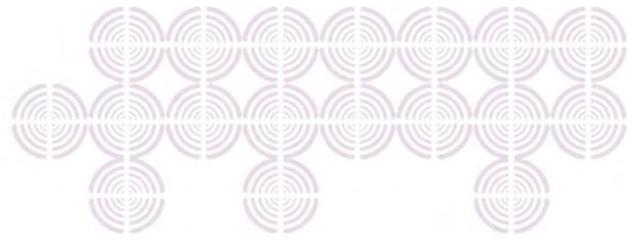
- Review Week Eight session information.
- Copy Week Eight handouts.
- Prepare newsprint or flipchart pages: draw a line down the middle of the page and write the headings “Charity” at the top of one column and “Justice” at the top of the other column. Prepare enough sheets so there will be one for each small group (of 4-5 people). (See Second Half below “Charity and Justice.”)
- Gather prayer items, markers, and masking tape (for above activity).
- Select instrumental music for the opening prayer.

Timing of the Session

Activity	Minutes
Prayer	15
Discuss reading	55
Break	10
Business	5
Discuss charity and justice	35
Discuss denominational resources	25
Closing prayer	5
Total	150

Welcome

Welcome participants and begin with prayer.



Opening Prayer (15 minutes)

- Items needed:* A piece of handmade pottery and a piece of soft modeling clay, Bible marked at Jeremiah 18:1-6
- Symbol(s):* Pottery/clay – We, and the world, are the work of God’s hands.
- Environment:* If possible, play instrumental music in the background.

Introducing the Symbols

(Slowly and deliberately)

When the group has gathered, hold up the clay in the center of the circle, introducing the symbol:

Clay – soft, malleable, receptive, forming . . . Creation.

Bring the pottery into the center of the circle. Hold it up and briefly introduce the symbol:

Pottery – hard, functional, useful, tool . . . Creation.

Place the pottery in the center of the circle.

Call to Prayer

(With quiet reverence)

Hold the clay in one hand and the pottery in the other. Begin by saying:

Oh God, you are the potter. We are the clay...the work of Your hands.

Pass the clay to the person seated on the right, the pottery to the person seated on the left. Invite the participants to hold each for a brief moment and pray silently before passing the symbol to the next person.

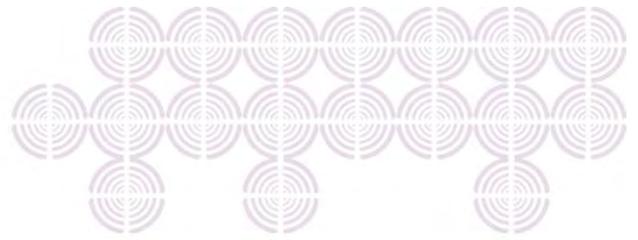
As the symbols move around the circle, pray aloud:

Jesus, in your name we gather. You are here in our midst.

In the presence of your Spirit, we become your body

to listen, to share, to learn, to care, and to pray for one another.

Move within us. Move among us.



Spirit of Compassion, bind us to one another.

Propel us out into your world to be your compassionate justice.

When the pottery and clay have gone around the circle, ask two participants to hold one of the items.

Scripture Reading

Read Jeremiah 18:1-6. Pause for silent reflection.

After a minute of silence, offer these words for further reflection:

Just as the potter can mold the clay into new forms and reshape it for new purposes, so can God remake and reshape our lives to fit the new purposes that the Holy Spirit has for us. But how do we know what those purposes are? How can we discern what the Master Potter has in mind for us? Just as Jeremiah was sent to hear God's voice by observing the potter, we too can know God's will by listening and looking and seeking the hand of the potter in the world around us.

Repeat verses 5 and 6 from Jeremiah. Pause for a brief moment of silence.

Distribute **Week 8 Participant Handout A**. Read the meditation slowly, pausing between each line.

Prayer of the Heart

Leader: **Let us take prayer to heart. Echo this simple prayer adapted from Jeremiah, line by line:**

Can I not do with you, just as the potter has done?

All: Can I not do with you, just as the potter has done?

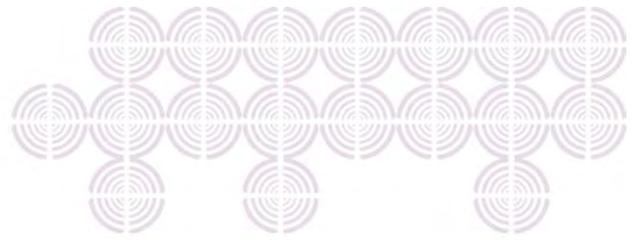
Leader: **Just like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand.**

All: Just like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand.

Leader: **Mold us into disciples, filled with compassion and love.**

All: Mold us into disciples, filled with compassion and love.

Leader: **Let this prayer echo in our hearts.**



Rite of Blessing

Leader: **Holy Spirit, inspire our thoughts. May we speak your truth.
May our hearts be opened. Together, we say, *Amen.***

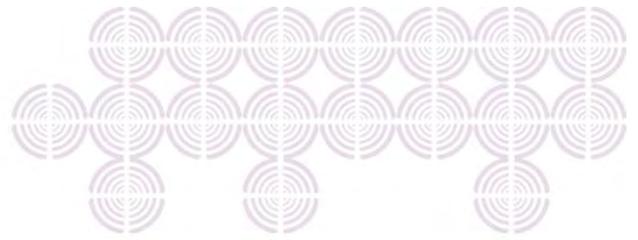
First Half (55 minutes)

Discussion Questions

- Tattoos on the Heart, pages 129-212

This final discussion of Father Boyle's book centers around the author's overall message and the nature of kinship. Be sure to cover the last question; it allows participants to discuss any fears or anxieties they may have around upcoming immersion experiences.

1. On page 130, the author writes, "Allowing folks into my jurisdiction requires that I dismantle what I have set up to keep them out." First, how do you understand his use of the word *jurisdiction*? Then discuss: Who are the people or groups of people that I exclude from the scope of those I care about? What would I need to dismantle in order to include them in my jurisdiction?
2. Recall a time when you took pure delight in someone, something or a situation. What would it take to be mindful to experience this type of delight in the world each day? If taking delight each day were a spiritual practice for you, how might it shift your consciousness over time?
3. On page 186, the author talks about wanting "to lean into the challenge of intractable problems with as tender a heart" as he can. In your understanding of working to address systemic injustice, why might it be essential to keep a tender heart in approaching such long term, intractable social problems?
4. The author states on page 187: "With kinship as the goal, other essential things fall into place; without it, no justice, no peace." How do you understand kinship after reading about Father Boyle's experiences? How might kinship lead to justice?
5. Ask someone to read the bottom half of page 190. Pause for a moment of silent reflection and then ask: Where are the margins in your community that you could move closer to so that the margin might be blurred, if not erased?
6. Where are the pockets of poverty in your community? What are churches, social service agencies and the municipal, state and federal government doing to address poverty in your community?
7. There are four immersion experiences during JustFaith where there will be opportunities to look into the eyes of a poor person. What concerns you about these experiences? What are you anxious about? What are you hoping for?



Break (10 minutes)

Business Items (5 minutes)

1. Assign reading for next week: Compassion, pages 47-84; Cloud of Witnesses, “Dorothy Day,” pages 9-14; and “Note to Participants for Week Nine.”
2. Distribute “Note to Participants for Week Nine”.
3. Remind participants to fill out their evaluations following each session.

Second Half (60 minutes)

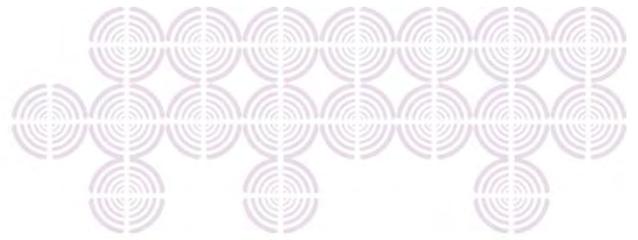
Part I: Understanding Charity and Justice (35 minutes)

This component will help participants review the differences between charity and justice. Prior to this session, prepare flipchart paper as described in the preparation list above.

Review the story that was in this week’s Note to Participants. Tell participants that this story illustrates a crucial difference between charity and justice. The villagers pulling children out of the river are doing an essential and life-saving service. However, their efforts will never cease as more struggling and drowning children come down the river. The villager who suggests going upstream to find out why children are in the river is taking the first steps toward justice—understanding the situation well enough to begin addressing the root cause. Both activities are necessary and vital.

Distribute **Week 8: Participant Handout B** and ask the whole group to look at the different types of general responses identified as charity and justice as well as specific responses to homelessness that come from using the lens of charity and the lens of justice. Ask the group to discuss how charity and justice differ, drawing on the information in the section labeled “General Responses.” Allow time for all to respond. (10 minutes)

Divide into small groups of four or five people. Ask the groups to respond to the bottom section of the handout and come up with two different lists of possible responses to hunger (or another social issue of local importance that the group might wish to explore): one list for acts of charity and one list for acts of justice. Ask the groups to be prepared to share their lists with the larger group. Give each group a marker and a sheet of newsprint; ask them to summarize their ideas on the newsprint and to select a spokesperson to present their ideas to the large group. (15 minutes)



Invite each small group to hang the newsprint with masking tape for all to see and to give a short report highlighting their ideas. To help clarify the distinction between charity and justice at the end of each report, ask if anyone has questions regarding whether an action idea is listed in the correct column. Based on the response, draw arrows, if necessary, moving ideas from one column to the other. (10 minutes)

Part II: Church Resources that Support Justice Ministry (25 minutes)

Ask participants to share what they found when they researched their own denomination's social teaching. If multiple denominations or nondenominational traditions are represented in your group, it may be helpful to organize the sharing by tradition.

Ask participants what their church provides as support for doing justice ministry, especially with the poor and marginalized (including declarations from leadership, creeds, policies, pastoral letters, etc.). What scripture passages are referred to in these church documents?

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Removing the Symbol

Pick up the clay and, with these words of blessing, remove it from the circle:

May our lives and this world be formed by God's promised reign.

Pick up the pottery and, with these words, remove it from the circle:

May we become vessels of justice, mercy, and compassion.

A Circle of Prayer

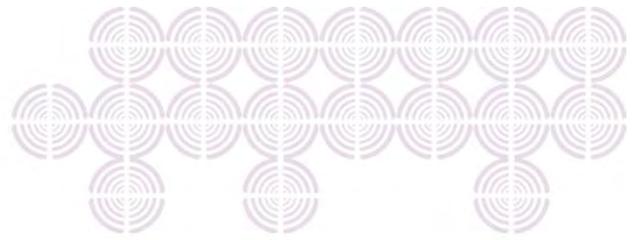
Ask the group to form a tight circle and link hands. Invite any participants who have a prayer, a concern, or a request to briefly share it with the group:

We are disciples on a journey.

We are the body of Christ, broken for this world.

Let us quietly pray for one another. (Pause)

If someone has a concern, a word of encouragement, or a short prayer to offer, please do so.



Words to Live By

Leader: **Let us again take this prayer from Jeremiah to heart:**

Can I not do with you, just as the potter has done?

All: Can I not do with you, just as the potter has done?

Leader: **Just like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand.**

All: Just like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand.

Leader: **Mold us Lord, to be your disciples and friends of the poor.**

All: Mold us Lord, to be your disciples and friends of the poor.

Leader: **May this prayer echo in our hearts throughout the week, as we walk, while we work, as we rest, and when we pray for one another. Call to mind those who are suffering, in despair or fear.**

A Sign of God's Peace

Leader: **Now we share in the peace for which our world hungers.**

With a sign of peace we affirm one another for the journey ahead.

May we extend God's peace to all!

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JustFaith Week 9

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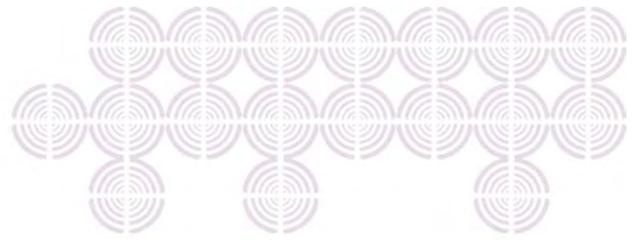
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Note to Co-Facilitators

Regarding this week's session, it includes a rather unusual video ("Portrait of a Radical") about Jesus that features the words of three very skilled commentators. The hope is to complement this week's reading and to see Jesus with new eyes and increased understanding. This video is meant to be an artful way of getting at some facets of Jesus' life and ministry that are difficult to communicate in theological or formulaic expression. It is also a kind of supplement or lens by which to understand the lives of the witnesses we read about each week. It should stimulate a lot of conversation.

Additionally, this week you will distribute a budgeting activity – **Week 9: Participant Handout C** – for members of your group to complete over the course of the coming week. In this budgeting activity, group members will receive a scenario – **Week 9: Participant Handout B** – and, throughout the next week, will be charged with creating a monthly budget for this individual or family. The activity is meant to create an awareness of the challenges facing the working poor in our communities. Encourage your group members to approach this activity realistically, resisting the temptation to pursue this exercise as a game. It may be helpful to provide your group members with suggestions for resources to use while doing this activity:

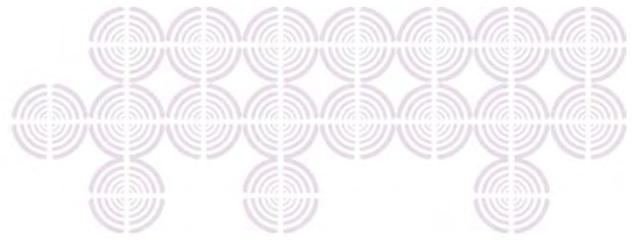
- www.apartments.com – this website will help participants identify the price range for apartments in zip codes near you)
- <http://www.livingwage.geog.psu.edu> – this website will help participants to estimate the cost of living in your community or region; the calculator lists typical expenses, the living wage, and typical wages for the selected location.

Be mindful that participants in your group will probably come from a variety of socio-economic experiences. The budgeting activity may resemble their lived reality. Be sensitive to this and encourage people to share their stories as they feel able. Encourage the rest of the group to listen to these stories with compassion and care.

Week Nine Components

Prepare for Week Nine

- Review Week Nine session information.
- Copy Week Nine handouts.
- Copy and cut "Budget Activity" scenarios (**Week 9: Attachment B**) so that each person receives one scenario (some members will receive the same scenario).
- Gather prayer items.
- Locate DVD "Portrait of a Radical" and assure access to a DVD player.



Timing of the Session

Activity	Minutes
Prayer	10
Discuss Reading	45
Break	10
Business	10
View Video	50
Discuss Video	20
Closing prayer	5
Total	150

Welcome

Welcome participants. Begin with prayer.

Opening Prayer (10 minutes)

Items needed: Prayer cloth, a candle and Bible. Mark the Bible at Exodus 3:1-10. Assign a Scripture reader and two readers for the prayer.

Environment: If possible, play instrumental music in the background and dim the overhead lights.

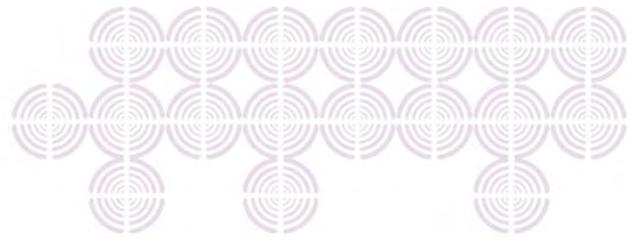
Distribute **Week 9: Participant Handout A**. Begin prayer with a moment of silence.

Scripture Reading

Read Exodus 3: 1-10. Pause for a moment of silent reflection.

Hold up the Scriptures for all to see, then place the Bible on the center table.

Continue the prayer by following **Week 9: Participant Handout A**.



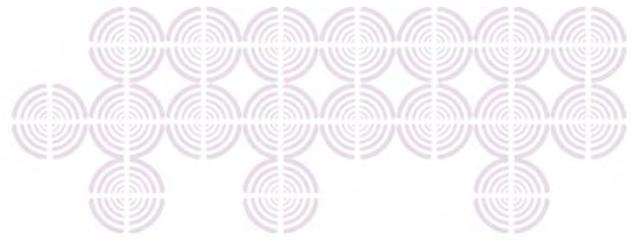
First Half (45 minutes)

Discussion Questions

- Compassion, pages 47-84
- Cloud of Witnesses, “Dorothy Day,” pages 9-14

Questions below focus on the Compassion text. However, consider the thoughts and example of Dorothy Day in your discussion.

1. “When there is no community that can mediate between world needs and personal responses,” the authors of *Compassion* note, “the burden of the world can only be a crushing burden” (p. 51). Describe your own experience of being overwhelmed by world need.
2. “In the Christian community, we can know about hunger, oppression, torture, and the nuclear threat without giving into a fatalistic resignation and withdrawing into a preoccupation with personal survival. In the Christian community, we can fully recognize the condition of our society without panicking” (p. 54). How has the company of other committed people been a source of support and encouragement for you?
3. “Voluntary displacement . . . leads us to see with others what we could not see before, to feel with others what we could not feel before, to hear with others what we could not hear before” (p. 64). How have you experienced “seeing” something or someone you could not see before because you went to a place on the margins of life or society?
4. “Quite often we will discover that we are asked to follow our Lord to places we would rather not go. But when we have learned to see him in the small displacements of our daily lives, the greater call will not seem so great after all. We then will find the courage to follow him and be amazed by our freedom to do so” (p. 73). How might this quotation be reflected in what we know of Dorothy Day’s life and personal commitment to the poor?
5. “To pay attention to others with the desire to make them the center and to make their interest our own is a real form of self-emptying, since to be able to receive others into our intimate inner space we must be empty. That is why listening is so difficult” (p. 79). As your group proceeds in this exploration of compassion and justice, it is important for the group to model self-emptying and listening. Ask your group how it can become more adept at listening to each other each week.
6. “In a world that puts such emphasis on success, our concern for a career constantly tends to make us deaf to our vocation” (p. 82). Discuss your own experience of the tension between “the call of success” and the call of God.



Break (10 minutes)

Business Items (10 minutes)

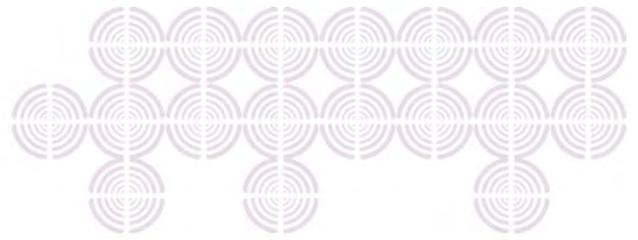
1. Assign reading for next session: Make Poverty Personal, pages 136-157; Cloud of Witnesses, “Henri Nouwen,” pages 72-77; and “Note to Participants for Week Ten.”
2. Assign “Budget Activity.” Present the activity with these or similar words: “While much of our study thus far has focused on poverty, one group who is often overlooked is the working poor. The designation “working poor” is generally understood as those who work regularly but whose income leaves them below the federal poverty level. This week, each of you will be given a scenario reflective of real situations. Based upon the scenario, you will be asked to create a monthly budget. As you work on the budget throughout this coming week, please approach it realistically. Next week we will spend time reflecting upon and discussing this activity.”
3. Distribute “Budget Activity” scenarios (**Week 9: Attachment B**), “Budget Activity” (**Week 9: Attachment C**) and “Note to Participants for Week Ten.”
4. Review plans for upcoming immersion experience, if needed.
5. Remind participants to complete their program evaluation after every session.

Second Half (70 minutes)

View and Discuss Film

View “Portrait of a Radical” (50 minutes). This film uses penetrating commentary, powerful images and music to move the viewer beyond the intellect and into a space where the dynamic nature of Jesus can be experienced. It attempts to draw the viewer into a space where Jesus can be seen from the perspective of his radical, compassionate and inclusive teachings. While watching the film, ask participants to jot down some ideas that they find important in preparation for discussion.

After the video, ask the group what ideas they found most interesting and helpful in the video. Also, ask if there were points made in the video that reminded them of any of the people described in our assigned readings. (20 minutes)



Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

A Circle of Prayer

Ask the group to form a tight circle and link hands. Invite any participants who have a prayer, a concern, or a request to briefly share it with the group:

We are disciples on a journey.

We are the body of Christ, broken for this world.

Let us quietly pray for one another. (Pause)

If someone has a concern, a word of encouragement, or a short prayer to offer, please do so.

Words to Live By

Leader: **Let us take prayer to heart. Repeat these words after me:**

**Open my eyes, O God, that I may see
the misery and suffering of your people.**

All: **Open my eyes, O God, that I may see the misery and suffering of your people.**

Leader: **May this prayer echo in our hearts throughout the week, as we
walk, while we work, as we rest and when we pray for one another.
Call to mind those who are suffering, in despair or fear.**

A Sign of God's Peace

Leader: **Now we share in the peace for which our world hungers.**

With a sign of peace we affirm one another for the journey ahead.

May we extend God's peace to all!