

Phase 2: Session 10

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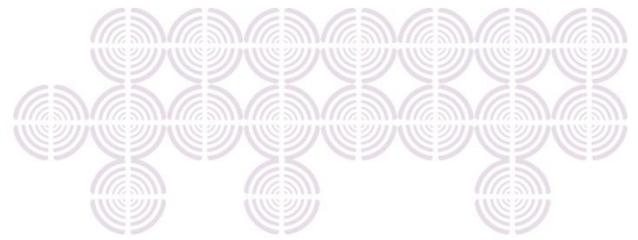
Catholic Campaign for Human Development



breadfortheworld
INSTITUTE



With additional support from: Catholic Charities USA



Session Overview and Materials

Session Focus: Addressing Poverty One Issue at a Time

Set chairs in a circle around the central prayer table.

Section	Timing
Opening Prayer	10 minutes
New Perspectives Dialogue: reflecting on the readings	75 minutes
BREAK	10 minutes
Business Items	5 minutes
Moving Toward Reconciliation	45 minutes
Closing Prayer	5 minutes

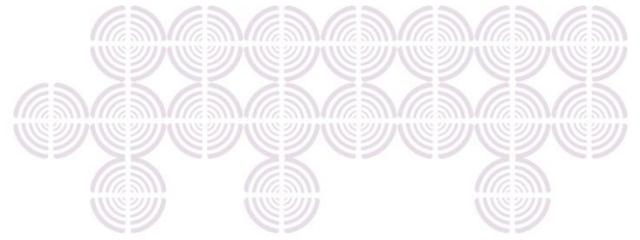
Session Checklist

For the group:

- Large pillar candle and matches
- Bible
- An empty plate
- Reflective music
- Flipchart paper and markers (optional)
- Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* or a print out of Paragraph 363

For each participant:

- Session 10 Participant Handout (cut as indicated)



Session Notes for the Co-Facilitators

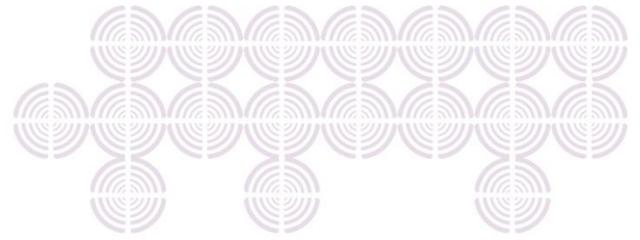
In Session 10, you will look closely at issues and realities related to global poverty through the work of Catholic Relief Services. There may be some participants who question the need to focus beyond “our” neighborhood or country, possibly suggesting that there is more than enough to be done closer to home. Without diminishing the critical needs that do exist here in the United States, there are almost unfathomable needs outside of our country. According to UNICEF data released in 2013, more than 18,000 children die of poverty-related disease and illness every day, and more than 2.4 billion people, about one-third of the world’s population, survive on less than \$2.00 per day.

Perhaps the biggest obstacle you will encounter during the next several weeks of the JustFaith program will be the implication of the United States and other Western countries in the economic and environmental crises of many poor countries. Historically, richer countries have taken advantage of smaller, less powerful countries. Like people, governments are not perfect, not always good, and sometimes even very wrong. But governments seldom admit wrongdoing until long after the fact. While the historical record documents this fact unambiguously, it still may be difficult for some of us to define citizenship in a way that allows for scrutiny, critique, and even a kind of holy skepticism that recognizes the dangers of power. To question authority potentially puts us at odds with our neighbors, our church friends, even our family members.

In preparing for sessions over the next few weeks, it is important to first ask the question: “What does it mean to be faithful to Christ?” We may be tempted to ask competing questions like, “What does it mean to be faithful to my family, my country, my neighbors, my political opinions, etc?” Remind participants that the focus of JustFaith revolves around the questions, “Who is the God of our lives? Who gets first and primary consideration? Who is my neighbor? Who are we responsible to and what does that responsibility ask of me?” These are the important and tough questions.

These questions ask for a major re-orientation—what the Gospel calls *metanoia*, or conversion. You can expect a certain amount of apprehension, tension, and struggle as the group moves through the next several sessions. Do not be too quick to try and move beyond the tension; it is when we are jostled by ideas that run counter to our current understanding that we create the space to re-orient our way of thinking. Just hold fast to how important such change is.

Finally, in the conversations that will occur, it is important to manage the dialogue effectively. Remind participants of the agreed-upon group guidelines. It is important that those most passionate about a topic do not dominate the group conversations. Facilitators should take a few minutes to review the “Facilitation Guidebook” for how to navigate intense, and perhaps politically charged, conversations.



Welcome and Opening Prayer (10 minutes)

- Items needed: A Bible, an empty plate
Symbol: Empty plate – empty stomachs, God’s sorrow
Environment: Dim the lighting in the room, if possible.

While distributing all the session handouts, welcome participants. Assign a Scripture reader. Describe what the group will be doing using these or similar words:

Today we will explore how people of faith act in solidarity with those who are experiencing poverty or other injustices in the world through the work of one organization—Catholic Relief Services. CRS represents the U.S. Catholic community in international assistance and development projects. Let us begin with prayer.

Light the pillar candle on the prayer table.

Introduce the Symbol

Hold up the empty plate and introduce the symbol with these words:

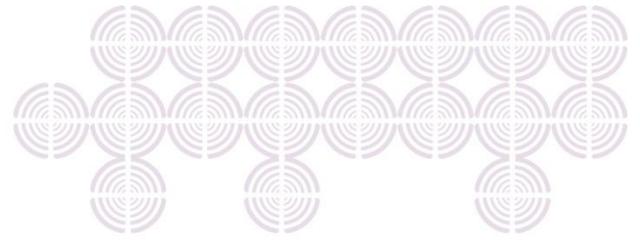
This empty plate is, for many of our brothers and sisters in this world, a reality. It is a world most of us here don’t understand and certainly don’t want for ourselves or for anyone else. It is a world that God does not want.

Call to Prayer

Hold the plate and continue the prayer:

Gracious God, this empty plate is the plate of pain. It is a serving of suffering. It is the menu for broken lives, broken families, broken hope. The bread is nowhere to be found, taken by someone else...hoarded by someone else...unshared. What shall we do, O God?

Pass the empty plate to the person seated next to you. Invite participants to hold the plate for a brief moment and offer a silent prayer before passing it. When the plate has gone around the circle, replace it in the center.



Scripture Reading

Read Deuteronomy 15: 7-8, 10-11. Pause for a minute of silence. Offer this reflection:

Throughout the Scriptures, we find God and God’s prophets describing a world in which all are fed—in which all have their basic needs met. If this is God’s vision for how our world should be ordered, then we must ask ourselves: How did we stray so far? Why do so many of God’s precious ones live with life-threatening hunger? What must we do to cooperate with God’s plan and ensure that all have enough food to eat and clean water to drink? What is God calling us to do?

Pause for a minute of silent reflection. Invite the Scripture reader to **re-read verses 10 and 11.**
Pause again for a moment of silence.

Meditation – To Have Hope

**To have hope is to believe that history continues open to the dream of God
and to human creativity.**

**To have hope is to continue affirming that it is possible to dream a different world,
without hunger, without injustice, without discrimination.**

**To have hope is to be a courier of God and courier of men and women of good will,
tearing down walls, destroying borders, building bridges.**

**To have hope is to believe in the revolutionary potential of faith, is to leave the door open
so that the Spirit can enter and make all things anew.**

*Excerpt from Missionary Sisters of St. Charles Borromeo, Prayer Without Borders
(Catholic Relief Services, 2004), 7. Used with permission for JustFaith sessions only.*

Prayer of the Heart

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

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

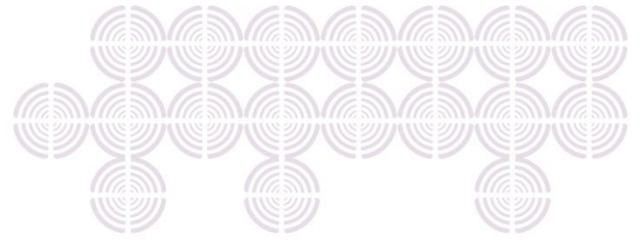
Leader: **Give us this day our daily bread,**

All: Give us this day our daily bread,

Leader: **As we this day share our daily bread.**

All: As we this day share our daily bread.

Leader: **And lead us not into temptation,**



All: And lead us not into temptation,
Leader: **But deliver us from indifference.**
All: But deliver us from indifference.
Leader: **Thy kingdom come.**
All: Thy kingdom come.
Leader: **Let this prayer echo in our hearts.**

Rite of Blessing

Invite participants to follow you as you mark a cross on your forehead, lips, and heart:

**Bless with me the thoughts, the words, and the stirrings of our hearts
that we will share in dialogue:**

(Cross forehead) **Holy Spirit, inspire our thoughts...**

(Cross lips) **May we speak your truth...**

(Cross heart) **May our hearts be opened.**

AMEN.

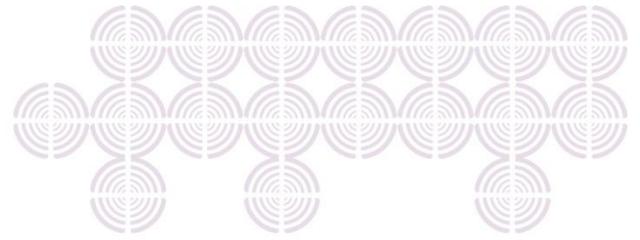
New Perspectives Dialogue: reflecting on the readings (75 minutes)

Begin with these or similar words:

Catholic Relief Service’s visionary motto is “Solidarity will transform the world.” The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* uses the word “solidarity” 27 times and describes solidarity as “a direct demand of human and Christian brotherhood” (#1939). Our dialogue today asks us to consider our role in building solidarity with all of our sisters and brothers, one issue at a time.

Try to cover each of the following questions, if possible.

1. What inspired you about the stories from this week’s reading of reconciliation and forgiveness in Chapter 4, “Forgiving the Unforgivable”? Where do you see the elements of the sacrament of reconciliation present in the *Gacaca* court process in Rwanda?
2. Chapter 5 of *Solidarity Will Transform the World* addresses “the solidarity economy.” What role and responsibility do you share in the solidarity economy?



3. What insights do Chapters 4 and 5 provide as far as building peaceful communities? [Facilitators might want to capture these on flipchart paper or a white board.] How can you use these insights to play a greater role in helping to address issues in your community or our nation?
4. Imagine your daily coffee routine. Most likely, it is a mindless activity. Now, consider all of those who helped to grow, harvest, roast, and deliver the coffee to you. What do you want your connections to the harvesters to be? How can fair trade better connect you to the people who produce your coffee?
5. How do this session's two online CRS videos demonstrate solidarity? Considering these two videos and the stories in *Solidarity Will Transform the World*, how might you engage in the work of Catholic Relief Services, one issue at a time?

BREAK (10 minutes)

Invite participants to share refreshments (if provided).

Business Items (5 minutes)

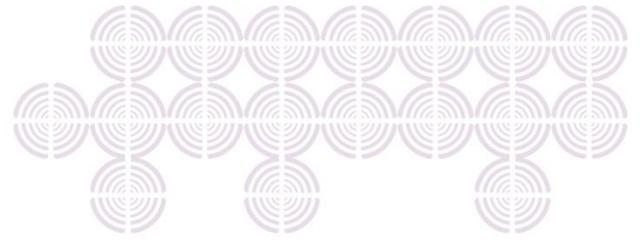
Discuss the date and logistics for the upcoming Journey to Justice Day or Phase 2 Immersion Experience, if necessary.

Moving Toward Reconciliation (45 minutes)

In this segment, participants will spend time exploring some of their own walls in regard to poverty, forgiveness, and reconciliation. Divide participants into small groups of three and begin with these words:

We have learned about several lives affected by poverty and by some of the most heinous crimes in the 20th and 21st centuries. Yet even in these circumstances, forgiveness and reconciliation have emerged. Most of us will not experience this kind of violence; but many of us, if not most of us, carry attitudes of negativity and feelings of anger – even extreme anger at times – toward others, including toward those who are poor.

Distribute the handout with the following questions and tell participants that they will have 30 minutes to discuss the questions.



1. What are the words, labels, or attitudes you use for people who are living in poverty? How do they create a barrier or wall between you and people who are poor?
2. How might your perspective need to change in order to break down the walls that divide you from those who are poor—those who are the “Hutus” or of the wrong tribe?
3. Where do you need to grant forgiveness? How can you help bring about that reconciliation?
4. How can you do more to build bridges of understanding and partnership with those living in poverty?
5. Name a few things that would be different in a reconciled world.

After 30 minutes, bring the group back together. Spend the rest of the time discussing questions 4 and 5.

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Read aloud the first sentence of paragraph 363 (page 156) in the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*. Pause between sentences to allow each person to prayerfully reflect on the text.

Return to the Symbol

Hold up the empty plate and say these words of blessing:

Let us work to banish this symbol from the world.

Let us fill plates with food and fill lives with love.

A Circle of Prayer

Invite the group to stand, form a tight circle, and link hands. In these words, 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 the world.

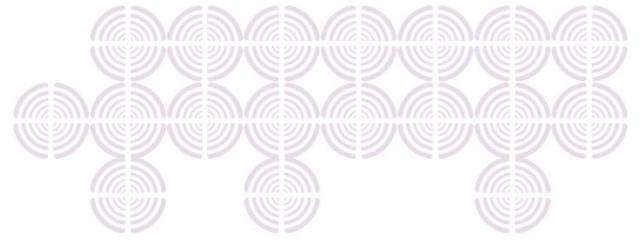
We hold one another as we carry the concerns and intercessions of our neighbors.

If you feel moved, please share your prayer aloud.

Words to Live By

Return to the mantra prayer and invite the group to echo it again.

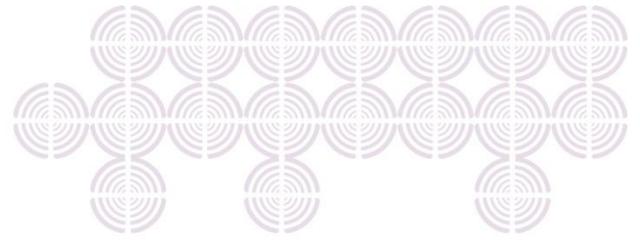
Leader: **Let us again take prayer to heart. Repeat the prayer after me.**



Leader: **Give us this day our daily bread,**
All: Give us this day our daily bread,
Leader: **As we this day share our daily bread.**
All: As we this day share our daily bread.
Leader: **And lead us not into temptation,**
All: And lead us not into temptation,
Leader: **But deliver us from indifference.**
All: But deliver us from indifference.
Leader: **Thy kingdom come.**
All: Thy kingdom come.
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 living in fear.
(Pause)

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!



Session 10 Participant Handout

Group Dialogue Questions

1. What are the word, labels, attitudes you use and have for people who are living in poverty? How do they create a barrier or wall between you and people who are poor?
2. How might your perspective need to change in order to break down the walls that divide you from those who are poor—those who are the “Hutus” or of the wrong tribe?
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