

VOICES

WINTER > SPRING 2014

Peacemaking: A Journey Taken Step by Step

Cory Lockhart, JustFaith graduate and Program Director for GoodNewsPeople

I am an aspiring peacemaker.

I use the word “aspiring” because I have not yet fully embraced in thought and action the ideals of peacemaking that I find so compelling. Practicing it is a constant daily effort, a series of taking steps (sometimes forward, sometimes backward), falling, getting up, and trying again. Overall, I think I’ve taken more steps forward than backward, but my peacemaking journey is far from complete. It is a lifelong quest.

First Steps

I can trace many of the steps I’ve taken in the last 22 years back to this very ministry. My JustFaith connection started in 1992 when my parents were going through the JustFaith program. (This was before JustFaith Ministries existed; JustFaith was a parish program at the time.) Their involvement led them to visit our church’s sister parish in El Salvador. When they returned, they asked if I’d like to go on the next delegation to El Salvador. Without knowing what I was getting into, I unhesitatingly said, “Yes!”

I did not know that my yes would teach me about poverty, war, hospitality, heartbreak, and vibrant joy. I did not know that my yes would teach me about my country’s complicity in unspeakable acts. I did not know that my initial yes would lead to many more: yes, I’ll go again to El Salvador; yes, I’ll live in Guatemala; yes, I’ll stand vigil in front of the

School of the Americas each November for 14 years; and eventually, yes, I’ll do the JustFaith program (13 years after my parents).

Stepping into Conflict

Going through JustFaith led to much bolder yeses: yes, I’ll get a Master’s in Spirituality; yes, I’ll teach Catholic social teaching in addition to Spanish; yes, I’ll leave teaching in order to volunteer abroad; yes, I’ll go on a Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) delegation to Iraqi Kurdistan; yes, I’ll make a commitment to nonviolent peace activism with CPT. This last commitment took me to the city of Hebron in Palestine for three months last year and will take me there again for six weeks later this year. These yeses, as well as knowing when to say no, have propelled me forward on my journey, sometimes with bold leaps, other times with stumbling baby steps.

My last yes is the most challenging one I have made. I have been in many places where oppression is evident. It is in Palestine, however, where I have seen most clearly the systematic dehumanization of people by other people, in both subtle and obvious ways, every day, day after day. Even with the benefits of my own privilege—being American, middle-class, well-educated, able to travel relatively freely—I felt the Israeli Occupation weighing on me.

Watching interactions between Palestinians and Israelis has challenged me and my



Palestinian children in Hebron encounter heavily-armed Israeli soldiers on a daily basis.

Peacemaking is a constant daily effort, a series of taking steps, falling, getting up, and trying again.

Did You Know?

Hebron is important to Jews, Christians, and Muslims—all Abrahamic religions—as the burial place of Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebecca, Jacob, and Leah. Read about it in Genesis 23.

EDITORIAL CONTENT PROVIDED BY:



peacemaking ideals to the core. How do I express my anger in a way that doesn't dehumanize those I accuse of dehumanizing others? How do I acknowledge the destructive forces of a system while acknowledging that the people who by choice or by birth are part of that system are children of God? How do I live in community with others during difficult circumstances? These are only a few of the questions whose answers I continue to seek.

Peacemaking Practices for Stepping Forward

Even as I struggle, I am taking steps forward, learning a little more about what peacemaking means in a tangible sense. Here are four of the practices I am trying to integrate into my life. They may seem simple, but living them out is challenging, even in the best of circumstances.

I invite you to practice taking these steps with me:

1. Look people in the eye. This is easy to do with those we care about. It is more difficult with those who challenge us, particularly if I add these words: with compassion. This was my practice during the less volatile times I

Some Simple Steps You Can Take

1. Explore ways to get involved with Christian Peacemaker Teams. Invite a speaker to come to your church or parish, or consider participating in a short-term delegation in an area of crisis: cpt.org/participate
2. Consider getting a small group together to do the JustMatters peacemaking module: tinyurl.com/jfmpeacemaking
3. Join current JustFaith participants in exploring the following questions for reflection and dialogue on the connections between poverty, violence, and nonviolence:
 - When have you said that it is too dangerous to go to a certain neighborhood or part of the world? How do you think the people who live in those communities would react to your fear?
 - When in your life have you witnessed violence or been impacted by trauma? How has it affected your life?
 - Where do you see links between violence in your community and the lack of financial resources?
 - Where do you see ways to become more connected in your own life to those who experience violence or trauma every day?



Members of Christian Peacemaker Teams in Hebron witness and document abuses that occur as a result of Israel's occupation of Palestine, which is illegal under international law.

was around Israeli soldiers, whose presence was often marked by the bravado of boys on the cusp of manhood, whose attitudes ranged from mild disrespect to hostility and anger, and whose actions ranged from inconveniencing Palestinians (and sometimes internationals) to doing them physical harm.

I would look straight at them, hoping to catch their eyes, with the following mantra going through my head: I don't hate you. I know you are more than what I see you do. I wish you love, real true love in your heart, for all people. What are you doing? What are you doing? What are you doing? By repeating the words, I knew that my eyes conveyed compassion, because that is what I felt. Sometimes a soldier dared to look at me and hold my gaze. I have no idea what he was thinking, but in those seconds I never felt that he returned my compassion with hostility. He might have before and might again afterwards, but not in that moment. Those exchanges briefly connected me to the soldiers on a human level and gave me sparks of hope.

2. Speak your truth. I am not great at expressing my needs. I am learning (perhaps late in life) that it is not fair to expect others to know what I need. I had a number of chances to practice speaking my truth while living with the team. At times I felt tensions with teammates because my needs weren't being met. My frustration grew as I waited for them to care for me. However, my challenges were not the same as theirs, so they didn't know I was struggling until I told them. Once I did,

we were able to have productive conversations about the dynamics between us. On a larger scale, now that I am home I share the truth of what I witnessed in Palestine.

3. Listen. Really listen. Really, really listen.

This is the counterpart to speaking our truth. There must be awareness that our individual truths form an incomplete picture. One of the blessings of working with CPT is the training. Before going to Palestine, I went through a month of intensive training on everything from the Biblical foundations of nonviolence, to nonviolent communication, to how to deal with trauma. While I was on the team, we had several more workshops on nonviolent communication. Learning to listen—not only to the words of another, but beyond the words, to the depth from which they spring—is a difficult task. I had more than one challenging conversation with teammates and it was very important for me to remember that whatever hurt was on the surface might be remnants from past situations, that what we were really dealing with were deep-rooted fears and insecurities that my actions had triggered. Being sensitive to that helped me to listen a little better. I have lots of room to grow in this area.

4. Practice gratitude. It is amazing just how many blessings we experience, even in the most trying of circumstances. In fact, there are reasons to be grateful for the trials themselves as they invite us to stretch and grow. Even if we're not ready or able to see our difficulties as gifts, we can take note of the many simple pleasures in our lives: a good meal, a beautiful sunset, a quiet walk, a conversation with a friend. When we start to pay attention, it is easy to find abundant goodness around us. Recognizing it eases the tension in our lives and helps us share that goodness with others.

Peacemaking is not easy. It is an ongoing practice. I am only beginning to integrate the above into my walk, moving both with confident strides and tentative steps. I find the journey easier when I have someone to walk with.

Will you join me? *JF*

Cut this out and keep it in your purse, wallet, or prayer space as a reminder of how you can keep moving forward as a peacemaker:

In order to take steps forward today as a peacemaker, I will:

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| 1.
Look people in the eye. | 2.
Speak my truth. | 3.
Listen. Really listen. Really, really listen. | 4.
Practice gratitude. |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|

Revisiting the Parable of the Good Samaritan: A Case for Advocacy

by Billy Kangas,
Catholic Relations

www.bread.org



breadfortheworld
INSTITUTE

The parable of the Good Samaritan is one of the most moving parables told by Jesus.

It tells the story of a man beaten and left for dead on the side of the road by a group of robbers. After being ignored by religious leaders from his own country, the man is eventually assisted by a despised Samaritan, who binds his wounds and carries him to an inn where he is able to recover. This is all done at great expense to the Samaritan.

This story has inspired Christians for centuries. And countless people's lives have been saved and enriched as individuals have responded in generosity toward others, opening their hearts and wallets to feed and care for the poor and vulnerable people in the world.

This kind of action, however, tells only part of the story.

Imagine again the story of the Good Samaritan. What if the Samaritan travels down the road the next day and discovers another man beaten, robbed, and left for dead? Out of the kindness of his heart he cares for this one as well and puts him in an inn at

his own expense so that the man might recover.

Imagine this continues day after day. Each morning the Samaritan finds a man near death and each day he opens his heart and his wallet to care for the poor soul who has been injured. At some point, the Samaritan would naturally begin to ask if there was a better way. Might not his resources be better spent supporting law enforcement along the road so that robbers would not so freely assault travelers?

This is not to negate or belittle the Good Samaritan's actions of providing direct assistance to the series of robbery victims. But it's worth considering that changing the system would be much more effective than continually treating those injured by it. This is what advocacy work is all about. It seeks to urge those in power to take action so that the systems in place protect vulnerable people.

You have been given a unique role as a voter in a democratically elected government. You have a powerful voice. You can help bring attention to points in the systems that harm

poor and hungry people. You can hold policy makers accountable. You can assure that the squeaky wheels are heard and addressed.

Bread for the World was started with the fundamental insight

that hunger is a global issue that requires global leadership to fix. We live in a world where millions of children die needlessly each year. The problem isn't that we don't have enough food, but that the systems we have in place aren't effective in getting food to the right people at the right times. At Bread for the World we hope you are inspired by Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan, inspired to care for and serve poor and hungry people suffering each day and also to urge leaders to take action to help fix the systems that create and sustain hunger in our world today. *✠*

*You have been given
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elected government.*

You have a powerful voice.

Creative Fasting Ideas for Lent

by Billy Kangas,
Catholic Relations

The season of Lent developed very early in Christian history as a period of preparatory fasting. People would refrain from certain meals and from eating meat and cheese, often sticking to a diet of raw fruits and vegetables throughout the 40-day season. This practice was seen as a way of uniting with the sacrificial life that God had demonstrated in Jesus Christ (Canons of Hippolytus, 20).

Today many Christians carry on this tradition during Lent. They give up things they enjoy—usually a food item or a practice—in order to unite more deeply with the love of God.

This Lenten season (March 5–April 19), we encourage you to reflect on how your own fasting can deepen your solidarity with people in need.

Here are a few ideas:

- 1. Fast from a few meals each week.** Give the money that you would have spent on meals to organizations working to help hungry people. You might consider giving to a local charity or soup kitchen, an international relief organization like Catholic Relief Services, or a hunger advocacy group like Bread for the World.
- 2. Take the food stamp challenge.** Millions of people rely on food stamps (now called SNAP) to keep food on the table. Try to live on the daily food stamp allowance—\$4.20 a day—for at least one week during Lent.
- 3. Try a food desert fast.** There are many people who do not have access to grocery stores in their neighborhoods and have no way of regularly getting fresh fruits and vegetables. To understand how difficult it can be to live a healthy lifestyle under these conditions, consider living for a few weeks only on food that you can purchase from your local convenience store. This is a daily reality for many Americans.
- 4. Fast and pray for immigration reform.** Last year, hundreds of people joined the Fast for Families to pray for immigration reform. Fasters lived on a diet of only water for set periods of time, some for as long as 22 days. When the fasting ended, they commissioned people to go home and continue the fast until immigration reform was passed. Consider joining them for some time this Lent. Learn more at fast4families.org
- 5. Consider taking the extreme poverty fast.** There are roughly a billion people in the world who live in extreme poverty, doing their best to survive on less than \$1.25 a day. You might try to create a food budget of \$1.25 a day for a few days to get a sense of what extreme poverty might feel like.

By incorporating one or two of these ideas into your Lenten fast, you may find your heart more deeply united to God's self-giving love. Make sure you consult with a doctor before starting any fast.

Why You Might Not Want to Give Up Your Smartphone This Lent

by Kimberly Mazyck,
Church Relations Manager

www.catholicrelief.org



Turn your smartphone into a helpful tool for your Lenten practices.

Download your CRS Rice Bowl mobile app at



crsricebowl.org/app

We hear a lot about smartphones and tablets these days, with many of us having found in them new ways to share pictures, communicate with family, and even read the newspaper.

Knowing that so many people communicate with their phones led us to wonder: Can a smartphone help someone with their Lenten practices?

This year, Catholic Relief Services is excited to introduce a new tool for smartphone and tablet users that will help people to engage with CRS Rice Bowl during Lent. This should be especially effective for those who are always on the go and lead a busy lifestyle.

CRS Rice Bowl Mobile App

The Rice Bowl mobile app offers a rich spiritual experience, and can help make the 40 days of Lent life-changing while making the world a better place. It is available for Apple or Android devices at crsricebowl.org/app.

Users can schedule delivery of daily reflections to their mobile devices, set and track their progress towards personal Lenten goals, obtain simple meatless recipes for Fridays during Lent, and find stories of hope from people around the world.

Features include:

- *Prayerful reflections for each day of Lent*
Use these resources to start your day, to incorporate during meetings at your parish, or to begin your evening meal at home with your family.

- *Customizable tool for setting a Lenten sacrifice goal and tracking progress towards its achievement*

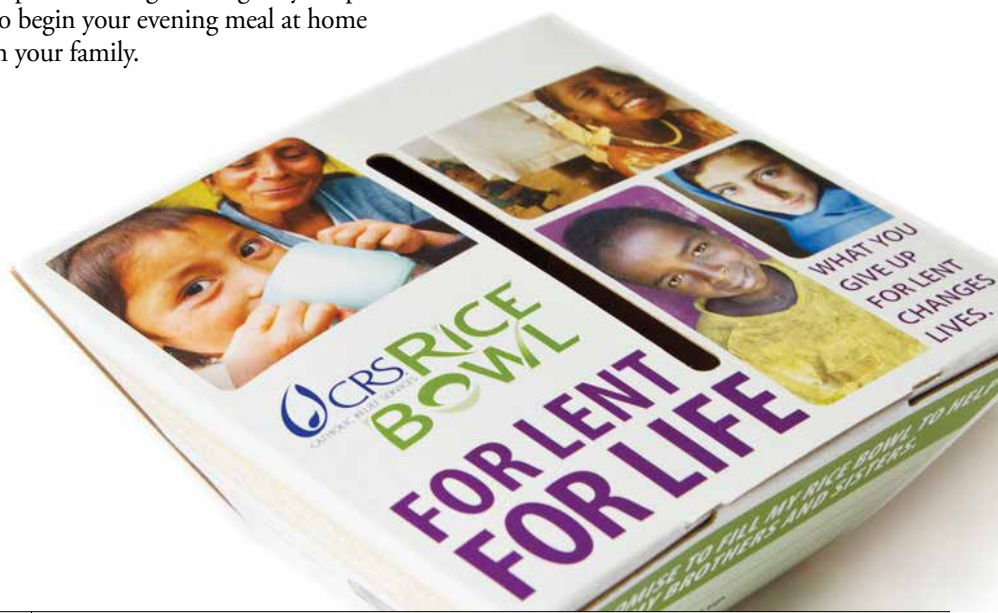
If you are planning to give up something this Lent, like a daily cappuccino at your favorite café, the Rice Bowl app will help you calculate the total cost for the period of Lent. The app will also share how this amount of money can benefit people in other countries.

- *Meatless recipes for Fridays during Lent*

As we seek to abstain from meat on Friday, the biggest challenge for many comes in planning meals. The Rice Bowl app will help by providing meatless recipes. This will be especially helpful for meal planning on the go.

- *Stories and videos of people who benefit from prayers and almsgiving to CRS Rice Bowl*

The Rice Bowl app includes stories for each featured CRS Rice Bowl country. These stories and videos build a connection to our sisters and brothers overseas. The stories also highlight the value of partnership and how families are committed to improving their lives.



In addition to utilizing the mobile app, here are four more ways you can engage with CRS Rice Bowl:

1. Order materials.

Parishes and schools may order CRS Rice Bowl materials free of charge online at csrricebowl.org or by calling 1-800-222-0025. CRS Rice Bowl materials include: Rice Bowls and Spiritual Guides (calendar), Educator's Guide, and posters.

2. Distribute materials.

- On Ash Wednesday, invite volunteers to distribute CRS Rice Bowls as people leave Mass.
- For schools, hold a school-wide assembly or prayer service and give a CRS Rice Bowl to each student, or distribute the CRS Rice Bowls through your weekly communication to families.

3. Organize Lenten activities in your parish.

- Prepare one or more of the simple meal recipes and invite participants to share a meal as a community. Invite people to make a free will offering to CRS Rice Bowl when attending the meal.
- Use the CRS Rice Bowl Prayer Service found at csrricebowl.org with small faith-sharing groups.

4. Collect CRS Rice Bowls and thank participants.

- At the end of Lent, make announcements and place information in your parish bulletin to inform participants when and where to turn in their Rice Bowl donations.

- Share with your parish the results of their participation in CRS Rice Bowl. Place an announcement in your bulletin or newsletter, and list the total number of families participating and the total amount collected.

No matter how you choose to use it, CRS Rice Bowl is the perfect way to connect with your local community and your sisters and brothers around the world during Lent.



Say Yes to Your Mission!

by Maryknoll Partnership Committee

www.maryknollaffiliates.org
www.maryknollaymissioners.org
www.maryknollsisters.org
www.maryknollsociety.org



In less than a year, an Argentine bishop little-known outside of South America has become a beacon for many around the world.

The words and actions of Pope Francis give us hope that a more compassionate and merciful world is possible as he calls us to reach out to those who are poor and marginalized. But like anything worth doing, this takes practice.

In a world that Pope Francis characterizes as marked by a “globalization of indifference,” we are called to see and treat others as part of our family, as our own brothers and sisters in the family of God. Those of us who have served as missionaries in other countries have been privileged to develop a sense of family with people from all over the world. But as Pope Francis points out in his apostolic exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*, all disciples are missionaries. The phrase “missionary disciple” has been used with many activities of the Latin American church ever since the 2007 meeting of bishops in Aparecida, Brazil.

Becoming missionary disciples—people who live with an attitude of love and compassion for everyone in our global family—is the great work of our lifetimes. Everyone needs time to prepare themselves for the important things they will attempt in life. Jesus took 40 days in the desert. Each year we also have 40 days to focus on practices that bring us closer

to contributing to a world more marked by compassion and mercy than by globalized indifference.

What then, are some of the skills needed by missionary disciples? And how can the three traditional practices of Lent—prayer, fasting, and almsgiving—help us prepare for this role?

Prayer

A missionary must develop a listening heart—a heart able to hear God's voice and the voices of all people, no matter the language they speak. Prayer is the surest way to a listening heart. Carrying into our prayer the human faces from the stories we hear each day helps us ask ourselves: Can I see and love this person as my brother or sister? How can I respond to this brother or sister in need? This is why we pray.

Fasting

A missionary disciple needs a selfless and adaptable disposition. When we hear God's invitation to reach out and love another, we often realize that this might mean going beyond what is comfortable or easy, beyond what we feel like doing in a given moment.

Sometimes we need to be able to say “no” to what we'd rather do so that we can say “yes” to what God is asking of us.

That takes practice! Our Lenten tradition of fasting, in its many forms, can help us

LENTEN PRACTICES FOR MISSIONARY DISCIPLES

— PRAYER —

Pray each day with the news reports: Where are people in places of conflict, disasters and economic problems, who need compassion and the positive energy of our prayer? What additional response does God ask of you?

— FASTING —

Give up habits that can be destructive on an interpersonal or global level. For example, make peace with your neighbors or buy local products to cut your carbon footprint.

— ALMSGIVING —

Try reaching out in service to a person or a group of people in a way that stretches you beyond your comfort zone.

practice. Although it often refers to “giving up” a particular type or quantity of food, we can “fast” from one or more of the many things that keep us focused on our own interests and disconnected from the needs of others. In Lent we are invited to cut back on something not to prove that we can do it, but rather to help us re-focus our attention on all of the people and needs that God is trying to get us to notice. This is why we fast.

Almsgiving

A missionary disciple needs to learn to serve others—and we learn by doing. The third traditional practice of Lent is almsgiving, which could also be described as service, or as caring about others and their needs and doing something about it.

Each of us has been touched by people with different needs. Some needs seem overwhelming and impossible to meet. Like in the Gospel, where we learn that Jesus sent

the disciples out two by two, the Maryknoll experience confirms the importance of collaborating in missionary teams and working together with people of good will from both local and international organizations throughout the world. Together we accomplish great things—much more than we could ever imagine doing by ourselves. This is how we give alms.

If we give time in Lent to these traditional practices of prayer, fasting and almsgiving, we will find that we are refining the skills we need to become better missionary disciples. Along with others inspired by the Gospel and by Pope Francis, we will find that globalized indifference need not rule the day. A more just, compassionate and merciful world is happening through our collective efforts! *AF*

Becoming missionary disciples—people who live with an attitude of love and compassion for everyone in our global family—is the great work of our lifetimes.

You will find resources and links on the website of the *Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns* presenting the work of many groups collaborating on global issues. Check them out and you will no doubt find connections to issues and needs to which you are called to respond this Lenten season:

www.maryknollogc.org

We also invite you to participate in an overseas mission immersion experience designed for JustFaith Ministries graduates. Visit the *Friends Across Borders* website and learn how you can get involved in an experience that will help you stretch beyond the familiar and discover new ways to be involved in the social ministry of our Church:

www.friendsacrossborders.org



JustFaith graduates explore their missionary discipleship during an immersion trip to El Salvador. Maryknoll priest John Spain leads a reflection during a retreat at the memorial site of the 1980 martyrdom of four women missionaries (including two Maryknoll Sisters).

A Celebration of Goodness in the World

by **Genevieve Mougey**,
Poverty Education & Outreach Manager

www.usccb.org/cchd



CATHOLIC CAMPAIGN FOR
HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Pope Francis recently reminded us in his apostolic exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*, of a key quote from Pope Emeritus Benedict XIV: “Being a Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction.”

Pope Francis continues in his own words:

Goodness always tends to spread. Every authentic experience of truth and goodness seeks by its very nature to grow within us, and any person who has experienced a profound liberation becomes more sensitive to the needs of others. As it expands, goodness takes root and develops. If we wish to lead a dignified and fulfilling life, we have to reach out to others and seek their good (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 9).

You are a part of this goodness in the world. As a graduate of a JustFaith Ministries program, you know what it means to experience the sensitivity needed to reach out to others.

As an expression of the solidarity of the Catholic community in the United States, the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) aims to put the words of these two holy men into practice:

- CCHD builds on the encounters and goodness of people like you!
- CCHD is about the relationships you build with your neighbors in your towns, your cities, your communities.
- CCHD works to address the root causes of poverty so that all people are able to see goodness from God “take root and develop.”
- CCHD is founded on the Catholic social teaching principle of subsidiarity, which means we are called to “reach out to others and seek their good,” regardless of economic status.

In order to highlight ways in which the goodness of God is taking root and developing, CCHD recognizes a young adult each year who is working to eradicate injustice and poverty in his or her community. This year we celebrate the goodness of two Cardinal Bernardin Young Adult Leaders.

Ana and José Aguyao are siblings who came to the United States when they were still children. Ana and José exemplify what it means to “reach out and seek” the good of others. Ana notes, “As we reflect upon how we came to be here, we are taken back to our humble beginnings, and they originate in our parents. It is their faith, values, and courage that brought us to where we are today: fighting for a world that shows more compassion, more love, and more respect for the dignity of work.”

While still in high school, Ana became acquainted with a group of 12 workers who needed a translator to help document their cases about abuses in the work place. Ana and José decided that they would help the workers. “When we needed it the most, our faith and community were the sanctuary that gave us refuge and strength, and nurtured our spirit of justice to carry through,” Ana said. They chose

to act for and with others through their work with the North West Arkansas Worker Justice Center (NWA).

Founded in 2002 to help low-income and immigrant workers in Arkansas advocate against workplace injustices, the NWA seeks to empower the working community. NWA operates under principles of Catholic social and moral teaching, exemplifying the mission of Jesus Christ, “to bring good news to the poor ... release to captives ... sight to the blind, and let the oppressed go free” (Luke 4:18). By tirelessly advocating for low-wage workers and by empowering workers with labor education and equipping them with the tools necessary to protect themselves at work, NWA seeks liberation for those who are oppressed in the workplace.

The NWA is able to make significant strides through support from CCHD. Funding enables them to be the region’s primary



Ana and José Aguyao were recognized by the Catholic Campaign for Human Development for their work to eradicate injustice and poverty in their community.

advocates for low-income workers by administering Know Your Rights trainings, self-development programs, and a safe space where workers can find tools and resources alongside a welcoming hand, a listening ear, and a caring heart. CCHD support aids the Center and the workers by opening up opportunities for communities of faith to take action and live gospel values.

“If we wish to lead a dignified and fulfilling life, we have to reach out to others and seek their good.” —Pope Francis

Ana shared a story about one worker, Carmen, who received help and care at NWA:

One of the most memorable stories that has helped me grow as an advocate is the story of Carmen. Carmen worked in the poultry processing industry, and, like many women, suffered harassment,

was threatened [with deportation], and suffered repetitive motion injuries because of the fast line speed and lack of adequate protective gear. When Carmen came to NWA we learned that the employer was not paying all her hours worked and that she was facing harassment and [deportation] threats if she sought to speak up. We were able to open a worker’s compensation case for her, recover wages for overtime not paid that accumulated to \$780 and through her voice gave hope to other women workers.

Ana and José today hold executive roles at the North West Arkansas Worker Justice Center. They took over running the center while completing course work at the University of Arkansas. Together they have helped to recover more than \$580,000 in lost wages for workers. Their efforts led to establishing stronger standards for more than 800 poultry processing employees. Ana and José are models of leaders in the work to eradicate injustices and poverty at its root by reaching out to others. *✠*

The Catholic Campaign for Human Development is the official anti-poverty program of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

For more stories of hope from CCHD, visit www.povertyusa.org

and follow us on Twitter:

www.twitter.com/EndPovertyUSA

Dig Deeper into Scripture with *Lectio Divina*

Lectio Divina involves prayerfully reading a scripture passage multiple times. Just as a gardener’s shovel scoops more than once to make a hole deep enough for new life to be planted, so it is with *Lectio Divina*. Each reading is a scooping deeper into the heart, making more open space for the revelation of God’s word to fill it.

Fr. Basil Pennington, O.C.S.O., briefly describes the process: “As we listen to the Word (lectio), a word, a phrase, a sentence may well strike us, and we let it reverberate within, opening and expanding, forming and shaping (meditatio), calling forth varied responses (oratio) until finally we simply rest in the Reality to which it all leads (contemplatio).”

Try *Lectio* with this passage from Isaiah 58:9-10:

*If you remove the yoke from among you,
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,
if you offer your food to the hungry
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,
then your light shall rise in the darkness
and your gloom be like the noonday.*

Lectio Divina is a central feature of the GoodNewsPeople program. To see what GoodNewsPeople is all about, watch the video at goodnewspeople-jfm.org

Your Gifts Are Changing Lives

*Thanks to You,
17 Families in Wyoming
Own Their First Home!*



The Wyoming Family Home Ownership Program, which enables low-income working families with children to buy a home, was born out of the first JustFaith group in Cheyenne, Wyoming. Your gifts change lives as JustFaith Ministries program graduates respond to community needs by taking action.

Housing for low-income families is the highest priority need in Cheyenne, Wyoming.

Terry Williams, a Wyoming JustFaith graduate, wanted to do something to meet the long-term housing needs for low-income families and help them move out of poverty.

He realized that the Wyoming state assistance system he once administered was broken. The system responds to the immediate needs, but it does not resolve the root causes of poverty and uplift families to self-sufficiency and independence.

It was time to do something different—something more effective.

Inspired by the principles of social justice he learned about in JustFaith, Terry developed a team to address housing needs for low-income working families with children. The team included several other JustFaith graduates. Together they created the Wyoming Family Home Ownership Program (WYFHOP), which helps low-income working families become homeowners.

The program provides twelve weeks of financial education. Participating families are then required to save for two years for a down payment and closing costs. At the end of the two years, these savings are matched four to five times by WYFHOP, enabling the family to buy a home. The program's matching funds come from the generous partnership of local faith communities and businesses.

WYFHOP maintains connections with participating families for four years and provides them with ongoing mentoring as needed.

Home ownership gives a family stability and helps children thrive. It also builds equity and helps move families out of poverty. To date, WYFHOP has helped 15 families buy their own homes, and 27 families are in the two-year process of saving toward home ownership. In total, 108 children have been positively impacted.

This is all thanks in part to your support of JustFaith Ministries.

When you donate to JustFaith Ministries, you make it possible for people like Terry Williams and his fellow graduates to experience the transformational programs we offer. But it doesn't stop there! Your gifts continue to change lives as program graduates respond by taking action—just like these Wyoming graduates did.

Your gifts change lives!

Please support

JustFaith Ministries.

*To donate, use the enclosed envelope
or visit justfaith.org/donate*

Seven Reasons Why We Need Prison Reform

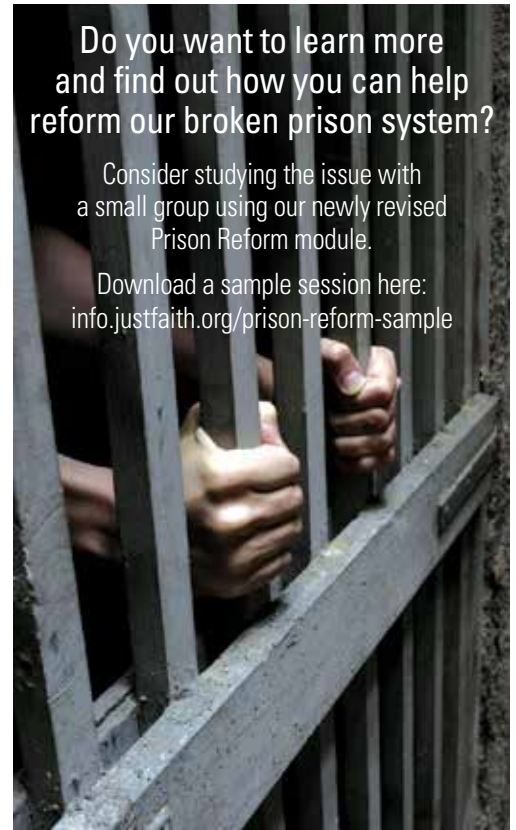
1. The U.S.A. is the only country in the Western industrialized world that still uses the death penalty.
2. Since the war on drugs began in 1971, America's prison population has grown 700%. We lock up more people than any other country in the world, holding 25% of the world's prison population (but we only have 5% of the world's people).
3. Since 1980, California has built one college campus and 21 prisons.
4. Ten years ago there were only five private prisons in the country. Today there are 100. The prison industry complex is one of the fastest growing industries in the United States, with its own trade exhibitions, conventions, and catalogs.
5. The majority of people we incarcerate in this country have never committed a violent crime: 97% of federal inmates and about two-thirds of state inmates have been convicted of nonviolent offenses.
6. Poor people and people of color are disproportionately affected by incarceration. A recent study found that one in every three African-American males will be incarcerated at some point in their lives.
7. The passage of the "three strikes" laws in 13 states (life in prison after being convicted of three felonies) made it necessary to build 20 new federal prisons. One of the most disturbing cases resulting from this measure was that of a prisoner who received three 25-year sentences for stealing a car and two bicycles.

(Sources: globalresearch.org and uscbb.org)

Do you want to learn more and find out how you can help reform our broken prison system?

Consider studying the issue with a small group using our newly revised Prison Reform module.

Download a sample session here: info.justfaith.org/prison-reform-sample



Because we think we know,

we are blind.

Because we presume to understand,

we forget to listen.

Because it seems so familiar and common,

we take life for granted.

Because we expect rather than receive,

we fail to be astounded.

Without wonder,

we cannot hope to embrace the wounds and appreciate the mysteries of our lives.

Open our eyes that we might gaze upon your wonders, O God,

and wonder about the struggles and sufferings of your people.

(Excerpted from *Engaging Spirituality*)



Are you hoping for a deeper life?

Are you worried about the world?

Are you looking for wisdom in times like these?

Join Joe Grant, creator of EngagingSpirituality, for a series of online reflections designed to engage these questions and provide practical guideline for living in times like these.

Find out more at: info.justfaith.org/pause-pray-ponder

The first year of Pope Francis' tenure as Bishop of Rome has yielded surprise after remarkable surprise.

It has seemed like never a day goes by that Francis doesn't say or do something remarkable, quotable, or inspiring. My experience of listening to JFM grads all over the country is that his leadership has enthused many. Count me among them.

And since we're among friends here, may I have your permission to speak candidly?

As each day unfolds another chapter of the Pope Francis legacy, am I dreaming or does it seem like one enormous, continuous affirmation of the work we've been doing together for the last fourteen years?

As the pope makes clear his passion for a Church that is poor, with the poor, for the poor, of the poor; as the Pope speaks to and lives a simple and prayerful lifestyle; as the Pope addresses the ugliness of war, the threat of climate change, and the vulnerability of the refugee, do you imagine—like I do—that you're in the middle of a session of JustFaith or EngagingSpirituality or GoodNewsPeople? It all seems so wonderfully familiar.

Yes, it's true that all popes in the contemporary age have spoken to and contributed to the landscape and language of Catholic social teaching, but Pope Francis has taken this to a level that immediately links any kind of basic "Amen" with caring for the world. This pope will not abide talk of Jesus that does not lead to a discipleship connected to the vulnerable and abandoned. He will not embrace any version of Church that shies from compassion and the suffering of any of our sisters and brothers.

It could be said that Francis has merged all talk of FAITH in Jesus with the work of JUSTICE that is God's dream for this world. JUSTICE merged with FAITH—that thought has crossed my mind before!

My friends, it is no exaggeration to suggest that this chapter of Church leadership is unprecedented. We have never known a pope like this one. We have never heard such bold language coming from Rome. This pope speaks like a prophet, loves like a pastor, smiles like a child, acts like a saint, all the while calling himself a sinner. And, somehow, he is appealing to almost everyone.

Pope Francis is inviting a movement—a movement that can make God real to the world, can make hope real to the world, and can make the world and all of us whole. If there was ever an opportunity to live and dream boldly, the time is now. If there was ever a time to break out of whatever holds us back from making a commitment, taking a risk, or loving with new abandon, the time is now.

I'm in. JustFaith Ministries is in.

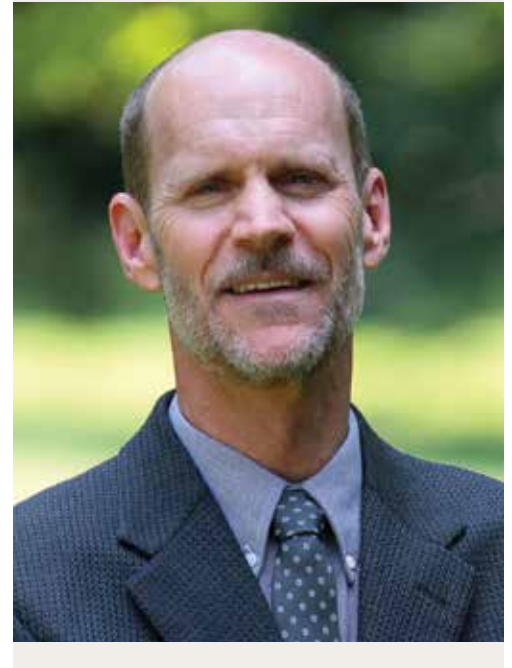
How about you?



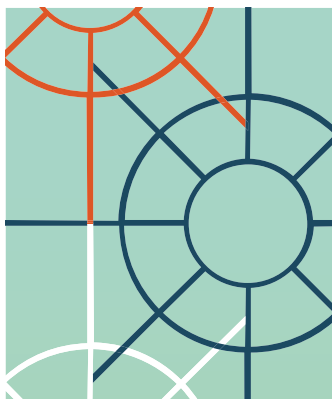
Are you in? Tell us about it at www.facebook.com/justfaithministries.

Notes

From Jack



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JustFaith Ministries provides graduates of our programs with timely resources through our **GradNet** email.

To join, sign up at justfaith.org/graduates

If you have comments, ideas or suggestions for an article, or if you would like to share digital pictures of Just Faith Ministries groups in action, please contact: noelle@justfaith.org

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OUR MISSION

JustFaith Ministries forms, informs and transforms people of faith by offering programs and resources that sustain them in their compassionate commitment to build a more just and peaceful world.

Graphic Design: PLOW Studio, Louisville, KY



Jane Walsh, Executive Director of JustFaith Ministries

Join Us in Welcoming Our New Executive Director!

As you may already know, Jack Jezreel moved into the role of Founder and President at the end of 2012 and continues to bless us with his incredible gifts in this new role. At the end of 2013 we hired Jane Walsh to serve as our new Executive Director. We give thanks for board member PJ Edwards, who served as Interim Executive Director during 2013.

Jane comes to JustFaith Ministries with almost 20 years of social justice advocacy and non-profit management experience. She most recently worked with the Network Center for Community Change, a social justice movement of more than 5,000 people who live, work, and worship in Louisville's urban neighborhoods. Before that she was the Executive Director of the Metropolitan Housing Coalition, where she led a coalition working for fair, safe, and affordable housing in the Louisville region.

Jane is a member of St. Francis of Assisi parish in Louisville and has two (very lovely) children. She is a fourth generation Louisvillian and a lifelong advocate for racial and economic justice. She is about to learn how to be a wonderful gardener (so feel free to offer advice and tips) and enjoys hiking, knitting, reading, and spending time with her family and friends.

Please join us in welcoming Jane by leaving a note for her on our Facebook page!
www.facebook.com/justfaithministries