

Justice Walking

*A journey of being rooted
and grounded in love.*



SUPPLEMENTAL MUSIC RESOURCE

In partnership with



Catholic
Campaign
for Human
Development



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Introduction

"I think music in itself is healing. It's an explosive expression of humanity. It's something we are all touched by. No matter what culture we're from, everyone loves music."

Billy Joel

Music is a powerful medium used to stir our senses and awaken us to deeper reality. The poetry of words coupled with the emotion of melody often proves to be a helpful resource for people of prayer. The Psalms of David, African-American spirituals, Taize music, all can reveal God's movement in our lives and speak to our hearts.

In the following pages, you will find five suggested songs for each J-Walking session that can be used alongside the resource CD *Songs for JusticeWalkers* by Bryan Sirchio. These songs may be used during the appointed time for music as transitional music, for welcoming people into the session, or to play while participants journal.

Different Types of Music

Sing aloud unto God our strength: make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob.

Psalm 81:1

The following music is diverse both in style and popularity. This sampling aims to mirror attitudes and outlooks from the Christian tradition. Some of the music is contemplative and meditative like the first chapter of Genesis; some is heavy and heartbroken like the 23rd Psalm. Some seethes with prophetic anger, demanding social change like Jeremiah's volleys against Jehoakim. A few musical offerings sing a grateful and joyful melody like Mary's Canticle. Some of the music is instantly recognizable; other songs may be completely unknown to all in the group. Both types of music offer gifts to the listener during a session.

Prayerful Listening

Sing, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O Israel! Be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem.

Zephaniah 3:14

Choose songs by tuning in to the dynamics of the group and in order to convey needed messages. Pay special attention to the lyrics of the songs. You might want to print copies of the lyrics or ask J-Walkers to write down lines or phrases.

Although it may have an outstanding melody or poetic rhyme scheme, avoid the temptation to listen to the song that you "like" the most. Instead, choose music that may offer the strongest challenge, causes the most disruption within you or brings you to ask the hardest questions. Your choice might be the song that you "like" the least. You may also want to introduce songs of your own choosing.

This music is not for entertainment, but for transformation.

Sessions and Songs

Session 1: Image and Likeness

1. “*Faithful*” by Common — one of hip hop’s prophets, Common explores how our image of God would be different if we recognized the divinity in the people we treat in lesser ways. “What if God was a Her? Would I treat Her the same? Would I still be running game? In what type of ways would I want Her? To be in Her presence I try to stay faithful.”
2. “*Blackheart Man*” by Bunny Wailer — An easy-to-listen to reggae classic, “Blackheart” highlights the understanding that Gospel living can lead people to be viewed as outcasts and misfits. Yet such a life is necessary to an authentic life. Imaged in Christ, the “*Blackheart Man*” is abused, blamed, mistreated and the source of simple living and wisdom for the singer.
3. “*When God Made Me*” by Neil Young — Following a series of questions surrounding one person’s relationship with his Creator, this acoustic ballad offers listeners an image of an inclusive God that asks us to recognize our connections to God and our fellow humans.
4. “*Living Like a Refugee*” by Sierra Leone Refugee All Stars — The SLRAT met in a refugee camp and began playing music to remember their humanity and share their sorrow. This reggae-infused African song resounds in hope, even after it’s begun with the words by band-leader Rueben, “Living like a refugee, it’s not easy/ I just take all the problems/ The suffering of the people and make a song of it.”
5. “*At the Bottom of Everything*” by Bright Eyes — This incredibly poetic and quirky folk song takes a few moments to unpack all of its meaning, but when done, the listener is rewarded with a song rich in imagery that points to our being intimately and profoundly connected to our Creator: “Death will give us back to God/ Just like the setting sun is returned to the lonesome ocean.”

Session 2: One Planet, One People

1. “*All the World is One*” by Peter Mayer — In a playful and matter-of-fact manner, singer-songwriter Peter Mayer asserts that there’s simply no getting around it: no matter how hard you might try to separate yourself, all the world is one. “Earthlings don’t leave town/ They just go round and round/ Until they figure out/ All the world is one.”
2. “*Somewhere Over the Rainbow*” by Israel “IZ” Kamakawiwo‘ole — In this adaptation of two classic songs, “Somewhere Over the Rainbow” and “What a Wonderful World,” IZ celebrates the beauty of Earth and the joy we experience being a part of it. “Well I see trees of green and/ Red roses too/ I’ll watch them bloom for me and you/ And I think to myself/ What a wonderful world.”
3. “*Satisfied Mind*” by Johnny Cash — In Cash’s straightforward country style, this tune echoes the idea that money does not buy happiness, while the worthwhile pursuits of love, human presence, and simplicity lead to life with a “satisfied mind.”
4. “*Big Yellow Taxi*” by Joni Mitchell — A perennial classic, this song was written while Mitchell was visiting Hawaii. After being awestruck by the beauty of the mountains outside her hotel

window, she looked down and saw what she describes as a huge parking lot: “Don’t it always seem to go/ That you don’t know what you’ve got till it’s gone./ They paved paradise/ Put up a parking lot.”

5. “*Simple Man*” by Lynyrd Skynyrd — Distinctly Southern Rock, this familiar song promotes simple values and the true essentials of life—patience, enduring sorrow and love. “Forget your lust for the rich man’s gold/ All that you need is in your soul.”

Session 3: Right and Responsible Living

1. “*Orange Sky*” by Alexi Merdoch — Melodic and meditative, repetition strengthens Merdoch’s song by calling on his “brothers and sisters” and pleading: “In your love, my salvation lies.”

2. “*Waiting for You*” by Ben Harper — An intense modern folk rock masterpiece, “Waiting” can be listened to as if it were words spoken by a brother, sister, or God. This ballad zeroes in on the reality that simple presence with another is what we’ve been waiting for. “What else can I do but keep hoping for you?”

3. “*In My Time of Need*” by Ryan Adams — Adams’ alt-country acoustic heartbreaker is set against the realistic scene of an old farming couple considering their age, physical decline and potential loneliness. The narrator suggests that the presence of his wife is all that he needs. “I will come for you when my days are through/ And I’ll let your smile just off and carry me.”

4. “*Everything is Everything*” by Lauryn Hill — Hill deftly shows the connection between simple being and the creative energy that flows from it. “Everything is everything, what is meant to be, will be/ After winter, must come spring/ Change, it comes eventually.” Far from accepting the present as the way it should be, Hill offers words to those who “won’t accept deception instead of truth.”

5. “*Be*” by Common — Hip-hop and jazz connect in Common’s reflection on life in the world today. After voicing so many struggles, hardships and hopes and embracing a spectacular image of God in his daughter, Common ends his anthem clearly with, “Never looking back, or too far in front of me/ The present is a gift, and I just want to be.”

Session 4: Engaging Poverty

1. “*When I Was a Boy*” by Dar Williams— Williams’ indie-folk style leads listeners into their own memories of childhood, when gender rules were less strictly enforced. As adults, however, both women and men are pushed to fulfill gender expectations—at the expense of both sexes. She sings: “And now I’m in a clothing store/ and the signs say ‘Less is More’/ More that’s tight means more to see/ More for them, not more for me.”

2. “*Junkie Song*” by The Be Good Tonyas — Harmonious voices coalesce in this sorrowful folk song that offers us a negative image of people living out their connectivity. The singer, seeing the “junkies and homeless” acknowledges, “I could easily be you.”

3. “*Mothers of the Disappeared*” by U2 — A heartbreaking, meditative ballad sung from the perspective of people living under the boot of an oppressive government. Their sons and

daughters, who have been taken from them brutally, remain with them. “In the wind we hear their laughter/ In the rain we see their tears/ Hear their heartbeat/ We hear their heartbeat.”

4. “*Mercy Now*” by Mary Gauthier — A ballad of blues country/folk highlights in beautifully direct speech that we all suffer from some form of poverty . . . be it the poverty of having too little or the poverty that arises from having too much. “Every single one of us could use a little mercy now.”

5. “*Everybody Hurts*” by R.E.M. — Easily recognizable from one of rock-n-roll’s most respected bands points to the reality that all human beings — corporately and individually — experience pain and sorrow. It can be dealt with best by coming together and embracing each other. “Everybody hurts/ Take comfort in your friends/Everybody hurts.”

Session 5: Table Space

1. “*Mr. Wendell*” by Arrested Development — An early 90’s rap hit, “*Mr. Wendell*” still rings true today. The singer reflects in a song of hope and joy on his relationship with a homeless man and realizes that, though the man has been and remains marginalized, he still offers all who take the time to get to know him wisdom and the gift of his unique perspective. “Uncivilized we call him, but I just saw him eat off the food we waste.”

2. “*Voice of the Voiceless*” by Rage Against the Machine — This forceful hard rock, rap-influenced work angrily asserts the right to be heard. Referencing historic events like the Little Rock church bombing and Dred Scott, this song is socially aware and seething with energy. For those who always expect the downtrodden to weakly and passively ask for rights, this song demands that the forgotten be given a place at the table.

3. “*Homeless*” by Paul Simon — Simon is accompanied by the traditional African chanting voices of Ladysmith Black Mambaza. “*Homeless*” paints a picture of the precarious life living on the plains of Africa, subject to life in the elements. Chanted phrases and a cappella voices sing: “Strong wind destroy our home/ Many dead tonight it could be you.”

4. “*Another Day in Paradise*” by Phil Collins — A familiar and easily recognizable song, Collins paints an all-too-familiar scene of how we ignore and intentionally forget people in our midst who simply have less money than us. “You can tell from the lines on her face/ You can see that she’s been there/ Probably been moved on from every place/ Cause she didn’t fit in there.”

5. “*Old Man*” by Neil Young — This memorable song depicts the interconnection between a youthful life of the singer and the aging wisdom of the “*Old Man*.” He admits that he lives, “Alone in a paradise that makes me think of two.”

Session 6: Justifiable Peace

1. “*Sleep Through the Static*” by Jack Johnson — Sublime and melodic in its acoustic musical arrangement, Johnson hits hard with poignant and satirical lyrics questioning our values and behaviors. “Who needs keys when we’ve got clubs?/ Who needs ‘please’ when we’ve got guns? Who needs peace when we’ve gone above and beyond where we should have gone?”

2. *“Redemption Song”* by Bob Marley — Marley’s reggae classic is widely embraced for its direct lyrics, hopeful message and lovely melody. Calling all people to envision a new type of freedom fighting, Marley asks: “Won’t you help me sing, these songs of freedom?/ Cause it’s all I’ve ever had... redemption songs, redemption songs.”
3. *“Devils and Dust”* by Bruce Springsteen — A slow rock anthem written from the perspective of a soldier in war. This piece captures much of the soldier’s internal conflict of standing up for a good cause but in a life-depleting way. “We’ve got God on our side/ We’re just trying to survive/ What if what you do to survive/ Kills the thing that you love.”
4. *“Blowin’ in the Wind”* by Bob Dylan — Dylan’s folk classic offers listeners a series of invaluable hypothetical questions surrounding the nature of warfare and peace. “How many ears must one man have before he can hear people cry?”
5. *“Life Is Sweet”* by Natalie Merchant — Merchant’s inspirational contemporary rock song juxtaposes a militant and deterministic worldview against a compassionate and imaginative one that values life in all of its small and precious ways. “I tell you life is sweet/ In spite of the misery/ There’s so much more/ Be grateful.”

Session 7: For the Good of All

1. *“To Zion”* by Lauryn Hill — Hill reveals the connection that exists between love of God and love of human in this song about her hope, her love and her joy — Zion, her daughter. “Look at your career they said, / ‘Lauryn, baby, use your head’/ But instead I chose to use my heart/ Not the joy in my world is in Zion.”
2. *“We are Gonna Be Friends”* by The White Stripes — A melody and poetry of simple beauty, this song builds on the idea: “Everything I need to know I learned in kindergarten.” The singer tells the story of his first day at school and a new friend encountered. They are different but still going to be friends: “The teacher thinks that I sound funny/ But she likes it when you sing.”
3. *“All You Need is Love”* by The Beatles — The familiar tune can be heard again with new ears as The Beatles testify to love’s limitless power to change the world. “There’s nothing you can make that can’t be made/ No one you can save that can’t be saved/ Nothing you can do but you can learn to be in time/ It’s easy/ All you need is love.”
4. *“I’m Ready”* by Tracy Chapman — Chapman’s bare bones folk ballad rings with an honesty and clarity surrounding a reinvigorated innocence and cleansing that recalls our baptism and confirmation. “If the waters can redeem me/ I’m ready, I’m ready/ I’m ready to let the waters wash over me.”
5. *“Bridge Over Troubled Water”* by Simon and Garfunkel — Easy rock ballad is a powerful tribute to the Christ-like sacrificial fidelity that people, who inspired by love, can offer. “When darkness comes/ and pain is all around/ like a bridge over troubled water/ I will lay me down.”