



OVERVIEW

In partnership with



Catholic Campaign
for Human
Development



breadfortheworld
INSTITUTE



With additional support from: Catholic Charities USA

The JusticeWalking Vision

Set your hearts first on God's Reign and God's justice and all these other things will be given to you as well.

Matthew 6:33

Imagine what would happen to us and our world if we really tried to live the Gospel!

JusticeWalking (J-Walking) is a small-group process that initiates high school students and adults into life-affirming relationships, applied Catholic social teaching, and gospel transformation,

J-Walking is an experiment in gospel living.

What would happen to our lives if we tried to live out the gospel teachings together?

This prayerful process brings adults and older high school students into a small Christian community in order to practice Gospel-based living. Over the course of twelve sessions, J-Walkers dialogue, reflect, and experiment with the application of the Gospel and Catholic social teaching to their lives.

J-Walkers build relationships that deepen connections and broaden community.

What would happen to our friendships if we let the Gospels guide us?

Transformation happens through relationships. The friendships that develop during the J-Walking process are core to the process. J-Walking encourages young people to broaden their circles of awareness and exposes them to the spirit of engaged compassion.

J-Walkers are pilgrims in pursuit of a better world.

If we put God's justice first, what and who would we care about? What would we be looking for in life?

The J-Walking process is a spiritual journey in which J-Walkers:

- look *at* current realities and their life experiences
- look *into* the depths of their own hearts
- look *through* the witness of prophetic people who reveal the potential of life lived with integrity and compassion.

J-Walking is inter-generational and co-facilitated.

How would the world change if the prophetic voices of young people were our guide?

J-Walking groups include five to ten older teens and two coordinators (adults over 21 years of age). Since we are all teachers and learners when it comes to walking justly, everyone—young or old—is a J-Walker. Younger and older J-Walkers co-facilitate together.

Walking a Heart Path of Justice

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because God has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. God has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim a year of God's favor.

Luke 4: 18-19

Imagine walking in the footsteps of Jesus today.

Where would we go? Who would we know? How would we grow?

J-Walkers are moving in a different direction.

This journey will lead young people along different paths, inspire uncommon life choices, offer faith-based perspectives on the events of our time, re-order life priorities, and relocate relationships.

J-Walkers do not follow the crowd but go against the flow.

J-Walkers look and listen, read and dialogue, pray and practice.

J-Walkers choose unconventional paths and cross boundaries.

J-Walkers form unlikely relationships and build community.

J-Walkers draw inspiration from the stories of those who have struggled to live justly.

J-Walkers engage in prophetic dialogue with our world.

Components of the JusticeWalking process

With the support of friends and family, J-Walkers commit to:

- Twelve two-hour weekly or bi-weekly sessions
- Holding every other meeting (six visits) at a local social service agency
- An Opening and Closing retreat
- A Justice Pilgrimage, prayerfully visiting eight local sites (over two days)
- Reading and reflecting together on two books
- Daily prayer and journal reflection
- Six spiritual practices or experiments in lifestyle adjustment
- Conducting a Public Dialogue with invited guests

“J-Walking goes far beyond twelve sessions. It is a way of life.
It changes the way you live your life!”

Allyson Ferry

JusticeWalking Components

“Dear young people, please, don’t be observers of life, but get involved. Jesus did not remain an observer, but he immersed himself. Don’t be observers, but immerse yourself in the reality of life, as Jesus did.”

Pope Francis

Meeting at the Margins

Jesus made a regular practice of crossing social boundaries. J-Walkers follow Jesus by walking where he walked and daring to examine and challenge some of the most prevalent social boundaries in our society. J-Walkers form a relationship with a local social service agency by gathering at the agency every other session. During the first hour of these sessions, J-Walkers form relationships, build understanding, and develop an awareness of the life experiences of those with whom they visit. In time, and with the help of dialogue and reflection, these relationships widen the circle of awareness of J-Walkers and help them to recognize the social constructs that might affect their own lives.

Praying the News

Every session begins by opening a newspaper and reflecting on current events through the lens of our faith. Holding these realities together in prayer allows the small group to draw the wider world into its circle of awareness. The J-Walker Journal also guides J-Walkers in their prayer and spiritual reading between sessions.

Spiritual Practices

Walking the gospel path detours us from the mainstream. J-Walking offers counter-cultural spiritual practices to address the gap between what we profess and how we live in the world. Between sessions, J-Walkers experiment with new ways of life and reflect on new perspectives. These challenges can lead to creative tension at home, at school, and at work. Each practice has two aspects: *fasting from* an activity or attitude and *embracing* an alternative. These spiritual practices are intended to open minds, soften hearts, and put J-Walkers on a path to gospel justice that begins at home in our ways of living and loving.

Justice Pilgrimage

J-Walkers take to the streets in their hometown to reframe the practice of pilgrimage. Groups visit a variety of sites where they reflect, pray, journal, and share insights on the realities before them. This inner and outer journey invites J-Walkers to localize the implications of gospel justice.

“Words and Witness” Public Dialogue

J-Walkers are empowered to speak with a prophetic voice. As part of this journey, J-Walkers work together to host a public event during which they testify to their struggle to live the Gospel, share the realities they are investigating, facilitate a faith-sharing dialogue, and challenge participants with steps for practical action. Parents, friends, teachers, and graduates of other JustFaith Ministries programs are typically invited to this two-hour event.

Resources and Requirements for the Journey

When he was at table with them, he took bread, blessed it and broke it, and gave it to them.

Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him...

Luke 24:30-31

Shared Leadership

J-Walking materials provide prayers, rituals, reflections and symbols for each gathering. Sessions are co-facilitated by coordinators and participants so that each participant shares in the tasks of leading prayer and dialogue.

Inspiring Resources

Reading and journal-keeping are central to J-Walking. Everyone is expected to read and reflect on two books that offer challenging perspectives on what it means to be moved by compassion and turned around to gospel justice. Additional resources include the J-Walker Journal, a DVD, and the companion CD, *Songs for JusticeWalkers* that Bryan Sirchio compiled for J-Walking.

Small is GREAT!

Forming small circles of care and prayer reflects the discipleship model we find in the Gospels. Smaller groups are conducive to deeper sharing; entering a social service agency with only a handful of people is less invasive. The ideal size of a J-Walking group is seven to twelve people total. The minimum recommended number for a J-Walking group is seven people (including two coordinators).

Families, Friends, Supporters, and JustFaith Ministries Graduates

The Public Dialogue provides an opportunity for the family, parish, and/or school community to share in the J-Walking process. Participants in other JustFaith Ministries programs are encouraged to participate in this dialogue session and act as supporters of the process.

A Safe Environment

To ensure the safety of adults and young people, all adult J-Walkers must undergo background checks and need to be familiar with diocesan policies concerning ministry with minors. J-Walking groups should be sponsored by a recognized church agency (parish, school, diocesan office, etc.) that can provide insurance coverage for events located outside the church or school campus.

Outline of the J-Walking Journey

While they were discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them...

And he said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?"

Luke 24: 15-17

JusticeWalking offers a flexible format of weekly or every other week sessions.

- **Opening Retreat** (overnight)
- **Step One:**
 - **Session One** (two hours)
 - **Session Two** (two hours)*
 - **Session Three** (two hours)
 - **Session Four** (two hours)*
- **Justice Pilgrimage** (two five-hour days)
- **Step Two:**
 - **Session Five** (two hours)
 - **Session Six** (two hours)*
 - **Session Seven** (two hours)
 - **Session Eight** (two hours)*
- **JusticeWalking Dialogue** (two hours)
- **Step Three:**
 - **Session Nine** (two hours)
 - **Session Ten** (two hours)*
 - **Session Eleven** (two hours)
 - **Session Twelve** (two hours)*
- **Commissioning Retreat** (seven hours)

**These Meeting at the Margins sessions take place at a local social service agency.*



Holy Web of Life
Session One

In partnership with



Catholic
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With additional support from: Catholic Charities USA

Holy Web of Life (2 hours)

Overview

Compassionate justice begins with God’s outpouring of love that brought forth the universe. J-Walkers commit to intentionally re-connect with natural environments as they recognize God’s universal reign that embraces all living systems.

Aim

Young people experience that all things in life are interconnected. Together, they examine how our lives have an impact on the fabric of Life.

Environment

Place the prayer cloth in the center of a circle of chairs or pillows. Put the Bible, candle, and newspaper on the cloth. Have the other supplies close at hand. Write the session title (Holy Web of Life) on the prayer cloth. J-Walkers should bring their J-Walker Journals and pens.

SUPPLIES FOR THIS SESSION:	BROUGHT BY:
JW prayer cloth and markers	
Pillar candle and matches	
Bible	
CD player and the companion CD	
Reflective music (optional)	
Three small bowls	
A copy of the book <u>No Room at the Table</u>	
A small bag of soil	
A current newspaper with a selected story for “Praying the News”	
A large ball of yarn	
Symbols of “processed” living (empty soda can, food wrappers, etc.)	
A copy of the co-facilitation schedule	
Attachment A (Web of Connection)	
Attachment B (Original Gift)	

CO-FACILITATOR TASKS:	DONE BY:
Review materials and gather supplies	
Delegate facilitation roles	
Write the session title on the prayer cloth	
Identify a practical challenge to offer the group	

Gathering (15 minutes)

You will need...a pillar candle; matches; a recent newspaper; a bowl; a small bag of soil.

Signing

Invite the group to stand in a circle around the prayer cloth. One facilitator moves into the center of the circle with a match and a candle, ready to light the candle at the appropriate time during the following reflection. The other co-facilitator begins:

First, there was nothing.

“In the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void, and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters.” [Genesis 1:1-2]

“Then, God said, “Let there be light...” [Genesis 1:3a]

Pause. Light the candle:

And with an explosion of love, everything began to take shape.

Place the lit candle on the prayer cloth:

Immersed in God, we pray together, making a sign of our faith...

In the name of the One who is above us... (Touch forehead)

beneath us... (Touch chest)

and all around... (Touch left, right shoulders)

AMEN.

Praying the News

Ask participants to sit.

Pray a news story.

Close with a response prayer, such as *Lord have mercy* or *Lamb of God...*

(For a full description of “Praying the News,” see Step One Overview, Attachment A.)

Symbol

Place the empty bowl and bag of soil on the prayer cloth. Take a small handful of soil:

Earth...Our home and shelter,

The source of our food, sacred dust from which we were all made.

Place your handful of soil into the bowl. Invite people to come to the center one at a time, take a small handful of soil from the bag, and silently place it into the bowl:

*The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it;
the world, and those who live in it. (Psalm 24:1)*

Once everyone has had a turn, remove the bag of soil from the prayer cloth.

Listening (60 minutes)

You will need...a large ball of yarn; a marker; the Bible marked at Matthew 6:26-33; a few symbols of “processed” living; Attachment A cut up in bowls (per directions); Attachment B.

Activity (20 minutes)

Move the candle off the prayer cloth (as a safety precaution).

- **Round 1:** Facilitator #1 picks up the bowl of “NATURE” words and passes it around the circle, inviting each person to take a slip. Facilitator #1 shares that the slips of paper bear the names of things found in nature. Facilitator #2 picks up the large ball of yarn and gently tosses it to another J-Walker while holding onto his/her end of the yarn. Facilitator #1 asks those holding the yarn to read the words on their slips of paper out loud. They have 15 seconds to name at least one way these two things are connected. If they struggle, invite the rest of the group to help them out.

Facilitator #1 invites the participant holding the ball of yarn to toss it to a third person, instructing him/her to continue holding onto his/her end of the yarn. The two participants once more read their words aloud and name a connection; again, if they struggle, the rest of the group may help. Repeat this process until all of the slips of paper have been used. The empty bowl is passed around to collect the nature words while participants continue to hold their strands of the web. Facilitator #1 sets the bowl aside.

- **Round 2:** Facilitator #1 picks up the bowl of “HUMANITY” words, passes it around, and invites each participant to take a slip. Share that the words from this bowl have to do with humanity. Repeat the process as described above until all of the slips of paper have been used.
- **Round 3:** Facilitator #1 combines the paper slips from the two bowls, then passes this mixed bowl around the circle to repeat the process one last time. Not all of the slips must be used in this third round; the point is to get participants thinking about the interconnectedness of our world. This round will probably be the most challenging of the three. The pairs should be encouraged to think freely and creatively. Any connection is a good connection!

Note: If the group runs out of yarn, you can still keep the verbal aspects of the activity going.

When the activity is over, ask everyone to continue holding onto their piece of the web and invite them to take a prayerful look at the web of connection that they have created. Transition into the next section by leading participants through an echo prayer (Psalm 24:1):

Co-facilitator prays:

*The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it...
the world, and those who live in it..*

(Pause...slowly repeat prayer.)

J-Walkers repeat:

*The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it...
the world, and those who live in it.*

Presenting the Theme (20 minutes)

As J-Walkers continue to hold onto their piece of the web, introduce the upcoming meditation:

*We are interconnected with all that is inside and around us.
The cosmos is God's web. We are woven into it with strands of love.
This cosmic story is a parable about original gift and primal justice.*

+ Slowly read Attachment B (Original Gift).

Continue:

*We are so tangled up in the community of life
that if any one of us tries to break away,
the strands pull and tear at everyone and everything.
Humility, reverence and care put us into right-relationship with God's web of love.*

♪ “Strands in the Web” from the Companion CD.

As the song plays, invite the group to roll the yarn back into a ball.

Break (5 minutes)

Spiritual Practice (15 minutes)

⚡ Read Matthew 6:26-33. *Learn from the birds and the plants to put God's Reign first.*
What Gospel attitudes are we being asked to integrate into our lifestyle?

Place the symbols of “processed” living on the prayer cloth:

*Followers of Jesus walk the earth differently.
Walking with God means respecting our oneness with everything.*

When we are disconnected from life's source, we can become care-less with life.

Pick up one of the symbols and continue:

These things remind us how easily our society can disconnect us from the source and fragility of life and the life-support systems of our world.

Take a moment to silently consider these questions:

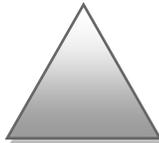
When did you last spend time exposed to nature's elements... walking barefoot on the grass... working in a garden... contemplating a sunrise?

How do we reconnect our selves and our souls to God's living system?

Write "Walking into the Web of Life" on the prayer cloth:

During this JusticeWalking journey, we will experiment with spiritual practices that help us address the gap between what we profess and how we operate in the world. Our first spiritual practice is "Walking into the Web of Life." For the next few weeks we will practice paying attention to life's parables, maximizing our exposure to God present in the miracle of life.

Invite J-Walkers to open their journals to page 9. Begin a dialogue on how to practice "Walking into the Web of Life:"



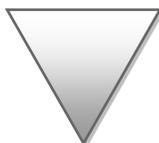
Activities to Embrace

- Spend time each day outdoors.
- Take a regular walk in the park.
- Observe the eco-systems around you.
- Notice the phases of the moon.
- Watch a sunset outdoors.
- Read Psalm 65 every day.
- Find a dark place to contemplate the stars.
- Start/end each day with gratitude.

WALKING INTO THE WEB OF LIFE

Activities to Minimize

- Eating at garbage-producing places like fast food restaurants...
- Going to artificial spaces like shopping malls, amusement parks, stadiums, swimming pools...
- Engaging in energy-consuming activities like driving, playing video games, getting online...



Each J-Walker commits to **embrace** at least one activity and to **minimize** at least one activity.

Ask people to make note of their personal commitments in their journals.

*To walk as Jesus did means slowing our pace, noticing life, being grateful.
The universe is God's mirror, reflecting the infinite scope of compassion.*

Sharing (30 minutes)

You will need... journals and pens; reflective music (optional); a copy of No Room at the Table.

Journal Reflection (5-10 minutes)

- Open space for journaling and silent reflection. You may choose to play reflective background music. After 5-10 minutes, call everyone back to the circle with their journals. Encourage participants to continue journaling at home during the week.

Dialogue (25 Minutes)

Open with these reminders about dialogue:

Dialogue is about listening and sharing.

*Share freely about your reading of the text, your journal writing,
the spiritual practice, and today's theme.*

*This is not a debate. Anyone can share, no one is required to speak,
and all are expected to listen.*

Let the group become comfortable with silence. No one should be pressured to talk.

Use the following questions to spark dialogue:

How would anyone know you care about the earth that takes care of you?

*What does it mean for you (or your family, school, church...) to be in "holy
relationship" with the sacred water, air, earth and light around you?*

Invite those who wish to write a word or phrase of wisdom from the session on the prayer cloth.

Sending (15 minutes)

You will need... a copy of the co-facilitation schedule.

Announcements

Remind the group of the following:

- Date, time, co-facilitators and location for the next session (*Meeting at the Margins*).
- Reading assignment: Complete Chapter Two of No Room at the Table (through page 54).

Closing

Invite everyone to stand and link hands to form a circle.

We give thanks for our connectedness, for being created in and for community. We ask for strength to live into the web of life and to look out for all its strands.

God of the universe,

We give you thanks for... (Share an insight)

We ask your assistance in... (Someone speaks of a situation of need)

We hold in our hearts... (Name people)

We ask our guides to bless us... (Name your patrons)

AMEN.

End with a sign of peace, a word of thanks, and a reminder to pray for each other.

Session One, Attachment A

Web of Connection

Make a copy of this sheet and cut along the dotted lines. Put the “nature” slips of paper into one bowl, and the “humanity” slips of paper into a second bowl.

NATURE

Forest	River	Flower
Mountain	Star	Rock
Insect	Frog	Fish
Desert	Rain	Cloud

HUMANITY

School	Family	Child
Car	Park	Road
Hospital	City	Bridge
House	Store	Church

Session One, Attachment B

Original Gift

Do you know the ancient giveaway story that you are part of? It started before there was time, more than 15 billion years ago when there was “no-thing-ness,” no thing but God. *(Pause)*

And the heart of God exploded with giving, an instantaneous eruption in every direction, of matter and energy that generated a community of more than 50 billion galaxies. The infinite expanse we call universe was born. *(Pause)*

In one tiny strand of this divine outpouring, a galaxy we call Milky Way was formed, a whirling gathering of 100 billion stars nestled in the dark surrounding presence of God. *(Pause)*

Like dust, fragments began to rotate along one edge of Milky Way, hugging a light-giver we call Sun, a burning symbol of God’s generous heart that throws out light at 186 thousand miles per second in every direction. Sun does not reclaim its energy. *(Pause)*

Because of this pulsating light gift, more than 3 billion years ago life began to emerge on an insignificant rock. By capturing and changing a minuscule percentage of this God-light, a garden of life we call Earth was formed, brimming with an unimaginable array of creatures in miraculous diversity. *(Pause)*

Covered with water, a rich coat of living soil, and a delicate blanket of air, Earth became a life-maker in the image of its Creator. *(Pause)*

It takes one thousand years to create one inch of the top-soil we call earth, and it has taken over 4 million years of growing, for the children of God to become aware, conscious of their place, their task in this web of God-life. *(Pause)*

And here we sit, spinning across an immensity of space, children of light, aware of the life that pulsates through us, energy, matter, spirit, all interconnected and woven. *(Pause)*

It has taken over 15 billion years of giving, erupting, and sacrificing light to bring us to this moment in time. Why? What could be the reason for this universal giveaway? *(Pause)*

So that we might be “de-lighted” as God is delighted, to feel the warmth of God’s original gift, and like the universe woven into us, that we too might learn to giveaway. *(Pause)*

From the book of Beginnings (Genesis 2:1-4)

“And so the whole Universe was completed. Since, by the seventh day God had finished all the work of creating, God rested on the seventh day from all the work of creation.”

And God saw that it was good. *(Pause)*