

*Just*Faith

JustFaith
Overview



www.justfaith.org
(502) 429-0865

In partnership with



Encouraging a Culture of Care

When it is evening, you say, "It will be fair weather, for the sky is red." And in the morning, "It will be stormy today, for the sky is red and threatening." You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times.

-Matthew 16:2-3

JustFaith is a transformative process that inspires small groups of faithful Christians to embrace the gospel vision of justice and peace, inviting them into right relationship with God, neighbor, and all of Creation. These relationships are the focus and the locus of personal and social transformation. This includes the relationship of participants to their own faith journey, the deepening bonds within each small community of faith, and the broadening of relationships with those who are poor and vulnerable. Through prayerful reflection, study, dialogue, and encounter, participants explore the signs of the times together as they open their hearts to the Spirit of Jesus in our midst.

In a landmark letter addressed to the whole human family, Pope Francis presented a new paradigm for engaging the Christian message in our time. In the face of an unfolding environmental and human catastrophe, whose effects are felt acutely by the most impoverished among us, he has strengthened the bridge between environmental and human concerns. True to the Biblical vision of God's world restored, he has challenged all of us to undergo an "ecological conversion."

...social love moves us to devise larger strategies to halt environmental degradation and to encourage a "culture of care" which permeates all of society.

-*Laudato Si'* 231

JustFaith embraces the integration of this eco-social justice paradigm, linking the cry of Creation with the cries of the world's poorest. These links between planet and people are affirmed throughout the 24-session process.

Integrating the paradigm of *Laudato Si'* with wisdom and voices from other traditions, this program is designed for use in diverse Christian contexts. At various points throughout the process, Catholic, Protestant, and ecumenical groups have the option to adapt and integrate prayer, rituals, and references that reflect the unique gifts of their own traditions.

Let ours be a time remembered for the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability, the quickening of the struggle for justice and peace, and the joyful celebration of life.

-Earth Charter

An Unfolding Process

The JustFaith journey of 24 sessions unfolds in four phases. Phase themes are as follows:

Phase 1: Sessions 1-6	Compassion for People and the Planet
Phase 2: Sessions 7-12	Poverty at Home and Abroad
Phase 3: Sessions 13-18	Personal and Structural Biases
Phase 4: Sessions 19-24	From Violence to Nonviolence: A New Way

Each session includes prayer and dialogue. Some sessions also integrate videos or guest speakers into the process.

Retreats and Discernment

Opening and closing retreats are vital components of the JustFaith process. The opening retreat encourages the deepening of community within the group. Building a sense of trust and companionship is a critical element in the transformative journey. The closing retreat invites participants to review and celebrate their journey together.

Four to six weeks after the closing retreat, the group re-gathers for a discernment day. This allows participants to revisit their experience and share the challenges and the call to integrate this process into their ongoing discipleship journey.

Immersion Experiences

Each phase of the program includes an immersion experience in which participants leave the confines of their regular meeting space to encounter people, stories, and realities on the margins of their community. These visits offer the opportunity to be with (rather than do for) people, and to learn from (rather than learn about) realities that impact lives as well as the quality of life in the local community.

Spiritual Practices

JustFaith offers a spiritual practice for each phase. These practices encourage a deeper integration and practical engagement of the phase themes.

Resources: Books, DVDs and Online Material

A variety of books, DVDs, and online resources offer participants a broader understanding of the issues they explore. Through study, reflection, and dialogue, participants examine the implications and connections between faith and lifestyle. Facilitators and participants have access to online resources through the JustFaith webpage.

Co-facilitation Team

Ideally JustFaith is led by a team of two co-facilitators who coordinate the process and cultivate respectful dialogue within the group. Co-facilitators share and delegate responsibility for different parts of the process.

Prayer and Ritual

A culture of care grows by cultivating reverence. We experience the presence of the Spirit when we risk opening our hearts to listen and share our stories and struggles; prayer and ritual serve as gateways to this deeper dialogue. Each session opens and closes in prayer. The session outlines offer a framework for prayers that often include rituals and symbols.

Building a Caring Community

The JustFaith process invites people to explore difficult questions together. This involves risk and vulnerability, as well as moments of great insight, joy, and spiritual growth. Inevitably, there will be growing pains as people wrestle with personal, social, religious, and political perspectives in the light of the Gospel. Heart-sharing and active listening are important practices to nurture throughout the process. Ideally, each JustFaith group blossoms into a caring, small community of faith that encourages a broader and deeper culture of care.