

College Justice **WALKING** | Just-FAITH

A Discipleship Journey with College Students

General Overview 2010-2011

This overview is intended for adults interested in coordinating College Justice Walking. Although JustFaith materials are copyrighted, this document may be copied and forwarded without permission.

JustFaith Ministries

PO BOX 221348

Louisville, KY 40252

(502) 429-0865

www.justfaith.org

justicewalking@justfaith.org

In partnership with:



JustFaith Ministries works in cooperation with the partner organizations listed on this page and receives over half of its funding in the form of charitable contributions from program graduates.

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 conversion process that initiates older high school teenagers and adult coordinators into life-affirming relationships, transformed by the Gospel and the application of Catholic social teaching.



College J-Walking is an experiment in Gospel living.

What would happen to our lifestyles if we tried to live out the Gospel teachings together?

This prayerful, semester-long process brings young adults and one or two adult companions into small Christian community in order to practice Gospel-based living. Over the course of seven weekly 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 and relationships that develop during the J-Walking process are the core of the program. J-Walking encourages young adults to broaden their circles of awareness, and exposes them to the spirit of “*engaged compassion*” which we call Gospel justice.



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 framed as a pilgrimage, *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 changes your entire perspective on things and takes down the barriers that hold you back so you can move forward into the world to change and be changed.” Sally Wilcox



The Justice Walking Mission

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because God has anointed me to bring good news to the poor...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 where a journey as “pilgrims in search of Gospel justice” could take us!

J-Walking means: going against the flow; choosing unconventional paths; crossing social boundaries; entering into “unlikely” relationships; uncovering opportunities to build community; gaining insightful perspectives through personal encounters, reflection and dialogue.



J-Walkers do not follow the crowd.

True to its name, College J-Walking is a counter-cultural and demanding small-group conversion process (comprised of 8-12 people).



College J-Walking initiates young people into prophetic living.

J-Walkers commit to seven two-hour sessions over the course of one semester. There is also an opening and a closing retreat (both overnight), a one-day justice pilgrimage, and a public presentation of the J-Walking journey, following the commissioning retreat.



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

Reading assignments for J-Walkers are modest (two texts). The context and content for College J-Walking focuses on spirituality, dialogue, and building relationships.



J-Walkers are boundary-crossers.

Each J-Walking group develops a relationship with a local social service agency. Every other session takes place at this agency, where J-Walkers spend the first hour visiting with people and the second hour in reflection and dialogue on-site or at a nearby location. The relationships built at the agency and the dialogue sessions that follow help J-Walkers become aware of and challenge the artificial (yet powerful!) boundaries that divide us from one another.



J-Walkers engage in prophetic dialogue with our world.

The process includes a public dialogue session in which J-Walkers offer creative presentations before an assembly of family members, peers, students and faculty.



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

J-Walking groups include 6-10 young adults and two coordinators: ideally one older college student and one adult companion (campus minister, professor, diocesan staff person, etc.). Since we are all teachers and learners when it comes to walking justly, everyone—young or old—is a J-Walker. Sessions are co-facilitated by younger and older people working together.

“J-Walking will help you find peace and hope with yourself and your place in a global world.”

Leah Raidt



Walking a Heart Path into Justice

*“Come unto me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.
For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” Matthew 11: 28-30*

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 three- to six-month 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.

Through prayer and ritual, spiritual reading and spiritual practices, journal-keeping and deepening spiritual and social awareness, J-Walkers are exposed to:

- *Prayerful dialogue* - the practice of listening with undivided attention
- *Prophetic living* - the call to live justly in a mis-ordered world
- *Relationships across boundaries* – dialogue and relationship-building that helps us become aware of and challenge the artificial (yet powerful!) boundaries that divide us from one another.
- *Witnesses of Justice* - the stories of those who have struggled to live with integrity



Components of the College Justice Walking process

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

- *Seven two-hour weekly sessions*
- *Holding every other meeting (four visits) at a local social service agency*
- *Two overnight periods of reflection (an opening and commissioning retreat)*
- *A justice pilgrimage, prayerfully visiting four local sites*
- *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 seven sessions. It is a way of life. It changes the way you live your life!”

Allison Ferry



Integrated Experiences Unique to J-Walking

“Young people are entrusted in a special way with the task of becoming communicators of hope and workers for peace.”

Pope John Paul II

Imagine the people we would come to know, and the realities that would become important to us, if Gospel justice was the focus of our living!

J-Walking creates small, mobile communities of younger and older disciples willing to walk the holy ground of unfamiliar places and relationships.



Meeting at the Margins

What social boundaries do the Gospels and our faith require us to cross?

Jesus made a regular practice of crossing social boundaries and exposing them for the sinful constructs that they are. J-Walkers are invited to follow Jesus by doing what he did, by walking where he walked, and by daring to examine and challenge the most prevalent social boundaries in our society. To this end, J-Walking groups develop a relationship with a local social service agency over the course of the J-Walking process, with every other J-Walking session being held at the agency. During the first hour of these sessions, J-Walkers focus on forming relationships, building understanding, and developing 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. The second hour of these “*meetings at the margins*” includes shorter reflective sessions that take place at the agency or at a nearby location.



“Words and Witness” Prophetic Presentation

What is God asking of us, and who speaks on behalf of loving-justice?

J-Walking is built on dialogue and collaboration. J-Walkers are empowered to speak with a prophetic voice. At the conclusion of this journey, J-Walkers work together to create a public event to challenge and inspire others, and facilitates a prayerful dialogue with an assembled group of guests. Parents, friends, teachers, and JustFaith graduates are typically invited to this two-hour event. J-Walkers 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.



Reflecting the Signs of our Times

What are the crises of our times? How does the Gospel speak to these realities?

J-Walkers “*pray the news.*” Every session begins by opening a newspaper and reflecting on current events through the lens of our faith. J-Walkers also have “*J-Walker Journals*” to guide their prayer and spiritual reading between sessions.



“J-Walking opens your life to the community around you, it makes you more aware of everyone and everything in this world we share.” Tyler Hobbs



Spiritual Practices

Based on our actions and attitudes, choices and relationships, would anyone know we are following Jesus?

Walking the Gospel path detours us from the mainstream. College J-Walking offers five counter-cultural challenges to address the gap between what we profess and how we operate in the world. Between sessions, J-Walkers experiment with spiritual practices and reflect on new perspectives they have gained. These challenges can lead to creative tension at home, at school, and at work. Each practice has two aspects: relinquishing or “fasting from” an activity or attitude, and embracing an alternative.

For the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life, and there are few who find it. Matthew 7:14

Embracing

Observing Sabbath, being with people

Reducing possessions, recycling

Eating more simply, eating with others

Practicing forgiveness, kindness, cooperation

Spiritual reading, conversation, contemplation

Doing Less, Being More

Living with Less

Eating Ethically

Reconciliation and Collaboration

Tuning-in to Silence and Solitude

Fasting

Over-activity, hurry, busyness

Shopping, buying, clutter

Over-eating, junk food, snacks

Violent images, aggression, competition

Over-stimulation of media, TV and Web

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.



Shared Prayerful Leadership

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



Justice Pilgrimage

J-Walkers take to the streets in their hometown area to reframe the practice of pilgrimage. Groups a day visiting a variety of sites where they reflect, pray, journal, and share insights on the realities before them. This inner and outer journey helps J-Walkers in the recovery of soul and vision, inviting them to localize the implications of Gospel justice.



Themes 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

J-Walking offers a flexible format that can be organized to best fit the needs of your group.

(Micah 6:8) **...and what does the Lord require of you?**



Opening Retreat: *Doers and Dreamers* (Overnight)

...to ACT justly

Session One: *Sacred and Significant**
Session Two: *Image and Likeness*
Session Three: *Right and Responsible Living**



Justice Pilgrimage: *Repairing Relationships* (one 6-hour days)

...to LOVE tenderly

Session Four: *Embracing Poverty*
Session Five: *Table Space**
Session Six: *Justifiable Peace*
Session Seven: *For the Good of All**



Commissioning Retreat: *Living Under the Influence of Justice* (Overnight)



Words and Witness Dialogue: Public Dialogue Session (2 Hours)

...and to WALK humbly with your God

Sessions marked with an asterisk () take place at the social service agency.*

“J-Walking opens your eyes to things you see on TV that you don’t think really happen. It helps you become more aware about what’s actually going on in your own community, not just miles away. J-Walking helped me find ways to change and begin to deal with the things that distress me on TV.” Sara Klingsmith



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

Right Relationships

The relationships that develop as a result of the J-Walking process provide the context for transformation. The content for each session is communicated through prayer, dialogue, journal reflection and the spiritual practices. Ritual, symbol and journal-keeping are tools J-Walkers use to break open their relationship to the God of life.



Resource-full Reading

Reading and journal-keeping are central to College J-Walking. Everyone is expected to read and reflect on two books, read by the entire group.

A Monk in the Inner City Mary Lou Kownacki Orbis Books, 2008

With Open Hands Henri Nouwen Ave Maria Press, 2005

They 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*, the DVD *When Did I See You Hungry* (by Gerard Straub), and *Cloud of Witnesses*, a reference book on saints and prophets for our time. The companion CD *Songs for JusticeWalkers* (by Bryan Sirchio) was specifically compiled for J-Walking. The songs are woven into the session outlines.



Small is GREAT!

Forming “*small circles of care and prayer*” reflects the discipleship model we find in the Gospels. Smaller groups are more conducive to deeper sharing, and a handful of people is less invasive at the social service agency. The ideal number for a J-Walking group is between 6-12 people total. The minimum recommended number for a J-Walking group is 6.



Integrating older and younger voices

J-Walking communities integrate rather than participants. As in any initiation experience, transformation occurs in communities where dialogue is encouraged, integrity is proven through practice, and young and old become companions.



Families, Friends, Supporters, and JustFaith Graduates

The “*Words and Witness*” public dialogue session provides an opportunity for the family, friends and campus community to share in the process. JustFaith groups and graduates are encouraged to participate in this dialogue session and act as supporters of the process.

“J-Walking connects young people to what we should recognize in the world and what we all need to be aware of in order to deal with injustice as a reality in our world.”

Evan Rhea





Walking into a different paradigm

But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins. Luke 5:38

The College J-Walking mission focuses on “*transformation from the inside out,*” and is designed to move young adults beyond traditional models of justice education. As in any invitation to life-conversion, J-Walking is elective. No one can be “*required*” to participate. J-Walking will certainly enhance existing campus ministry programs, but it is NOT intended to replace a theology class, catechesis, or a service/retreat program. J-Walking fits best as a focus group within existing the existing campus ministry structure.



A Safe Environment

To ensure the safety of everyone involved, J-Walker groups should be sponsored by a recognized agency (campus ministry, diocesan office, etc.) that can provide insurance coverage for events located outside the church or off campus. Also, if any participants are under the age of 18, be sure to follow safe environment guidelines for interactions with minors provided by your university or diocese.



Introductory Presentations

Presentations are offered by JustFaith staff and representatives to introduce the JusticeWalking paradigm to interested adults in universities or dioceses. The four-hour presentation examines the role of prophetic ministry with young adults, describes the conversion paradigm, and orients potential coordinators. Hosts are expected cover transportation and housing costs.



Registration Fee

A single fee of \$200 provides a parish or school access to the College JusticeWalking materials for the 2010-11 program year. Groups that register receive comprehensive materials outlining the content for each gathering, facilitation tips, and retreat guidelines. JustFaith Ministries’ staff offers telephone and email consultation.

“J-Walking is a great way to learn about yourself and how your choices really affect other people. It challenges you to consider the consequences of your actions, directly and indirectly. You need to be willing and open to change in order to let J-Walking work on you.” Sean Sullivan

More Information

To inquire about an introductory presentation, request the “*Getting Started*” document or register for the process, contact the JustFaith office at justicewalking@justfaith.org or 502-429-0865. You may also visit our website at www.justfaith.org.

