

# *Just*FAITH

## ***JustSkills***

### ***Practices and Tools for Parish Social Ministry***

### ***Getting Started 2008-09***

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#### ***JustFaith Ministries***

***P.O. Box 221348 Louisville, KY 40252***

***(502) 429-0865***

***[www.justfaith.org](http://www.justfaith.org)***

***[mary@justfaith.org](mailto:mary@justfaith.org) and [david@justfaith.org](mailto:david@justfaith.org)***

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***Catholic Campaign for Human Development***



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***Catholic Relief Services***

# ***JustSkills***

## ***Getting Started 2008-09***

### ***Table of Contents***

| <b><i>Topic</i></b>                                      | <b><i>Page(s)</i></b>                           |
|--|---|
| <i>Welcome</i>   | 3   |
| <i>What is JustSkills? - Vision and Purpose</i>          | 3-4   |
| <i>General Program Assumptions</i>                       | 4   |
| <i>Components of JustSkills</i>                          |   |
| <i>Meetings/Sessions</i>                                 | 4   |
| <i>Curriculum</i>  | 5   |
| <i>Shared Leadership</i>                                 | 5   |
| <i>Retreats</i>  | 5   |
| <i>Forming Groups and Fees</i>                           |   |
| <i>Formation of Groups</i>                               | 5-6   |
| <i>Participant Requirements/Commitments</i>              | 6   |
| <i>Fees</i>  | 6-7   |
| <i>Planning Steps</i>                                    |   |
| <i>Step 1: Establish a Planning Team</i>                 | 7   |
| <i>Step 2: Seek Approval for the Program</i>             | 8-9   |
| <i>Step 3: Choose Co-Facilitators</i>                    | 9-10  |
| <i>Step 4: Register with JustFaith Ministries Office</i> | 10  |
| <i>Step 5: Establish the Schedule</i>                    | 10-11   |
| <i>Step 6: Recruit Participants</i>                      | 11-13   |
| <i>Step 7: Conduct Discernment/Orientation Meetings</i>  | 13-14   |
| <i>Still have Questions?</i>                             | 14  |
| <i>Attachments</i>                                       |   |
| <i>Attachment A</i>                                      | <i>Timetable for Planning Team</i><br>15-17     |
| <i>Attachment B</i>                                      | <i>Sample Schedule</i><br>18                    |
| <i>Attachment C</i>                                      | <i>Discernment/Orientation Meeting</i><br>19-20 |
| <i>Attachment D</i>                                      | <i>Sample Bulletin Announcements</i><br>21      |
| <i>Attachment E</i>                                      | <i>Information Meeting</i><br>22-23             |
| <i>Attachment F</i>                                      | <i>Commitment Statement</i><br>24               |
| <i>Attachment G</i>                                      | <i>Program Fact Sheet</i><br>25                 |



*You must love the Lord your God with all your heart,  
with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,  
and your neighbor as yourself. . . (Luke 10:27–28)*

**Welcome to JustSkills: Practices and Tools for Parish Social Ministry!** You have chosen to embark on an exciting and challenging journey during which you will sharpen old skills, learn new ones and discuss step by step processes that can help you make “action on behalf of justice” a bigger and more vibrant reality in your parish and community. During your JustSkills journey, you will learn about several strategies for addressing the Gospel call to love our neighbor – especially the poor and vulnerable - as ourselves, and you will have the opportunity to deepen your own spirituality.

This *Getting Started* document is meant to provide as much help as possible in beginning the JustSkills process. It is divided into several parts: general information, program components, formation of groups, planning guide for getting started, and attachments. Please read it thoroughly and provide copies to each member of the planning team for use during your preparation for getting started. If you have any questions, please contact Mary Wright ([mary@justfaith.org](mailto:mary@justfaith.org)) or David Horvath ([David@justfaith.org](mailto:David@justfaith.org)) at the JustFaith Ministries office (502-429-0865).

### ***What is JustSkills?***

In 1994, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops issued a document called *Communities of Salt and Light: Reflections on the Social Mission of the Parish*. The bishops insisted that social justice is the mission of the whole parish—that the social justice mission is what keeps a parish alive and makes it truly Catholic. This **vision** of parish life informs the JustSkill’s goal of building a thriving, prophetic church that does “service and action, charity and justice”.

The JustSkills program has been crafted in response to the many requests of JustFaith graduates who ask for help in developing the skills necessary to do the work of justice within a parish setting. It offers a parish blueprint and some of the skills and tools needed to make this vision a reality within the parish setting.

#### **JustSkills is:**

- an opportunity to learn about and practice some of the skills necessary for doing the work of effective social ministry, especially – but not exclusively - within the parish context
- an opportunity for deepening one’s prayer experience and spiritual reflection
- an opportunity to deepen our understanding of key justice issues

#### **JustSkills offers participants:**

- a process that helps make the experience and practice of our faith more life-giving



- a set of tools that can broaden and enhance the parish commitment to action on behalf of justice
- support and training in specific skills that each participant can apply in whatever area of social ministry work they choose to undertake *after* completing the program
- a tool for *planning* actions within their parish, but it is not an *action process* of itself.

JustFaith Ministries works closely with three of the most skilled and effective partners in the social ministry community. These highly respected and critically important Catholic organizations are the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD), Catholic Charities USA (CCUSA) and Catholic Relief Services (CRS). These organizations share a common commitment to reverse situations of poverty as well as the causes and effects of poverty. They are major contributors to both the vision and the curriculum of JustSkills.

Although the common focus of JustFaith and its partners—CCHD, CCUSA, and CRS—is *poverty*, skills learned in the JustSkills process can be practiced in many different parish social ministry contexts and with many different social issues.

### ***General Program Assumptions***

JustSkills is offered with the following assumptions:

- JustSkills’ participants will have completed JustFaith and/or are involved in or interested in working with others to develop an effective social ministry program in their parish or want to enhance their present social ministry program.
- JustSkills’ participants are deeply committed to the *work* of social ministry - i.e., participants want to learn and practice some of the skills necessary to help the parish form a strong, effective social ministry effort and/or to engage in other social justice activity. It is very important, therefore, that those interested in JustSkills go through a discernment process (Attachment C: Discernment/ Orientation Meeting) to determine if this Program matches their interests in social ministry.
- Spirituality and justice are not separate from but integral to each other. This program presumes that the inner spiritual journey and the outer lived journey are intrinsically linked and that mature, effective parish social ministry only occurs when attention is given to both the inner and the outer journey.

### ***Components***

#### **Meetings/Sessions**

JustSkills includes twenty working sessions and two retreats. Each session is two and one half hours long and consists of some combination of the following: prayer; spirituality reflection; ongoing formation; discussion; education on social action topics; and skills development.



## Curriculum

*A significant part of the curriculum focuses on building a foundation of social ministry skills for use within the parish. Specific curriculum content areas include the following: dialogue, facilitation, justice education, legislative advocacy, social analysis, community organizing, and strategies for building local and global solidarity within the parish. Employing books, videos, retreats, and other learning media, this program provides a wide range of experiences that help participants understand and practice some of the skills critical to the Church's social mission and to parish social ministry.*

## Shared Leadership

Co-facilitators will oversee and orchestrate the process provided in the curriculum; however, *shared* leadership means drawing out the qualities and gifts of everyone. It means that each participant shares the responsibility to make the process work and contributes to the effectiveness of the process. As part of the skills development, **each participant will take on the role of discussion leader by taking turns facilitating segments of each session and as prayer leader by taking turns creating and leading prayer.** The whole group will engage in an evaluative process to provide feedback and support.

## Retreats

Retreats invite us to withdraw for a time from the busyness of life and to focus on our relationship with God and with our community. The two retreats (one near the beginning of the program and one near the end) ground participants in the contemplative and spiritual dimension of justice work. Without this contemplative and spiritual dimension, we shortchange our capacity to engage God's wisdom and direction in our work. With it, we more intentionally place ourselves at the behest of God. The two retreats ***are not optional*** but a critical component of the program and process.

## *Forming Groups and Fees*

### Formation of Groups

Participants may come from a single parish or from multiple parishes throughout the diocese. The optimum size for a group is eight to ten people, including the facilitators. The minimum number is five (5), including the facilitators.

As noted above, it is assumed that participants will have completed JustFaith and/or have interest in working with others to develop an effective social ministry program in their parish or want to enhance their present social ministry program. It is also assumed that participants will be deeply committed to the *work* of social ministry. Because of these assumptions – requirements even – the pool of potential participants most likely will be significantly smaller than the pool for the JustFaith program; therefore, recruitment will need to be more focused than it is for the JustFaith program.

Questions that can be used for discerning a candidate's readiness for JustSkills can be found in Attachment C: Discernment/Orientation Meeting. If someone approaches the planning team



about participation in the JustSkills program and has no real interest in doing *the work* of social ministry, the person could be referred to a JustFaith group.

It should be stressed that JustSkills groups are *not* intended to be “peace and justice committees”, “working groups”, or “action groups”. As stated earlier, JustSkills groups form for support and training in specific skills that each participant can apply in whatever area of social ministry work they undertake *after* completing JustSkills.

### **Participant Requirements/Commitments**

*JustSkills is not for everyone and not for everyone who has been through JustFaith.* Nor is JustSkills a prerequisite for doing the work of social ministry. JustSkills is for those who are willing and able to make a commitment to the development of their social ministry skills and the application of these skills within the parish. Also, JustSkills asks for some of the most valuable things we have - dedicated participation and time.

JustSkills participants are asked to make the following commitments:

#### ***Participation***

- 1) Be present at and participate fully in the sessions and retreats
- 2) Be willing to take a leadership role in some sessions
- 3) Continue and/or strengthen their commitment to prayer and spiritual reflection
- 4) Complete the readings and other assigned exercises

#### ***Time***

- 1) Approximately twenty, two-and-a-half-hour sessions. (See Attachment B: Sample Schedule)
- 2) Two retreats consisting of a Friday evening and Saturday or a Saturday and Sunday

Each and every participant in JustSkills is a critical part of the success or failure of the program. As a matter of responsibility to the entire group, everyone must come into the process equally committed. *It is strongly recommended that the co-facilitators do a discernment and orientation meeting (see Attachment C) with each potential participant and ask each person to carefully read and then sign a commitment statement (see Attachment F) before starting the program.*

### **Fees**

The costs of the program include: the overall program registration fee, the cost of books, videos, retreat expenses, and possible, infrequent speaker fees. Each of these is detailed below.

***Registration fees:*** The overall program registration fee is \$200. unless the parish has registered for another JustFaith Ministries program. (If your parish is also doing JustFaith, a discount is available. Please inquire with the JustFaith Ministries office.) Each participant will complete a participant registration form during the first session.



**Cost of books:** JustSkills uses a handful of books. Participants pay for their own books (approximately \$65/person). As in JustFaith, books and videos can be purchased through Sowers Books and Videos, if desired. **Note:** while there are only a handful of books, there are other several other electronic reading requirements that may need to be printed and copied if participants cannot or are not going to simply read them online.

**Cost of videos:** The cost of videos is approximately \$15.00. Groups may elect to purchase the videos. In some cases, the diocesan office will support the program by purchasing the videos and making them available on loan. Some parishes may be interested in expanding their own parish library and may be willing to purchase the videos and make them available to JustSkills groups as well as other parish groups.

**Cost of retreats:** Retreats will entail additional costs if the group chooses to use a retreat center for one or both retreats. The cost per person for each retreat may range from \$25 to \$100 per retreat weekend, depending on the site selected. Alternatively, retreats can be held in a home or a parish center so that these expenses can be avoided, especially if cost is a concern for some or all of the participants.

**Fee Support Options:** In situations where no parish or diocesan assistance is available, JustSkills groups will have to take on the financial responsibility for all materials, dividing the costs among the members of the group. This means that the participants would share the costs for the registration fee, copying program materials, and videos (a total cost of around \$250 - or about \$25 per participant for a group of ten), in addition to the books and cost of the retreats.

Cost should not be a deterrent to participation in JustSkills, however. There are several options for providing financial assistance to participants who have few financial resources. Other JustFaith graduates who are not participating in JustSkills may be willing to “sponsor” someone and cover their book costs. The parishes of participating JustSkills members may be willing to pick up the cost of their registration fee, books, and/or retreats. If other arrangements are not possible, JustFaith Ministries will waive or lower the registration fee for parishes.

## ***Planning Steps***

There are seven steps to prepare for the start of JustSkills. Each step is outlined below. In addition, Attachment A: Planning Team Timetable is provided to help the Team organize and complete each of these steps.

### **STEP ONE: Establish a Planning Team**

The first thing needed to make JustSkills a successful experience is to gather a group of people who will coordinate planning for the program. It is best if this group comes together eight to ten weeks prior to the start date.

#### ***Responsibilities of the Planning Team:***

- Consult with the pastor and/or diocesan office about the intention to offer JustSkills

- Register with the JustFaith Ministries office
- Decide on a schedule
- Decide who will be the co-facilitators
- Work with the co-facilitators to:
  - Recruit participants
  - Conduct discernment/orientation meetings with potential participants

### ***Composition of the Planning Team***

This group may consist of as few as two and as many as five people. Some groups from which to draw members for this Team include:

- 1) JustFaith graduates
- 2) People with a functional understanding of Catholic social teaching and/or a commitment to social ministry and who know social ministry resources within the parish and/or community
- 3) Someone who is familiar with the inner workings of parish or diocesan life so that the group can tap into parish/diocesan resources and follow appropriate protocols
- 4) Representatives from the local/diocesan office of the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, Catholic Relief Services, and Catholic Charities
- 5) A representative from the diocesan Peace and Justice Office, Social Action or Social Concerns Office

## **STEP TWO: Seek Approval for the Program**

### ***Parish Setting***

JustSkills tends to presume that there is a group in the parish that has completed JustFaith. If this is the case, the work of seeking the approval of the appropriate staff and the pastor has already begun. It is recommended that you stay in conversation with the pastor and/or staff, both to share with them the benefits of JustFaith and to suggest that JustSkills is the appropriate next step for some of the graduates. Note: This program may involve little or no expense on the part of the parish.

### ***Multi-Parish/Regional/City Setting***

In the case of gathering people from different parishes, pastors should be told in advance that you are joining with another parish in order to do JustSkills. Pastors should be informed of participation in the program. They may or may not be aware of the significant contribution of JustFaith graduates to the social ministry of the parish, diocese and/or Church in general. Quotes/testimonies from graduates from your own parish illustrating the significant impact JustFaith has had in their lives may be helpful to share with pastors. You can also obtain some quotes/testimonies from the JustFaith web site ([www.justfaith.org](http://www.justfaith.org)).

### ***Diocesan Setting***

Approval is not needed from diocesan staff to offer this program in a parish or a cluster of parishes, but it is very important to communicate your intention to do JustSkills and even to seek assistance from some diocesan staff during the recruitment phase. Diocesan directors will be very glad to hear of your desire to offer this program. Collaborating with local representatives of



CCHD, CRS, Catholic Charities, and the diocesan social ministry office is also a way to obtain the best possible local resources.

Note: The “JustSkills Flyer” might be a simple and easy way to communication with parish and diocesan staff and share your intention to participate in the program.

### **STEP THREE: Choose Co-Facilitators**

It is best if two people coordinate the overall program. This team approach to facilitation allows for the expression of varied facilitation styles and gifts. It also allows for flexibility in the event of one facilitator getting sick or involved in some kind of emergency that prevents him/her from attending a session. Co-facilitation also allows for a division of labor. The co-facilitators should meet frequently, both before the program begins and during the program, to prepare and evaluate.

*Even though the overall facilitation is shared, all facilitators need to be at every meeting.* This program depends heavily on the rapport and trust that is built during the process. It is absolutely necessary for participants and co-facilitators alike to make a determined and faithful commitment to the group to be present at every meeting.

While not recommended, it is possible to facilitate this process by oneself. The JustFaith Ministries office is designed to be a source of help and consultation for all facilitators, including those who are facilitating alone. The JustFaith Ministries office staff is readily available via email or phone throughout the recruitment period and the program itself. Contact information is on the front cover of this document.

If you cannot find a co-facilitator, it may be possible that a diocesan staff person would welcome the opportunity to be a co-facilitator. In many dioceses, people on the diocesan level are familiar with JustFaith (especially those connected with CCHD, CRS, and CCUSA) and recognize that this process will help them identify new justice advocates and leaders for diocesan-wide and parish-wide efforts.

### ***Responsibilities/Qualifications of a Co-Facilitator***

Being a co-facilitator is an important and serious responsibility. Therefore, co-facilitators should be people who are mature, responsible, and capable of overseeing all sorts of conversations.

Responsibilities related to facilitation include:

- Attending to group dynamics (e.g., how people relate to each other; the flow of conversation)
- Coaching and supporting the group and individuals, especially in the area of skills development
- Holding the group together and making decisions about when to move from one conversation or exercise to the next
- Assuring books and videos are ordered in a timely manner
- Preparing in advance for each of the sessions

Good facilitation is critical to having a successful JustSkills experience.

### ***Communication between Co-Facilitators and JustFaith Ministries Office***

Co-facilitators are encouraged to connect regularly with the JustFaith Ministries staff. They are encouraged to call with questions they have about content and process and about any concerns that come up within the group.

Program materials are distributed as e-mail attachments, so co-facilitators need easy access to a computer, a printer, and the Internet. Materials sent to each co-facilitator include the syllabus, retreat content, order forms, the non-book reading assignments, evaluations, and updates. The syllabus includes planning instructions for each session and discussion questions. The retreat information includes detailed outlines of the retreat process, prayers, discussions and activities.

These materials are sent in a timely manner so that planning can happen well in advance. The goal is for co-facilitators to prepare for each session with a minimal amount of time and effort.

### **STEP FOUR: Register with JustFaith Ministries Office**

The next step in getting started is to register the group with the JustFaith Ministries office. Groups need to be registered with the JustFaith Ministries office in order to receive syllabus materials. It is recommended that groups register as soon as possible so that materials with further guidelines and timetables can be obtained with adequate time to prepare for the start of the program. To register your group, simply call the JustFaith Ministries office at 502-429-0865 and request a registration form or obtain one from [www.justfaith.org](http://www.justfaith.org).

### **STEP FIVE: Establish the Schedule**

#### ***Schedule the Meeting Times***

The next step is to decide on the best time of the week for your weekly meetings, taking into consideration the calendars of the facilitators and the accessibility of a meeting place. ***Do not presume to gather registered participants together and then try to work out a schedule!*** Co-facilitators should determine the best calendar option for weekly sessions in advance and advertise the program with the dates already selected. Those who sign up will then know what day and time they will be expected to meet. Undoubtedly, some people will have conflicts, but this could be true regardless of whatever time/day is selected.

Some groups hold biweekly meetings. If you plan on doing this, adjust the schedule as needed. In addition, stay closely connected with the JustFaith Ministries offices to discuss when you need to complete your material orders to ensure that materials are available to you.

If the sessions will be held at the parish or at the diocesan office, one of the most significant variables is what and when space is available at these facilities. Preplanning and coordination with parish or diocesan staff must be done to secure a meeting place for all of the sessions. The sessions could also be held in someone's home if preferred.



Once a time and day of the week are selected, prepare a yearly calendar in advance of both advertising and conducting the individual discernment/orientation meetings. This will allow co-facilitators to provide potential participants with a schedule that they can review and write into their calendars. The earlier this is done, the better. See Attachment B for a sample schedule.

### ***Schedule the Retreats***

Schedule the retreats from Friday evening through Saturday evening or Saturday through Sunday afternoon. Retreats need to be scheduled before the program begins, and they require 100 percent participation. The Opening Retreat should be scheduled within the first four weeks of the program. The first retreat is critical to the success of the program because it lays the foundation for both the building of trusting relationships and grounding the group in the spiritual dimension of justice work. The second retreat is also essential because it ties together the formation experience, helps address future goals, and provides an opportunity to celebrate the group and all that has been learned and accomplished with the program.

### **STEP SIX: Recruit Participants**

Co-facilitators may want to contact the JustFaith office to find out if other JustSkills groups are being planned in your local area, and then work together in promoting the program and recruiting participants.

### ***Points to Make during Recruitment***

It is important to let people know what will be asked of them. If they are JustFaith graduates, they will already know that the work will be challenging. If they are not JustFaith graduates but are doing the work of social ministry, they may be attracted by the opportunity to hone their social ministry skills and connect with other people of faith interested in and/or involved in this work.

When having personal conversations with potential participants, some of the following points could be made to help explain the program:

- JustSkills assumes that each participant has heard the call of the Gospel to attend to the poor.
- JustSkills participants will have a chance to develop and refine specific skills needed to carry out the justice tradition of our faith and social ministry in the parish.
- The program provides learning in the skill areas of prayer leadership, dialogue, facilitation, justice education, legislative advocacy, social analysis, community organizing, and strategies for building local and global solidarity within the parish.
- The program helps participants know they are not alone in this work by connecting them with others who have the same heart for justice.
- This is a program that offers an opportunity to be contemplative, to journal, to implement spiritual practices and to reflect on the Gospel call to act with justice.
- The program provides a blueprint for putting Catholic social teaching into practice.
- The program furthers the understanding of social issues.

### ***Personal Invitations***

One-on-one recruiting is the best method to surface interest. The planning team and co-facilitators need to look for potential participants and make it a point to invite them to consider JustSkills. The invitation could be extended in a phone call, or better still, through a face-to-face sit-down meeting, maybe over coffee after Sunday Mass. This would be an opportunity to tell the person why you think she/he would be a good candidate for this program, let her/him know why you are planning to participate, and tell her/him something about what the program involves and the kind of commitment it requires.

Personal invitations need to be followed up with solid information about the program, including the schedule, time commitments, etc. Providing this kind of detailed information up front will pay off in the quality of attendance and participation.

### ***Who to Recruit***

Several people should be considered when recruiting. These include:

JustFaith graduates - It would be good to get a list of graduates in the parish and/or the surrounding area. You can contact the JustFaith office for a list of names. The previous participants in JustFaith might know people who have some interest in gathering with others who have a heart for justice and are in need of further skills for social ministry. Ask for the name and phone number of the person so that someone from the planning team may contact her/him. Issue JustFaith graduates a personal invitation by sending them a letter, or calling them or attending a “Beyond JustFaith” meeting.

Those who have a heart for and/or understanding of Catholic social teaching and of social ministry - There are frequently people in parishes who have been doing some sort of social ministry work for a long time. To begin to surface names of people to contact about this program, ask the pastor, the pastoral associate, the Director of Religious Education, the parish Social Concerns Committee or Peace and Justice Committee members and leaders of some of the parish outreach programs. Someone from the planning group should personally invite them to be part of JustSkills.

People you meet at various gatherings - People interested in and those doing the work of social ministry tend to find each other at church, at social justice gatherings such as public witnesses, at workshops, and at various other meetings and gatherings. Having a one-page information sheet, such as the “JustSkills Flyer”, available at these meetings and workshops is a good tool for recruiting. Once people sign up for JustSkills, they may know of other people who have an interest.

CCHD, CRS, and Catholic Charities representatives and contacts - These representatives are probably aware of some people in their organizations who are asking for skill development and would benefit from JustSkills. If a representative from these three organizations is not on your planning team, contact the organization to let the diocesan representative know of your desire to offer this program. It is also helpful to attend events sponsored by these organizations and have the “JustSkills Flyer” available for distribution.



### ***Tips for Recruiting Participants***

Sometimes a nice-sized JustSkills group will form just through using personal invitations, which eliminates the need to do general advertising. Should general advertising be needed, however, there are usually several promotion and recruitment methods available within the parish and diocesan setting. These are addressed below. Most of these promotion methods take planning and frequently involve specific timeframes and deadlines for submission of publicity materials. It is often helpful to dedicate one particular month as your primary recruitment time. The methods listed below can then be applied to the selected recruitment month.

**Bulletin Announcements:** It's always good to let the parish community know what is happening. Bulletin announcements can serve both the purpose of sharing information and the purpose of actual recruiting. (Samples bulletin announcements are provided in Attachment D.)

**Parish Newsletter:** Many parishes have a monthly or bimonthly newsletter that goes out to all parish households. This is another opportunity for recruitment and one that generally gives ample space for program description and details. The newsletter deadlines are usually four to six weeks before the publication of the newsletter.

**Diocesan Newspaper:** Some diocesan newspapers provide free program advertising to parishes. With minor adjustments, the sample bulletin announcements in Attachment D could serve as an advertisement.

**Information Meeting(s):** It may prove helpful to have a special information meeting to address the components of the program and to answer questions. This can be held after liturgy or as an evening meeting. When advertising such a meeting, it would be good to address it in such a way that JustFaith graduates will respond, for example, "Attention JustFaith Graduates and those interested in social ministry". These meetings generally last for one hour. It is good to do this information meeting in the middle of the recruitment month. A sample outline for an Information Meeting is included as Attachment E.

### **STEP SEVEN: Conduct Discernment/Orientation Meetings**

As noted earlier, *it is very important to meet with each potential participant to help her/him discern if this program will meet her/his needs and expectations* (See Attachment C). Ideally, this should be done as soon as s/he shows interest. It is important that the co-facilitators conduct these meetings.

There are three purposes to this meeting. First, it gives the co-facilitators and potential participants a chance to get acquainted. The meeting could begin with a co-facilitator simply asking the interviewee why s/he is interested in the JustSkills: Practices and Tools for Parish Social Ministry program. It can also be helpful to ask for some background information, such as previous involvement in the parish and/or community, family background, current work, etc. This is just a matter of getting to know the person. The co-facilitator may want to share



information on why she/he is interested in facilitating this program and/or what attracted the co-facilitators to this program.

Second, this meeting provides an opportunity for the co-facilitators to describe the purpose and process of the program in more detail. It is very important that potential participants be very clear about the purpose and expectations of JustSkills. Attendance at opening and closing retreats and the sessions should be stressed.

The third purpose of this meeting is to provide the co-facilitators an opportunity to assess whether or not the candidate is appropriately suited for this program. In the vast majority of cases, it is expected that potential participants should be encouraged to do JustSkills. However, occasionally someone who is clearly not ready for the program will express an interest in it, or you and they will find that the program does not match what they are looking for. For example, a good-hearted person who is feeding the hungry may not necessarily be interested in developing an effective social ministry program in the parish; or, someone may have interest in recycling efforts because it makes sense economically or have an interest in gaining a deeper understanding of “Care of God’s Creation” as a Catholic social teaching principle upon which to base action, but they may not want to develop their own leadership skills for doing parish social ministry. There is no question that turning someone away from the process can be difficult and awkward, but it can be done with pastoral sensitivity.

JustSkills is, in part, a skills training program; therefore, people need to have the background needed and be ready for the rigors of the program. It is important to let potential participants know that, in order for them to be a constructive influence in a JustSkills group, they need to have an interest in furthering a comprehensive social ministry program. It also helps to have a basic understanding of Catholic social teaching. In addition, it is strongly encouraged that only adults participate in this program.

Finally, there are practical details to be shared at this meeting, such as dates of the program, specific dates of retreats, and fees. Attachment G (Fact Sheet) explains the practical details of the program and is a good handout to give to the participants. Be sure to have all these details in hand before scheduling a discernment/orientation meeting.

### ***Still Have Questions?***

If you have other questions that were not addressed in this document, please call the JustFaith Ministries office at 502-429-0865 or e-mail Mary Wright ([mary@justfaith.org](mailto:mary@justfaith.org)) or David Horvath ([david@justfaith.org](mailto:david@justfaith.org)).

Thank you for being part of this process. Your contribution to building the reign of God is invaluable. While it is very important and serious work, we hope that you will also have some fun along the way.

*Across the country, we hold each other in the embrace of an abundant God  
who dreams big, demands everything, and cherishes everyone.*



## Planning Group Timetable JustSkills

| Responsibilities  | Person Responsible | To be done by    |
|---|--------------------|------------------|
| <b>Initial Coordinator</b>  |                    |                  |
| <b>Step 1: Establish a planning group</b>   |                    | <b>June 2008</b> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek out interested JustFaith graduates to be part of the planning group</li> <li>• Seek out interested representatives from CCHD, CRS and Catholic Charities</li> <li>• Provide all planning group members with a copy of this document</li> <li>• Thoroughly read the 2008-09 JustSkills “Getting Started” document</li> <li>• Decide if you will meet as a parish group, a multi-parish group, or a diocesan group</li> </ul> |                    |                  |
| <b>Planning Team</b>  |                    |                  |
| <b>Step 2: Getting Approval for JustFaith II</b>  |                    | <b>June 2008</b> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advise pastor(s) of interest to offer JustSkills</li> </ul>  |                    |                  |
| <b>Step 3: Choose Co-Facilitators</b>   |                    | <b>June 2008</b> |
| <b>Step 4: Register with the JustFaith Ministries Office</b>  |                    | <b>ASAP</b>      |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Send in a completed registration form to the JustFaith Ministries office</li> </ul>  |                    |                  |
| <b>Step 5: Establish the Schedule and Select the Site</b>   |                    | <b>June 2008</b> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select the ideal site for the meetings and the best day of the week for meetings. (Note: Access to a VCR and DVD player is needed.)</li> <li>• Work with appropriate persons at the planned meeting site, establish the beginning and end dates and create a calendar for the twenty sessions, incorporating holiday breaks.</li> <li>• Choose weekends for retreats and incorporate these into the schedule</li> </ul>          |                    |                  |
| <b>Step 6: Recruit Participants</b>   |                    | <b>July 2008</b> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select recruitment methods: personal invitation, bulletin announcements, parish newsletter, diocesan newspaper, information session</li> </ul>   |                    |                  |



**Planning Group Timetable  
JustSkills**

| Responsibilities   | Person Responsible | To be done by |
|--|--------------------|---------------|
| <p><b><i>Personal Invitations</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a deadline for personal recruitment activities</li> <li>• Identify JustFaith graduates who may be interested in the program</li> <li>• Call the local CCHD, CRS and Catholic Charities contact persons for possible candidates</li> <li>• Identify non-graduates who may be interested and qualify for this program</li> <li>• Identify who will issue the personal invitation to these folks.</li> <li>• Offer these graduates a personal invitation by letter or by phone call</li> </ul> |                    |               |
| <p><b><i>Bulletin Announcements</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify dates for bulletin announcements</li> <li>• Create bulletin announcements (See Attachment D for samples)</li> <li>• Submit bulletin announcements to appropriate staff person with desired insert dates</li> </ul>   |                    |               |
| <p><b><i>Parish Newsletter</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify date for parish newsletter</li> <li>• Create item for parish newsletter</li> <li>• Submit newsletter item to appropriate staff person with desired publication date</li> </ul>  |                    |               |
| <p><b><i>Diocesan Newspaper</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify date and possibility for diocesan newspaper</li> <li>• Create item for diocesan newspaper</li> <li>• Submit newspaper item to appropriate diocesan staff person with desired publication date</li> </ul>   |                    |               |
| <p><b><i>Information Session</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify a location central for the majority of JustFaith graduates</li> <li>• Work with appropriate staff at the location of the meeting, establish a date within the next 4 - 6 weeks for the information session</li> </ul>   |                    |               |





## Attachment B

# JustSkills Sample Schedule – 2008-09

**JustSkills includes the following. Once you are involved with the curriculum you will see that some of the practices are also tools and some of the tools are also practices.**

*Practices* include – leading prayer, enhancing and sustaining spirituality, facilitation, dialogue, social analysis, researching and presenting a social issue

*Tools* include – justice education workshops, community organizing, assessing and analyzing parish activities, legislative advocacy, organizing global and local parish solidarity committees, collaboration and coordination with local agencies, organizing a social ministry coordinating team, working with pastors, and planning

### **Sample Schedule**

Tuesday, September 16

Tuesday, September 23

**Friday and Saturday, September 26 and 27 - Opening Retreat**

Tuesday, September 30

Tuesday, October 7

Tuesday, October 14

Tuesday, October 21

Tuesday, October 28

Tuesday, November 4

Tuesday, November 11

Tuesday, November 18

Holiday Break

Tuesday, January 20

Tuesday, January 27

Tuesday, February 3

Tuesday, February 10

Tuesday, February 17

Tuesday, February 24

Tuesday, March 3

Tuesday, March 10

Tuesday, March 17

Tuesday, March 24

Tuesday, March 31 – Final meeting and evaluation

**Closing Retreat – either the weekend previous to the Final meeting or two weeks after the Final meeting (due to Easter, April 12<sup>th</sup>)**

## **JustSkills Discernment/Orientation Meeting**

*Copy this attachment to an electronic document and delete these italicized instructions. Create spaces between questions as appropriate so that you can write answers on this sheet. Make copies and have one available at each candidate meeting.*

*Please allow one hour for the Discernment/Orientation Meeting. Attachments needed for this meeting: revised B, C, F and G*

**Name of Candidate** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Meeting** \_\_\_\_\_ **Facilitator name** \_\_\_\_\_

### **Introductory Remarks**

The purposes of this meeting are:

- A. To begin/continue to build a relationship with each candidate
- B. To give full disclosure about JustSkills so there are no surprises
  - 1. To describe the process of JustSkills in detail
  - 2. To make the requirements of JustSkills are clear
  - 3. To ensure each candidate knows what he/she is committing to
  - 4. To answer candidate questions
- C. To determine the appropriateness of JustSkills in relation to where the candidate is in his/her social ministry and faith journey
- D. To secure a commitment from the candidate for full participation in the program if together it is determined the candidate and JustSkills are a match. This is a decision that will be made together.
- E. To complete the participant registration form and collect program registration fee.
  - Ask if it is ok if you take notes
  - Begin with a prayer for discerning God's call for the candidate and for wisdom to hear God's voice in this gathering

### **Getting to know each other**

- A. Tell the person about yourself and how you got involved in JustFaith and why you are doing JustSkills.
- B. Learning about the candidate: Ask the candidate general questions about the following:
  - 1. Family and work
  - 2. Parish involvement
  - 3. Previous justice work: Are there any service agencies in which you are currently volunteering your time?
  - 4. What spiritual practices do you currently use?



## Attachment C, page 2

**Determining appropriateness** - *These questions are meant to help the interviewer sense if the candidate is a good match for JustSkills. We recommend that you try to use all of the questions below in order to create a composite picture of the person's readiness for the JustSkills program.*

- A. Did you complete the JustFaith program? If yes, when did you complete it and what was the experience like for you? If no, what experiences or series of experiences have you had that have linked you to the poor?
- B. What experience have you had with the poor that has caused you some degree of internal struggle?
- C. What Gospel message(s) about the poor do you most struggle with?
- D. What would you most like to do to address the causes of poverty?
- E. What experiences have you had with social ministry? with Catholic social teaching?
- F. Why are you interested in doing JustSkills? What do you want to learn, to know more about? Are you willing to lead prayer and facilitate a segment or two of the program?
- G. How are you involved in your parish at this time? Are there other ways you imagine yourself being involved in the parish in the future

### **Review Calendar and Fact Sheet** (See Attachments B and G)

Describe the JustSkills process in detail using the "What is JustSkills?" and "Assumptions" sections on pages 3-4 of this *Getting Started 2008-09* document. In addition, copy Attachments B (calendar) and G (Fact Sheet) and share them with the interviewee.

### **Ask for a Commitment — if you think the person is a good fit for the program**

- A. Does the candidate have any questions/comments?
- B. Assuming that the candidate is a good match for JustSkills, ask for a commitment to participate fully in the program and to read and then sign the commitment statement (Attachment C).

### **What if the person isn't a good fit?**

- A. Handle the situation directly. Do not attempt to sidestep the issue.
- B. Be clear about your reasons for believing that JustSkills is not for this person (i.e., s/he is not interested in developing a social ministry program, in skills development or in the shared leadership part of this program, has little understanding of Catholic social teaching, little to no contact with the poor, too many scheduling conflicts). After hearing what's involved in the program, it is also very possible that the person herself or himself will determine that s/he is not ready for this program. Instead, s/he may want to pursue JustFaith, even repeating it.



## Attachment D

### **Bulletin Announcements** **For Parish Bulletins or Diocesan Newspapers** *Please adapt as needed*

Attention JustFaith Graduates, those involved in outreach ministries, and those concerned about human suffering in our own country and around the world: JustSkills: Practices and Tools for Parish Social Ministry is coming to (name of parish/city/diocese) in September. This program combines a spirituality of compassion with the practical *skills* of social ministry. If you've completed JustFaith or you have a solid understanding of Catholic social teaching, please consider joining us for JustSkills. For more information, call \_\_\_\_\_.

Attention JustFaith Graduates: What are you doing now that you have heard the Gospel call? Whether you are currently active in social ministry and would like to hone your social ministry skills or are ready to make the commitment of time and effort to the work of social ministry, consider JustSkills: Practices and Tools for Parish Social Ministry. This program is an effort of JustFaith Ministries and its partnership with CCHD, CRS and CCUSA. It will familiarize you with social ministry skills that help address both the symptoms and the root causes of poverty. It will be offered at (name of parish/city/diocese) in September. For more information, call \_\_\_\_\_.

Attention! JustFaith Graduates: Where is the God who extended a special concern for the "anawim," when 40,000 children worldwide die of hunger each day, when one-fourth of U.S. kids live in poverty? The God of compassion calls us to be the hands, feet and heart of justice to people living with very few resources. JustSkills: Practices and Tools for Parish Social Ministry is a program that provides substantial skills training and equips participants with many of the tools necessary for addressing the needs of the poor both locally and globally. If you want to do something about poverty and injustice, JustSkills may be for you. For more information, call \_\_\_\_\_.

Attention! JustFaith Graduates: Millions are homeless in this rich nation and, for many, food lines have replaced the family dining room table. Isn't there something we can do about it? YES! JustSkills: Practices and Tools for Parish Social Ministry is a program that provides follow-up to the formation focus of the basic JustFaith program. JustSkills offers a substantial skills-based training program that provides participants with actual tools for doing various kinds of social ministry needed in our Church and world today. If you'd like to engage in a spirituality done "outdoors" amidst the suffering of the world, where God is ever present and ever active, please give us a call. For more information, call \_\_\_\_\_.



## JustSkills Information Meeting

### Steps

- A. Assign two or three people to coordinate this meeting. *If JustSkills is offered as a multi-parish, deanery, city or diocesan gathering, the coordinating team should be representative of that reality.*
- B. The coordinating team implements the following:
  - Select date and time for the information meeting(s)
  - Arrange for a meeting space
  - Put announcements in the Sunday bulletins at least two weeks in advance of the meeting(s). Create a new announcement or use content from Attachment D.
  - Personally invite those who do outreach ministry in your parish/surrounding parishes
  - Advise CCHD, CRS and Catholic Charities of the date and time of the meeting. Invite them to promote this meeting among their constituencies
  - Identify presenters, coordinate presentations, and clarify responsibilities for the meeting.
  - Use the following outline to present information on JustSkills. (This outline may be adapted and modified as desired.)
  - Handouts Needed: your revised Attachment B.

### Meeting Logistics and Outline

**Setting:** Play background music from “Justice Walking” CD or some other justice music  
Have coffee and a snack available  
Use nametags and a sign-in sheet requesting name, address, phone, e-mail address and parish/deanery/vicariate affiliation.

**Timing:** Plan the session to last for one hour.

**Presenters:** Members of the planning group

**Prayer:** Begin the meeting with prayer

### Discussion:

1. Present a general description of the JustSkills program and walk people through the components of the program. Be sure to emphasize that this program:

- Is a *skills development* program for social ministry
- Is a process for furthering prayer and spiritual reflection
- Is a program that offers information on social issues and requires research on an issue
- Requires some sharing of leadership responsibilities

## Attachment E, page 2

- Is NOT just a continuation of what participants did in JustFaith
- Is NOT a program where participants engage in *doing* an activity

Be sure to mention if JustSkills will be offered as a multi-parish, deanery/vicariate, city or diocesan gathering.

2. Discuss logistics of program: Pass out copies of the schedule (your revised version of Attachment B) and walk people through start date, session schedule, meeting place, and commitment.
3. Take any questions.
4. Invite those present who might be interested in this program to check their name on the sign in sheet. This will indicate that they would like one of the facilitators call him/her.



**Attachment F**

**JustSkills  
Commitment Statement**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, commit to participating in JustSkills: Practices and Tools for Parish Social Ministry.

I understand and accept that:

- JustSkills is a skills development program with three components: 1) prayer and spiritual reflection, 2) parish social ministry skills development, and 3) formation on social issues.
- As a participant in JustSkills, I will learn some leadership skills, will facilitate parts of some sessions, and will lead prayer for some sessions.
- The ultimate goal of JustSkills is to provide a blueprint and tools for establishing effective social ministry in a parish.

I understand that the JustSkills commitment includes reading assigned materials and attending approximately twenty weekly sessions and two retreats.

Recognizing that I will be part of a supportive community and that my presence is important to the integrity of the group, I commit to attending both retreats and all sessions.

I commit to being an active participant in all these activities, to do the readings, and to prepare for each session to the best of my abilities.

I also commit to the development of community within the group and to supporting other participants as we journey together.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



## Attachment G

### Fact Sheet for JustSkills

#### Sessions Content

Each session consists of some combination of the following:

- A. Prayer and spiritual reflection. Note: Each participant will prepare and lead some of the prayers.
- C. Discussion of a Social Ministry *Skill* Topic. Note: Each participant will facilitate a segment of some of the sessions.
- D. Discussion of key social justice issue

#### Time and Place –

*(Insert the day of the week, time and place you have decided on.)* Have maps available if needed. Note that all meetings will begin and end on time.

#### Shared Leadership

Each participant will have opportunities to lead group prayer and group discussion and receive feedback on these experiences. Sharing leadership is an important part of the JustSkills experience, and everyone will be called on to facilitate some segments and to participate in this way.

#### Growing Social Ministry in the Parish

A blueprint and tools for parish social ministry will be provided. Each participant will have many opportunities to participate in developing strategies for growing an effective social ministry program in his/her parish.

#### Retreats

There are two retreats: one at the beginning of the program and one at the end. Retreats are an important and significant part of the JustSkills journey. They should not be considered or treated as optional.

#### First Meeting

For the first meeting, please be prepared to introduce yourself (3-5 minutes) to the group by way of sharing your spiritual and social ministry history. Please include some of the following:

- Your experience with social justice work, and how you come to be here.
- Your hopes for participating in this program.
- What you bring to the group.
- Something you'd like the group to know about you.

#### Costs

- Books: Approximately \$65.00 per person (4-6 books or booklets)
- Videos: Approximately \$15.00
- Retreats: \$25.00 to \$100.00 for each of the two retreats, depending on location
- Printing: Undetermined, based on how material sent electronically is used

