“Our commitment to reconciliation demands that we promote justice and peace…”

A Manual for Growth in Mission and Justice

JUSTICE PEACE / GS MISSION

Justice Peace (JP) for new members - Training Outline, Part 3

2012

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Introduction:

The following material is the third part of a design by GSIJPO in response to the GS Chapter Direction of 2009 which recognised the “urgency to nurture new life through holistic and relevant formation that prepares, renews and sustains us for the challenges of today’s realities.”

Part 3 presents material to support a full integration of GS Justice within living mission. It presupposes the foundational content of Justice from Parts 1 and 2 of the Curriculum outline Manuals.

The material in Part 3 does not follow the Unit/Content schema of the previous manuals. It presents material to be used in a personal “journal and theological reflection process” as each person is involved in mission activities. It may be adapted for orientation and ongoing growth of any person linked with GS mission. Growth in Justice is a core aspect of a maturing member’s commitment to GS mission; this journal/theological reflection outline is designed to deepen the practice and integration of Justice within the context of mission.

Reference back to the learning accomplished in Parts 1 & 2 may, at times, be helpful.

The material herein presents a series of “journal and reflection prompts” – the pages can be taken and inserted into an individual process of mission growth. The material focuses issues for self-assessment, reflection on personal goals, and challenge for ones growth in ministry and community. It is suggested that each page be taken in “small bites”, not considered all at once; each page can be used over and over again as certain questions will engage the personal path in different ways at different times.

A most important aspect of using this material is the active involvement of a spiritual guide who will accompany the maturing member. This person will serve as guide, mentor, support and co-evaluator. Inserting the process as much as possible within the local community experience is likewise to be encouraged.
Following the guidelines of GS Formation Principles (2001) and the Rome UISG JPIC Guide Us in Your Justice (2010), the goals for use of this material are that, upon completion of JP Training Part 3, each person will have:

- A commitment to continual growth and evaluation of the place of Justice in their life and mission;
- A solid integration of Justice practices within their prayer forms;
- A commitment to share their justice living within community;
- A commitment to environmental justice with deeper understanding of new learning on the Universe, Creation, Christ’s action in Creation, and the movement of the Spirit in shaping and renewing Creation;
- An understanding of zeal that is lived in daily service and evaluated in experiences that define the person’s growth in charism;
- Self-awareness of one’s personal and communal growth process;
- Awareness of and interaction with social analysis, systemic change, and solidarity
- Opportunities to evaluate congregational life and direction;
- Participation in international mission, inter-congregational mission and interfaith experiences;
- Evaluation of life style, personal and communal, in relation to professed commitments;
- Experiences of public expressions of a justice commitment.

The above goals are connected to and integrated within the broader program of formation that supports:

Christocentric living/ Professional and Theological study/ Language study/
Simplicity of life-style/ Capacity in media and technology/ Apostolic responsibility/
Integration of sexuality and affectivity for mission/ trust and dependence on God’s abundance/ countercultural witnessing/ involvement in social-political realities/
discernment/ inner freedom that will promote full expression of God’s merciful love.

The journaling/reflection material here is incomplete; it represents only starting points. It is intended that each formater will support comprehensive personal journaling that will include the material here and will also expand to wide-ranging topics, as determined by local reality, learner readiness, and integration with all other thematic areas of formation. Throughout the process it is to be encouraged that the person growing in mission makes links and connections with all material to the teachings of SJE & SME.

**Material Organization:**

The material for Justice Journaling is presented in a manner intended to be used flexibly and creatively within the trainee’s personal journey. There can be much overlap between journaling and theological reflection. According to each situation, the flow of material can be set out, with guidance of the formator, in a self-defined program, ongoingly evaluated and adjusted. Themes are intended to be repeated - recycled! - at different times and in different circumstances.

The essential process of journaling relies on the initiative and follow-thru of the formee. The process requires discipline, reflection, evaluation, creativity, and ongoing goal setting. Engagement, participation, building knowledge through experience, co-learning, integration of
personal growth with greater knowledge of GS mission, and exploration by the trainee all will be supported by the understanding and attentiveness of the formation guide. The relational and personal aspects of this role are of utmost importance in part 3 of the Justice Journey.

As the trainee is progressing in justice living, it is strongly suggested that each Trainer or Group Leader take responsibility for supporting experiences that might include:

- Local expert speakers/facilitators in various fields;
- Research activities that will be practical in the local ministry of the Unit;
- Sharing of learning with local communities and GS people in their Unit;
- Participation of trainees in local workshops on related topics;
- Participation in local action for justice and peace and human rights at all levels, personal, systemic and structural;
- Dialogue and discussion with GS communities, Units/districts/sectors, sisters/lay/affiliates/friends to participate with the trainees in discussion of justice themes, especially those groups related or linked with our ministries;
- Opportunities to explore biblical sources, theology, and prayer development.
- Exploration of material in relation to Founders and leaders in the congregation.

Resources:

JP topics and themes, resources and reading materials can be found in Parts 1 & 2 of:

THE JUSTICE PEACE / GS MISSION
Justice Peace (JP) for new members - Training Curriculum Outline

GS Position Papers, 2011 - Priorities for Ministry and Mission
http://www.buonpastoreint.org/jp-en/training-resources

The GSJPO Training Facilitator is happy to suggest/locate documents or material for your use with this curriculum through Internet sources, if requested. She will be as available as possible, to help you adapt and develop any material according to specific goals that you would like to meet.

We hope that this Manual for Growth in Mission and Justice, Training Outline, Part 3 will be a useful resource. We welcome your comments so that we may continue to develop, update, and improve it.

Please note JP training resources on the GS international Website:
http://www.buonpastoreint.org/jp-en/training-resources

Original in English
Translated into Spanish by Victor Carrasco
Translated into French by Virginie WOO

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Content part III (this content can be done in any order, adapted to the needs of each person, and supported by the accompaniment of a mentor)

**Part A - Journal Prompts (14)**

Introduction to Journaling

**Dear Journal,**

- How am I walking? Ecological footprint
- How loud is my voice? To be a voice for the voiceless
- Where in the World am I? Global Reality
- How inclusive is my community? Justice alive, at home
- Aren’t I a woman? Gender and Equality
- Is another World Possible? Gospel Jubilee
- Do I touch peace, in walking, in breathing, in living? Peacemaking
- Have I looked in the mirror lately? Re-examining goals
- How many loaves do I have? Eucharist
- Who do you say that I am? Interfaith dialogue and inclusion
- Is it the best kept secret in my life? Catholic Social Teaching
- Do I hear the cry? Human Rights
- But is it effective? GS NGO status
- Why is the Sky Blue? Essential Questioning

**Part B – Theological Reflection Prompts (12)**

Introduction to Theological Reflection

**Scripture leads my path...**

- Consecrated and Sent / Luke 4:14-22
- Cosmic inclusivity / John 1:1-3
- Preferential Option of the Poor / Matthew 25:40
- Zeal / John2:15 and Psalm 69: 9
- Inclusive Love in words and action / John15: 15 and St Paul, Galatians 3:28
- Internationality and Global Networking / Mark 15:12-16
- Interfaith / John4:7-10 & 19-25
- Challenge to System and Structures / Luke 11 37-44 & 52-54
- Transformation / Matt: 17: 1-9
- Prophecy, Public witness / Acts 1:8
- Signs of my Times: Migration, Trafficking, Violence / Matt: 16:2-3
- Forgiveness - inclusive justice / Luke 24: 36-4
Journaling Introduction – Sacred Process, a Process of Prayer
"I never know what I think about something until I read what I've written on it." -- William Faulkner

Dear Journal….  
I'm getting ready

Atmosphere - 
Choose a quiet, comfortable space and place where you will not be interrupted. Sacred music may help; papers and colored pencils and creative resources can be useful. A beginning prayer ritual is good, or simple breathing exercises, recalling the life of the Spirit, the breath of God. Candles or aroma may be pleasant; choose a spot where you are comfortable, maybe close to a tree or the sky...

Attitude – 
Be open to your unconscious mind, respect your thinking, and never fear questions. Be confident you will grow in self knowledge and grow closer to the Sacred Presence within and in the world.

Action – 
After some quiet time with a theme or question, just begin writing (or drawing or coloring or creating art). Write faster than normal and continue… (you're not in school and no corrections will be made!) Do not censor or criticize your writing, let it flow easily, don’t force it. Write your truth. No worries. Be awake to what you are writing.

After-writing – 
After some quiet, take some time to look at what you have done. Highlight anything you want to come back to. Make a note if something points in a direction for your life activity. Give thanks for this expression of yourself. Consider what you may want to share with your formation guide.

Short tips for journaling - 
Respect yourself & your time / Let God in / No rules / Be creative / Add relevant Scripture links / Write a prayer or try a poem / Doodle / Get out of your chair and dance.

A good traveler has no fixed plans and is not intent on arriving. 
Lao Tzu

Dance as if no one is watching. Sing as if no one is listening. Love as if you have never been hurt. 
Unknown

Learn to get in touch with the silence within yourself and know that everything in life has a purpose. 
Elisabeth Kubler-Ross

Stressed souls need the reassuring rhythm of self-nurturing rituals. 
Sarah Ban Breathnach

Live every act fully, as if it were your last. 
Buddha

We're fools whether we dance or not; so we might as well dance. 
Japanese Proverb
My Journal for Growth in Mission and Justice:

How am I walking?
Ecological footprint

Modern Society will find no solution to the ecological problem unless it takes a serious look at its lifestyles.” — Pope John Paul II

Dear Journal:

I want to think about my place on the earth, my ecological practices.
I’ll start thinking about and exploring my own behavior and the practices of my community –

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge base</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The basics of good ecological science, global warming, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The ways I learn more and keep up to date</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning practical things I can do to be ecologically responsible</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consumer practices</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food consumption</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal purchasing and community purchasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water usage</td>
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<tr>
<td>Energy usage</td>
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<td>Technology usage</td>
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<tr>
<th>Caretaking practices</th>
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<tr>
<td>Recycling habits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composting of waste</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gardening / Eating local foods</td>
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<tr>
<td>Modeling respect for environment and speaking about it</td>
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<tr>
<th>Attitudes I carry</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prayer that influences my respect of creation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Awareness of a holy spirit constantly renewing the Universe</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability or desire to share my concerns</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relationship with all living beings</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

I’ll write down areas I feel good about and some things that confuse me…
I’ll take my journaling to prayer…

My Journaling may lead me to

- evaluate more of my own ecological practices
  I can go to <http://www.myfootprint.org/> (languages can be accessed)
- read about the new science and understanding of cosmology
- decide to do better recycling or use energy in a different way
- discuss these issues in community
- make a concrete change that is ecologically positive.

Next Steps…
My Journal for Growth in Mission and Justice:

How loud is my voice?  
To be a voice for the voiceless

Never be afraid to raise your voice for honesty and truth and compassion against injustice and lying and greed. If people all over the world...would do this, it would change the earth.  William Faulkner

Dear Journal:

Advocacy is something I am thinking about.  
I wonder how I can use my own voice better. How courageous am I, really? How effective am I?

  I wonder what I can do to be a better advocate...
  I should think about the experiences I have had in advocacy...
  Some good feelings and some questions that I have...
  Maybe I have doubts and fears...
  Maybe I do not feel much support... I wonder why...
  New behaviors I want or need to try out...
  Maybe I am afraid of making a mistake...
  Maybe there is some danger – others’ opinions...
  My models for speaking for voiceless...
  The sound of my own voice...

  I’ll write down areas I feel good about and some things that confuse me...
  I’ll take my journaling to prayer...

My Journaling may lead me to

Explore the GS JP website to see what the congregation is doing

Asses my fears and my courage to name injustice

Explore scripture voices that speak for others

Decide on a step for practical advocacy

Look at this topic again, soon

Do public speaking or write a letter to the Editor in our local news media on a current topic related to mission

Next Steps…
My Journal for Growth in Mission and Justice:

Where in the World am I?

Global Reality

A human being is a part of the whole,...each experiences him/herself, as something separated ...Our task is to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all  Albert Einstein

Dear Journal:

I live on such a small part of the planet but I desire a global vision. I wonder about my place. I wonder about internationality. I wonder about embracing the whole world with God’s love. I want to consider -

The central desires of my heart

Learning about other cultures and countries

Encountering others and The Other

Universal Prayer

Differences among peoples

My smallness

My grandeur

The call I hear

Jesus’ activity in a small corner of the world

The ideas my community has about internationality

Languages

Networking, communication & skills, and technology I develop and use

I’ll write down areas I feel good about and some things that confuse me...

I’ll take my journaling to prayer...

My Journaling may lead me to

Learn about a culture I do not know

Write a psalm of my place in the universe

Explore the Acts of the Apostles & missionary journeys of St Paul

Speed my learning of a new language

Become more active in networking processes

Next Steps…
My Journal for Growth in Mission and Justice:

*How inclusive is my community?*

Justice alive, at home

Living in right relationship means radically changing both our individual behavior and social structures so that our way of life honors all of God’s creation. Quaker Spirituality

Dear Journal:

I desire Justice to be a daily reality in all my activities. I want to belong to a justice centered community. I want to be aware of all who might be excluded and I want to be included in my local and Unit communities. I wonder about

Someone who might experience exclusion right now

Around our prayer life
Around our recreation and social events
Around our power and decisions
Around our access to resources and finance

The times and the ways I experience full membership

The times and the ways I feel left out, not a part of things

The ways our community honors God’s merciful love

The structures we have that some are not comfortable with

Changing structures, changing behavior, changing hearts

Making changes together and dialoging together

The ways we (or I) sometimes avoid real relationship

I’ll write down areas I feel good about and some things that confuse me... I’ll take my journaling to prayer...

**My Journaling may lead me to**

Further dialogue, questions and mutual evaluation

Take responsibility for my relationships

Review the gospels, Jesus’ life, in light of biblical inclusion

Find a way to participate in common decisions – work and community

**Next Steps…**
My Journal for Growth in Mission and Justice:

Aren’t I a Woman? Gender and Equality

...there is no tool for development more effective than the empowerment of women. Kofi Annan

Dear Journal:

I am thinking about being a woman. My sexuality. My gender. My experiences as a woman. I think about…

Images of God that were taught to me

Discrimination that I see all around

My own feelings

Feelings of the men I know

Feelings of women I know

My relationships with men and with women

The meaning of women rights

What does sexuality mean?

Do I take joy in being a woman?

Is there something I need for fuller empowerment in my mission?

Do I include my femininity in my expression of mission?

Do I consider myself a feminist? a mujerista? a womanist?

Have I ever taken a political stand in favor of women?

I’ll write down areas I feel good about and some things that confuse me…

I’ll take my journaling to prayer…

My Journaling may lead me to

Read more theology from a women’s perspective and from my own culture

Remember my own mother and the women in my family

Explore my own feelings more deeply / write a poem

Contemplate God’s creation of me!

Think about the women and/or girls with whom I am in service

Examine ways I might be unconsciously supporting gender discrimination

Next Steps…
Dear Journal:

The world I see is full of pain and suffering for so many. I wonder… I wonder… I hear slogans for change… I am part of prayers for a better world… I know the Jubilee dream of Gods’ covenant… I am dreaming about…

Forgiveness of debts
Retuning land to original proprietors
Leaving the land time to rest and restore

Living in holiness
Re-distribution of the world’s resources
Jubilee economics / Economic Justice
Complacency
The World Social Forum Movement
Practical obstacles embedded in society
Change and social organization
Social Activism
The deepest meaning of Eucharist and inclusivity

I’ll write down areas I feel good about and some things that confuse me…
I’ll take my journaling to prayer…

My Journaling may lead me to

Read more about Jesus’ ministry as an economic call to Jubilee Justice
Become active in work to change unjust systems and structures
Integrate Jubilee concepts more deeply in my prayer

Next Steps…
**My Journal for Growth in Mission and Justice:**

*Do I touch peace, in walking, in breathing, in living?*

**Peacemaking**

*Peace is not the product of a victory or a command. It has no finishing line, no final deadline, no fixed definition of achievement. Peace is a never-ending process, the work of many decisions.* Oscar Arias, Costa Rica

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**Dear Journal:**

What is Peace?
Jesus speaks about leaving peace with us… I’m not sure I understand... Yes, I know internal peace and my own agitation… I know the violence of the world… I wonder how to apply Jesus’ peace…

*I wonder about…*

- My anger
- My complacency
- My powerlessness
- My stubbornness
- My disbelief
- The cruelty of humanity
- The Arms Trade
- Political Oppression
- Freedom
- Patriotism
- Nationalism
- Military Service
- Military Budgets
- Women victims of war
- Pacifism
- Passivity
- Resistance

*I’ll write down areas I feel good about and some things that confuse me… I’ll take my journaling to prayer…*

**My Journaling may lead me to**

- Join a local Pax Christi group, or the international group
- Organize a peace activity in my ministry
- Reread Pacem in Terris by Pope John XXIII
- Insert peace themes into local community prayer

Next Steps…
My Journal for Growth in Mission and Justice:

*Have I looked in the mirror lately?*

**Re-examining goals**

_The only one who behaves sensibly is my tailor; he takes my measurements anew every time he sees me, while all the rest go on with old measurements and expect me to fit them._ George Bernard Shaw

**Dear Journal:**

I am learning much in ministry these days and I am very busy. Sometimes the days go by so quickly I barely have time to think about what I am doing. I struggle to keep justice at the center of what I am doing. I want to look back at things I have learned and still keep looking ahead to be creative. I don’t want to get stuck. I want to take time to think about

- The integration of inclusive biblical justice in my life
- The ways my daily behaviors harmonize with gospel living
- The dreams I have to be a prophet of some kind
- The directions of my congregation and the ways I participate in them
- My personal goals to live Justice
- My involvement and responsibility in my own planning
- My growth in the past months toward being a person of justice
- The growth of my competency and confidence

I’ll write down areas I feel good about and some things that confuse me… I’ll take my journaling to prayer…

**My Journaling may lead me to**

- Set aside daily time for self-evaluation in prayer
- Review SMART goal setting from the past, set up some new goals that fit now
- Think about SME’s words “Love and justice will bind us to each other and to the whole mission.”
My Journal for Growth in Mission and Justice:

**How many loaves do I have?**  
**Eucharist**

*Eucharist is to be an anticipation of the kingdom, of the day when rich and poor would feast together, of the day when the body of Christ would not be wounded by divisions*

W.T. Cavanaugh, writing about Oscar Romero

**Dear Journal:**

Every day I go to mass. I feel wonder when I read the gospel of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes. Sometimes going to mass seems just a routine. I’m not sure what I am doing. I love the Eucharist and I know SME was devoted to the Eucharist. I want Eucharist to be central in my life. I want the Eucharistic celebration to be on fire with Justice. I am thinking about

*The inclusivity of the Eucharistic table I stand around*

*The full participation of those at the margins in sharing of Eucharist*

*The importance of the Eucharist in forming a body of people marked by the kingdom of God, in forming a body of resistance to the powers of darkness*

*Hope for the unity, the communion, of all*

*My ability to enter the Resurrection of Jesus*

*Transformation*

*Reconciliation*

My responsibility to distribute loaves and fishes when I feel so poor inside myself

I’ll write down areas I feel good about and some things that confuse me…  
I’ll take my journaling to prayer…

**My Journaling may lead me to**

Create a para-liturgical Eucharist with freedom to try new structures to express our full communion as brothers and sisters

Ask those to whom I minister to develop a Eucharistic expression that we will use together

Ensure that my culture and my gender is expressed in Eucharistic celebrations

Invite people to Eucharist and offer hospitality at Eucharist to those who may not feel comfortable

Read more Eucharistic theology

Ask others about their concerns and experiences about the meaning of Eucharist

**Next Steps…**
My Journal for Growth in Mission and Justice:

Who do you say that I am?
Interfaith dialogue and inclusion

There are those around the world who believe that there is one truth and infinite ways to approach it. As the world becomes smaller we must find ways to embrace the spiritual journeys of those whose traditions are different, without abandoning our own. Arlo Guthrie, singer

Dear Journal:
Sometimes I wonder if my own faith is strong enough to really accept all faiths. I want to proclaim Good News. But it must be a Good News to Embrace the entire World. My truth must be in my living, in my example, not in certainty of dogma. I wonder about

Recalling my experiences with other religious beliefs
Why so many wars are rationalized on the basis of religious beliefs
What about religion is external expression and what is my deep spiritual belief

The times my religion persecutes others or demeans others beliefs
The times people of my religion are persecuted by other more dominate groups
The connection between politics and religion
Beliefs of others that I find very strange; Beliefs of mine that others may find very strange

Creating unity when peoples’ basic beliefs are in opposition
My ability to illuminate Gods’ presence within any reality and perspective
What part of my religion is really cultural comfortableness more than faith

My ability to reconcile deep differences among people
The various experiences of my sisters all over the world in their expressions of faith
What my congregation and our charism say about the promotion of interfaith dialogue
What might I fear losing if I embrace a broader spiritual reality

I’ll write down areas I feel good about and some things that confuse me...
I’ll take my journaling to prayer...

My Journaling may lead me to

Learn more about another faith tradition
Live deeper in a spirit of compassion
Engage in interfaith dialogue or worship
In prayer, examine my own doubts

Next Steps…
My Journal for Growth in Mission and Justice:

Is it the best kept secret in my life?
Catholic Social Teaching

Solidarity then is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. On the contrary, it is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say, to the good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all. Blessed Pope John Paul II, 1987

Dear Journal:
I have heard that Catholic Social Teaching is “the best kept secret” of the church. It’s true; I did not learn much about it when I was small. And I rarely hear it preached in the churches these days. But my mission and my congregation call me to know and implement both Catholic Social Teaching and Universal Human Rights. I need to think about:-

- I get so busy; I make excuses to avoid learning more
- The documents are a lot to read; the language is not easy
- My readiness to take more responsibility
- How to teach social rights to those in our programs
- Evaluating my ministry in light of Catholic Social Teaching
- How to make Social Teaching part of my prayer life
- How to discuss Social Teaching in my community
- Making current issues I see in the news relevant to my prayer / or making my prayer relevant to daily issues

I’ll write down areas I feel good about and some things that confuse me...
I’ll take my journaling to prayer...

My Journaling may lead me to

- Take responsibility for reading and study
- Search for Christ in those I see on the streets and in the news
- Learn how to apply human rights in my ministry
- Raise my voice in community discussion, talk about Social Teaching and Church documents

Next Steps…
My Journal for Growth in Mission and Justice:

All human beings, whatever their cultural or historical background, suffer when they are intimidated, imprisoned or tortured . . . We must, therefore, insist on a global consensus, not only on the need to respect human rights worldwide, but also on the definition of these rights . . . for it is the inherent nature of all human beings to yearn for freedom, equality and dignity, and they have an equal right to achieve that. The Dalai Lama

Dear Journal:
Sometimes I feel overwhelmed by the suffering of the world. I just don’t know what to do beyond my small work. I want to be connected to the larger world. It seems so far away; it seems so big. I still have so much to learn about Human Rights (HR). And sometimes my community is not very enthusiastic about HRs. I feel a little strange talking about them even in our ministry program. I wonder

If my Unit has taken a human rights stance on any issues in the past few years

How I can participate in helping my community be stronger in human rights

How I can bring up the subject in my ministry

If everyone even agrees about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Why we emphasize HR when we have the teachings of SME

I’ll write down areas I feel good about and some things that confuse me...
I’ll take my journaling to prayer...

My Journaling may lead me to

Re-study the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Examine my ministry for any conflicts with human rights in our practices

Ask our community to use Human Rights as a topic for a gathering; maybe we could get a specialist speaker to address us.

Read about the life of a political prisoner.

Explore some Human Rights websites, Amnesty Int., Human Rights Watch, etc.

Next Steps…
My Journal for Growth in Mission and Justice:

But is it effective?
GS NGO status

It is, then, the privileged task of the nongovernmental organizations to help bring [global concerns] into the communities and the homes of the people, and to bring back to the established agencies the priorities and aspirations of the people, so that all the solutions and projects which are envisaged be truly geared to the needs of the human person. Pope John Paul II, at the UN

Dear Journal:

Sometimes I get excited about the ideals of the United Nations... and then sometimes, I think it is all useless talk that changes nothing. I read some of the documents and feel like going to sleep. I'm not sure I always understand the goal of my congregation in being there. And I do not understand how I can participate more. I don’t even know if I understand how my Unit JPContact functions to support our mission. It is a big commitment of the congregation; I think I should understand it better. I have lots of questions I need to think about. I’ll start by thinking about

My own attitude and how it has been formed
The participation of my country at the United Nations
The participation of my Unit in the GS structures of our NGO and JP work
What I have learned about positive aspects of the UN
Aspects of the UN that need reform
Spirituality and Political processes

I’ll write down areas I feel good about and some things that confuse me...
I’ll take my journaling to prayer...

My Journaling may lead me to

Talk with my Unit JPContact person or team member
Learn more about the United Nations
Think about doing an experience with GS NGO at a UN function in either Geneva or New York
Do something in my ministry that connects to NGO work

Next Steps...
My Journal for Growth in Mission and Justice:

Why is the Sky Blue?

Essential Questioning

Learning without thought is labor lost; thought without learning is perilous.
Confucius, Chinese philosopher

The important thing is not to stop questioning. Curiosity has its own reason for existing.
Albert Einstein

Dear Journal:

Life is so busy… sometimes it seems I hardly stop to think about what I am doing, about what
We are doing, about what is happening in the world.
But still there are questions in the back of my mind…..

Are we doing the Mission as best we can?
Are we responsive to the Signs of the Times?
Have some things grown stale, in need of new Life breath?
What is our commitment to ongoing learning, evaluation, and change?
Do I take things for granted? Have I stopped questioning and growing?
Is my questioning met with criticism that stops me?
Do I take a role of leadership with my questions?

I’ll write down areas I feel good about and some things that confuse me…
I’ll take my journaling to prayer…

My Journaling may lead me to

Explore more questions within my community
Consider more effective paths for ministry and share my ideas
Collaborate more with others in new areas of ministry
Take time to be with my dreams
Volunteer to plan for Community or Unit meetings
Try out new roles or take some small steps in leadership

Next Steps…
Theological Reflection Introduction – Sacred Process, a Process of Prayer

All theological reflection shares three elements in common: experience - reflection - response.

Scripture leads my path…

…there is a place at which God and the cosmic reality are reconciled, a place at which God and humanity have become one …It lies in the midst of history as a divine miracle. It lies in Jesus Christ, the reconciler of the world.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Daily living experience lights the way…

Theological reflection is a way of doing theology that starts from the experiences of life and leads to searching in faith, for deeper meaning, for the living God.

Openness and exploration allows the Spirit to enter…

To reflect theologically opens one to the possibility of ‘knowing’ and ‘being known’ by God. It grounds one, through scripture, in an unseen reality that alters our way of ‘seeing’ and shapes our responses in life relationships. It is to be vulnerable to change - change in our feelings, our attitudes, our perceptions, and our ways of responding. In a word, Theological Reflection is about transformation - in our thinking and in our perceiving - in our being and in our doing...

Response shapes the possibility of Transformation…

From a deepened awareness of God’s presence in the experience, decisions are made for more relevant and prophetic choices in ministry. Through this critical process one is often challenged to a response of conversion of heart, mind, and action.

Community and accompaniment confirm…

Vital conversation with a community or one who guides the reflection can help with clarification, conflicts, insights and challenges, always within a belief that the Spirit is alive and growth is expansive.

Notes adapted from Sr. Kathleen McAlpin, RSM & Rev. Dr. R. Dickey

Prayer is not asking. It is a longing of the soul. It is daily admission of one's weakness. It is better in prayer to have a heart without words than words without a heart.

Mahatma Gandhi

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

The Apostle Paul

Grant that I may not pray alone with the mouth; help me that I may pray from the depths of my heart.

Martin Luther

What we plant in the soil of contemplation, we shall reap in the harvest of action.

Meister Eckhart

Grant that I may not pray alone with the mouth; help me that I may pray from the depths of my heart.

Martin Luther

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Scripture leads my path...

Consecrated and Sent
Luke 4:14-22

Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. He was teaching in their synagogues, and everyone praised him. He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight for the blind,
to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.” All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. “Isn’t this Joseph’s son?” they asked.

Read the context of the scripture before and after this passage.

Some Questions that might emerge from Scripture

What would be Good News for those I know who are in situations of poverty?

Do people speak well of me when I give preference to the poor?

What happens in later verses of the gospel? Does the crowd turn against Jesus?
What does it have to do with Jesus’ proclamation of Justice?

Where do I find myself in this story?

Are people amazed at who I am? Where I came from?

How do I proclaim God’s merciful love? To whom? Where?

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Scripture leads my path...

Cosmic inclusivity
John 1:1-3

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Christ was with God in the beginning. Through Christ all things were made; without Christ nothing was made that has been made.

Some Questions that might emerge from Scripture

What does the sacred dimension of all creation include?

How do I understand Jesus in light of new science of the universe?

Can in comprehend that the universe is 15 billion years old and the earth is 5 billion years old?

How do I envision a Christ for all time for the entire universe?

Are there challenges to my past understanding of the Jesus story?

Are there challenges to my understanding of truth residing in other religions?

Are there challenges to my identity as a catholic?

Do I read theologians who will expand and challenge my faith?

Will I struggle with new understandings that can help move to inclusive unity of all?

Am I open to transformation?

What good is it to me that Mary gave birth to the son of God fourteen hundred years ago, and I do not also give birth to the Son of God in my time and in my culture?
We are all meant to be mothers of God.
God always needs to be born.
Meister Eckhart

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Scripture leads my path...

Preferential Option of the Poor
Matthew 25:40

...whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.

Some Questions that might emerge from Scripture

Do I understand the church’s call for a preferential option for the poor?

Have I read and prayed with the documents that make this call?

Do I avoid the materially poor by clinging to concepts of the poor in spirit?

Do I have an institutional mentality?

Have I thought about Solidarity lately?

Have I had real experiences that teach me that “the poor are the privileged carriers of God, the principal heirs of the Kingdom…” Pope John Paul II

How do I “respond to the anguish of the world….to the margins where God is waiting for us…”?

GS Direction statement 2009

Do I work to change the structures and system that keep humanity in conditions of poverty, even as I am willing to accompany them in their reality?

Does my encounter with the poor urge me to deeper contemplation?

Do I fear the demands of deeper encounter? Do I fear the demands of discipleship?

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Scripture leads my path...

Zeal

John 2:15 & Psalm 69: 9

Jesus’ disciples remembered that it is written: “Zeal for your house will consume me.”

I have become a stranger to my brothers, an alien to my mother’s sons
For zeal for your house has consumed me, and reproach has fallen on me.

Some Questions that might emerge from Scripture

What does the word zeal mean to me?

When do I feel most ready to give all? When do I resist?

Are my actions bold? Is my confidence strong?

What is the “house” of Jesus’ zeal in the gospel?

Do I feel the way the psalmist does when I think of zeal?

What help do I have to walk the pathway of zeal?

Take, Lord, receive all my liberty,
my memory, my understanding,
my entire will ...all I have and call my own.

You have given all to me.
To you, Lord, I return it.

Everything is yours;
do with it what you will.
Give me only your love and your grace. That is enough for me.

St. Ignatius of Loyola

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Scripture leads my path...

Inclusive Love in words and action

*John 15: 15 & St Paul, Galatians 3:28*

I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know the master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.

There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Some Questions that might emerge from Scripture

*Am I as careful as Jesus and St Paul to avoid labels and speak inclusively?*

*Does my language keep my God-image to male only?*

*How do I refer to those with who I am in ministry? Does any of my language separate or exclude?*

*The same question as above can be asked about co-workers and community members...*

*How do I promote the full freedom of others?*

*How do I distinguish who is servant or who is friend to me? Do I give preference to some and tend to ignore others?*

*Can I really hear Jesus speaking these words to me, to be friend?*

*Have I examined issues such as Racism? Xenophobia? Homophobia? Misogyny?*

*Love is the affinity which links and draws together the elements of the world...*

*Love, in fact, is the agent of universal synthesis.*  

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

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Scripture leads my path...

Internationality and Global Networking
Mark 15:12-16

Afterward, Jesus appeared in a different form to two of them while they were walking in the country. These returned and reported it to the rest; but they did not believe them either. Later Jesus appeared to the Eleven as they were eating; he rebuked them for their lack of faith and their stubborn refusal to believe those who had seen him after he had risen. He said to them, “Go into all the world and tell the good news to all creation.”

Some Questions that might emerge from Scripture

What is my experience of international mission in GS?
Have I really experienced the resurrection of Jesus?
Does Jesus have reason to rebuke me for my stubbornness?
What is my understanding of networking in mission?
What responsibility have I taken to network in my mission?
Do I understand networking in a spiritual context of the mission and the resurrection?

How do I live internationality in my daily experience? How do I support the internationality of the congregation?

Have I improved my communication skills? Language skills? Technology skills? Do I use them?

Do I form real partnerships with co-workers, volunteers and others who share GS mission?

Do I share my experience of encounter with God (trust my own experience) in whatever country I am? Do I tell good news to all?

The Holy Spirit gives us joy...
The missionary spirit of the Church is none other than the impulse to communicate the joy which has been given.

Other questions may emerge from the heart of your prayer:
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Scripture leads my path...

Interfaith

John 4:7-10 & 19-25

When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, “Will you give me a drink?” (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to him, “You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?” (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.” “Sir,” the woman said, “I can see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.” “Woman,” Jesus replied, “believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and God’s worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.” The woman said, “I know that the Messiah (called Christ) is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.”

Some Questions that might emerge from Scripture

How do I understand that God is ONE, indivisible?

Do I know the history of the Abrahamic faiths and other world religions? And the social context of each today?

Do I invite listening to the beliefs of others, do they have some living water for me?

Do I want to convince others that I (or my church) hold the final truth?

What do I think about the idea of the covenant of God as living within a mystery, slowly revealed?

How do I deal with my church when they seem to demean the beliefs of others?

In what ways do I “promote and engage in inter-faith dialogue in response to the international climate of intolerance and exclusion of minorities and immigrants”? (GS Chapter 2009)

Do I allow my actions to speak for the truths I believe?

Am I ready to accept hearing the truth of God from unlikely sources?

In what ways am I Jesus at the well? In what ways am I a Samaritan woman?

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Scripture leads my path...

Challenge to System and Structures

Luke 11 37-44 & 52-54

When Jesus had finished speaking, a Pharisee invited him to eat with him; so he went in and reclined at the table. But the Pharisee was surprised when he noticed that Jesus did not first wash before the meal. Then the Lord said to him, “Now then, you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness. You foolish people! Did not the one who made the outside make the inside also? But now as for what is inside you—be generous to the poor, and everything will be clean for you. “Woe to you Pharisees, because you give God a tenth of your mint, rue and all other kinds of garden herbs, but you neglect justice and the love of God. You should have practiced the latter without leaving the former undone. “Woe to you Pharisees, because you love the most important seats in the synagogues and respectful greetings in the marketplaces. “Woe to you, because you are like unmarked graves, which people walk over without knowing it.” “Woe to you experts in the law, because you have taken away the key to knowledge. You yourselves have not entered, and you have hindered those who were entering.” When Jesus went outside, the Pharisees and the teachers of the law began to oppose him fiercely and to besiege him with questions, waiting to catch him in something he might say.

Some Questions that might emerge from Scripture

Are there rituals in my life that have become rigid, have lost their Spirit and now serve no purpose?

Are there rituals in my community, in my congregation, in my church, that have become rigid, have lost their Spirit and now serve no purpose?

How do I evaluate Systems and Structures that look good on the outside but are neglectful of Justice? In my life... in my community... in my ministry... in my church... in society?

What do I do to confront such systems or structures? Is Jesus my model?

Have I taken seriously the GS Chapter direction to “confront unjust systems” (2009)

What consequences might there be to “shattering the glass”?

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Scripture leads my path...

Transformation

Matt: 17: 1-9

After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus.

Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters - one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.”

While he was still speaking, a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!”

When the disciples heard this, they fell facedown to the ground, terrified. But Jesus came and touched them. “Get up,” he said. “Don’t be afraid.” When they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus.

As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus instructed them, “Don’t tell anyone what you have seen, until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.”

Some Questions that might emerge from Scripture

What mountaintop experiences have I had?

Am I open to the voices of transformation from prophets and from God?

What did the disciples really hear and see? What was Jesus doing?

Did the disciples ever see things the same again? What about back in “daily life”, daily routine?

What things am I afraid of? Do I believe what I have seen?

As I seek to live mission more fully, am I engaged with my community in “fostering a deepening of our spirituality and a new consciousness of our identity as Good Shepherd which enlivens prayer, community life, ministries” (2009)

How do I share my insights with co-workers and partners?

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Scripture leads my path...

Prophecy, Public witness
Acts 1:8

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

Some Questions that might emerge from Scripture

Have I taken the challenge of discipleship to be a prophet for God?

What does discipleship require of me?

Do I witness publically when I see situations of exclusion?

When have I last spoken the truth in love?

Have I involved myself in the political issues that are around me?

Am I willing to “go against the grain” for the sake of the mission, to be part of creating a world of dignity and inclusion?

Do I share my opinions with others, even if I feel very alone?

Am I open to the promptings of the Spirit?

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Scripture leads my path...

**Signs of the Times of my life: Migration, Trafficking, Violence**

*Matt. 16:2-3*

Jesus replied, “When evening comes, you say, ‘It will be fair weather, for the sky is red, and in the morning, ‘Today it will be stormy, for the sky is red and overcast.’ You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times.

Some Questions that might emerge from Scripture

*In my ministry am I “reading” correctly the signs that I see?*

*How am I learning about the GS priority areas of migration, trafficking, the prostitution of women, & the situation of the girl child?*

*Who do I seek out to help me review my judgments and my evaluations?*

*Am I progressing in my professional education?*

*Do I know how to interpret the signs of my times? What do I do when I am confused?*

*How do I understand the violence across the world?*

*Do I seek out positive signs: peace movement, women movement, and youth searching for meaning, or Nation-states coming together at the UN?*

*How do I prepare for stormy weather or for fair weather in my mission?*

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Scripture leads my path...

Forgiveness - inclusive justice

Luke 24: 36-4

While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.” They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. He said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds?” Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have.” When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, “Do you have anything here to eat?” They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate it in their presence. He said to them, “This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.” Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, “This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.”

Some Questions that might emerge from Scripture

When have I needed forgiveness? What was my experience?

Why does the gospel, Jesus’ words, interweave justice, resurrection, forgiveness, inclusion, and peace so closely?

Do I witness to forgiveness in ways similar to Jesus’ instruction to the disciples?

What did this mean to the early Christians in their social reality?

What can it mean in my situation?

Do I understand the depth of forgiveness required by justice? Who are models of forgiveness that I can look to?

How do I extend forgiveness in my ministry when I want to teach about better behavior?

Do I have a difficult time extending forgiveness in my community?

What about those who politically seem to be on the side of violence and division... how do I extend forgiveness?

What is the prayer and work I need to do in order to live the peace of forgiveness more deeply and bring it into my ministry?

Other questions may emerge from the heart of your prayer: