

PORTRAIT OF A RADICAL: *The Jesus Movement*



A Three Session Series (*with a Preview Session*)

“We can only take the great truths in little doses...the big truths are simply too much for the psyche at any one moment.” Richard Rohr, OFM

Objective

This series, based on the video, **Portrait of a Radical: *The Jesus Movement***, is designed for small groups to explore and share their understanding and experience of Jesus. This series may be incorporated at any time during the year. However, it works well during a liturgical season like Lent.

Format

This series (with a preview session) is divided into three 90-minute Sessions, which include:

1. Theme
2. Opening Prayer
3. Video Segment Overview
4. Viewing
5. Sharing
6. Closing Prayer

Preview Session

Invite a small group of people to a preview viewing of the video. Follow the recommended 90 minute format, using the enclosed Facilitator Instruction as a guide. If the group is interested in exploring the video at a deeper level, offer the three session series.

Opening and Closing Prayer

Jesus, our Teacher, guide our minds as we try to understand you.

Jesus, our Healer, soften those places of hurt and fear that still keep us bound.

Jesus, our Savior, liberate us from the entrapments of our culture and our personality.

Jesus, our Prophet, move us into larger and more truthful worlds.

Jesus, our Lord, unite our scattered loyalties under one great Love.

Jesus, our Lover, help us to do it all with passion and joy.

Amen

Journey Work

Journey Work is a gift that you give yourself to deepen your spiritual journey.

Following each of the three sessions, you will be presented with an opportunity to step out of your comfort zone and explore new ways of experiencing the meaning of “faith.” These examples we offer, however, allow the Spirit to guide you as you enter into the process.



Viewing

Begin video Segment II with Matthew 7:1 and end at beginning of Matthew 16:15 (Time—21:16).

Questions for Sharing

- ⇒ Describe a time of solitude that led to some personal transformation. What was your experience?
- ⇒ Can you describe a time, in your life, when you were transformed by a devastating or humiliating experience?

Closing Prayer

Invite six members of the group to read one line each of the Closing Prayer.

Mid-Point Evaluation *(see facilitator instructions)*

Facilitator evaluation form to be completed by group members.



Journey Work

Take the opportunity to create a desert experience for yourself. Seek out a place where you can leave behind “business as usual” and spend time in prayer and silence.

SESSION 111

Theme

Jesus is seen as a revolutionary by the Roman State and is condemned to death.

Opening Prayer

Invite one member of the group to read the Opening Prayer aloud.

Video Segment Overview

In this final reflection, we begin with the mystery of Jesus, the one man “who got it right.” Jesus shows us the “Quintessential Human Being.” He speaks what He knows and lives and dies for—what He stands for. His life and words keep our religious tradition honest, for He is the Touchstone of authenticity.” If religion is about what it means to be truly human, as Jesus teaches us, rather than about how “to get to heaven,” our world would certainly be a different place. Our best evaluation of our humanity is our own life experience. We can never be sure that we “get it right.” To carry the burden of our own experience is to carry our cross—to experience the mystery of life, and to live in faith. Jesus came to teach faith.

Viewing

Begin video Segment III with Matthew 16:1 and view through completion (Time—5:45).

Questions for Sharing

- ⇒ Jesus is referred to, in the video, as the “Quintessential Human Being.” What does it mean for *you* to be fully human?
- ⇒ In the video we hear, “religion is common...faith is rare...” Share an encounter you have had with someone you believe to be living a life of faith. How has this person inspired you?

Closing Prayer

Invite six members of the group to read one line each of the Closing Prayer.

Final Evaluation *(see facilitator instructions)*

Evaluation form to be completed by all group members.



Journey Work

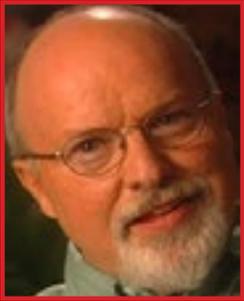
When you feel that “the burden of [your] own experience” seems too heavy to bear, use this as an opportunity to *pray for someone else* who is experiencing suffering.





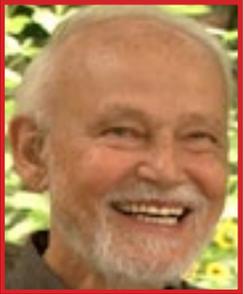
Allen Dwight Callahan

Reverend Dr. Allen Callahan is Associate Professor of New Testament at Harvard Divinity School and an ordained Baptist Minister. A native of Philadelphia, Professor Callahan has taught theology at Boston College and the language and literature of the New Testament at Holy Cross College, Andover-Newton Theological School. Dr. Callahan was most recently seen on Frontline's four part series which appeared on PBS; From Jesus to Christ - The First Christians. His most recently published work is titled *Embassy of Onesimus*.



Richard Rohr, OFM

Fr. Richard Rohr is a globally recognized ecumenical teacher bearing witness to the universal awakening within Christian mysticism and the Perennial Tradition. He is a Franciscan priest of the New Mexico Province and founder of the Center for Action and Contemplation in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Fr. Richard's teaching is grounded in the Franciscan alternative orthodoxy—practices of contemplation and lived *kenosis* (self-emptying), expressing itself in radical compassion, particularly for the socially marginalized.



Houston Smith

Houston Smith is a Thomas J. Watson Professor of Religion and distinguished Adjunct Professor of Philosophy, Emeritus, Syracuse University. Houston Smith is considered the leading scholar on world religious studies. His breakthrough book, *The World's Religions*, forever changed the West's perception of the world's religious landscape. The Bill Moyers' six part series, *The Wisdom of Faith*, which aired on PBS, introduced Houston Smith to an ever wider audience and the response was powerful.

Biographical excerpts used by permission of DJ Kadagian, Four Seasons Productions.

THE CENTER FOR ACTION AND CONTEMPLATION

Located in Albuquerque, New Mexico, the Center for Action and Contemplation (CAC) is the home of the Rohr Institute and its Living School for Action and Contemplation. The CAC's administrative offices and Bookstore have served people internationally for over 25 years, supporting the world-renowned ecumenical ministry of Richard Rohr, OFM. As founder of the CAC and Academic Dean of the Living School, Fr. Richard's teachings form the basis of the organization's vision and on-going work.



PO Box 12464 Albuquerque, NM 87195 • Main 505.242.9588 • Bookstore 505.247.1636

We seek to empower individuals to live out their sacred soul tasks in service to the world through educational programs and resources. - www.cac.org



Theme

We learn about the sociopolitical structure of Palestine in the year 30 AD, and the arrival of Jesus.

Opening Prayer

Invite one member of the group to read the Opening Prayer aloud.

Video Segment Overview

In this first segment of the video, we are given a description of the context into which Jesus enter history: Palestine, in the year 30 AD, is described as a “period of great tension—a period of flux,” and the Romans are in control. The ancestral regions of Israel are divided up, and “the people,” who are no longer being represented by the priestly establishment, “are desperately looking for a way out,” Jesus, a charismatic and compassionate man of the people, invites them to experience a new way of lived reality. Because He identifies with them—is one of them—He attracts great crowds of followers. Drawn to him are the socially undesirable and the marginal —particularly the women. Jesus does not defer to the authorities, but speaks with authority—individuating His followers along the way.

Viewing

View video from onset, ending Segment I at the beginning of Matthew 7:14 (Time—23:39).

Questions for Sharing

- ⇒ What is it about Jesus, in this video, that captivates you?
- ⇒ Do you see a connection with Palestine, in the year 30 AD, and the sociopolitical condition of this century? If so, how do you recognize Jesus as present in the midst of it?

Closing Prayer

Invite six members of the group to read one line each of the Closing Prayer.

**Journey Work**

Jesus had great compassion for those who were “undesirable and marginal.” Find a service organization in your community that embraces the message of the Gospel, and offer your time as a volunteer.

Theme

The spiritual journey begins by letting go. Jesus teaches us not to be afraid.

Opening Prayer

Invite one member of the group to read the Opening Prayer aloud.

Video Segment Overview

Israel has a history of people coming from and going to the desert—Moses, John the Baptist, Jesus. The desert represents a place of solitude and under-stimulation—a liminal space—a place of transformation. Jesus goes to the desert, leaving behind the world of “business as usual,” and comes back with the message that He is a beloved son. He invites us to follow Him and tells us not to be afraid. He assures us that God’s love and care is very real. For Jesus, religion is not a system of requirements, nor is it about reward and punishment—it is about relationship. Jesus’ impact on the people was profound. “Lives were being changed because of what He did and said.” However, His language was viewed as a threat by those in positions of authority and “His outburst in the Temple” confirmed this. The Romans viewed Jesus as subversive. He was speaking of a kingdom separate from theirs, so “He had to go.” Jesus was condemned to the brutal, terrorizing death imposed on those who were a threat to the Roman State—death on a cross. His humiliating death was, for the people, a devastating conclusion to what had been a hopeful start. “In the Resurrection of Jesus,” the people experienced a person “who was realizing [their] aspirations.” Through both the crucifixion and resurrection, Jesus becomes the sign of hope.

