

## Possibilities to Include in Franciscan Justice Circle Group Guidelines

Having an agreed upon set of guidelines allows for all current and future members of an FJC to understand the expectations for themselves and each other. In order to foster ownership of your Circle's guidelines, it's recommended that you set time aside at the beginning of the process to allow all members to give their input and reach an agreement on what the group's guidelines will be. After the initial guidelines for your Circle are set, they should be reviewed by everyone whenever a new member joins the Circle. Here are some possibilities and ideas:

- Treat each other with respect in all forms of communication and in all actions. Listen respectfully, even when the other's point of view is different from your own or uncomfortable. Interruptions and side conversations are not permitted.
- Always be honest and open with the other Circle members.
- When not understanding another member's perspective or disagreeing with it, try to look for clarification or greater understanding in a loving way.
- Confidentiality: What is shared in the group remains there, unless the members agree that it can be shared outside.
- Acknowledge and respectfully accept the differences that we have as individual persons.
- Each person is expected to participate and shares a responsibility for the group's experience.
- During a moment of reflection or in the time between Circle members sharing, allow for silence.
- Give each person the opportunity to speak. In a time of sharing or dialogue, before speaking a second time, members will wait until those who have not spoken and would like to speak are given the chance.

Questions to ask:

- How will the group make decisions? Keep in mind that the goal is to build consensus whenever possible, or in other words, that all Circle members agree to commit to finding solutions that everyone supports or at least can live with.
- How will the group handle conflict, should it arise?
- Who will (co)facilitate the gatherings? Will you rotate?
- How long will the (Co)Facilitator and Spiritual Servant serve in their roles? How will new people be chosen to fill those roles?
- What are the attendance expectations? What does one do if they cannot attend?
- What is the cell phone policy?
- How is it decided who speaks next?
- How will logistical questions re: meeting time & possible refreshments be decided?

