



College Meeting 1: Orientation

1. OPENING PRAYER:

- a. *"What we would like to do is change the world--make it a little simpler for people to feed, clothe, and shelter themselves as God intended them to do. And, by fighting for better conditions, by crying out unceasingly for the rights of the workers, the poor, of the destitute--the rights of the worthy and the unworthy poor, in other words--we can, to a certain extent, change the world; we can work for the oasis, the little cell of joy and peace in a harried world. We can throw our pebble in the pond and be confident that its ever widening circle will reach around the world. We repeat, there is nothing we can do but love, and, dear God, please enlarge our hearts to love each other, to love our neighbor, to love our enemy as our friend." - Dorothy Day, The Long Loneliness*

2. ICE BREAKERS, INTROS, AND HELLOS

3. INTRODUCTION TO BETHLEHEM FARM

- a. Read ***Bethlehem Farm Mission Statement:***
Bethlehem Farm is a Catholic community in Appalachia that transforms lives through service with the local community and the teaching of sustainable practices. We invite volunteers to join us in living the gospel cornerstones of prayer, community, service, and simplicity.
- b. Review Mission and Vision document from the website as a group.
- c. Review Introduction to Bethlehem Farm document from the website as a group.

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4. WHY ARE WE HERE?

- a. Have group members pair off and talk with a partner about.
 - i. Which aspects of Bethlehem Farm excite you?
 - ii. Which aspects of Bethlehem Farm sound challenging to you?
 - iii. Why did you choose to go on this service week, and why did you choose Bethlehem Farm in particular?
- b. Have them then return to the large group and share highlights from their conversations with the whole community.
- c. Group leaders then share their perspective on why the group is here – why did the leaders organize this trip in the first place? Why do the leaders think a trip like this is important?

5. WHY THESE KINDS OF TRIPS IN GENERAL? – read [Dean Brackley article](#) and discuss in large group

- a. What does he mean by letting the poor break your heart?
 - i. *The key here is making sure that groups don't interpret "letting the poor break your heart" as pity. Brackley uses a broken heart analogy to describe the experience of being broken open, having your borders and assumptions shatter, and allowing yourself to be reformed in light of the experience in front of you. Much like the JVC motto of being "ruined for life", Brackley describes a decentering encounter with poverty and those experiencing it which forever alters your perspective. Having had this experience, you can't unlearn it or go back to the way things were before this experience – therefore, the challenge becomes, what are you called to do in light of this experience? How are you transformed by your encounter with those in poverty?*
- b. Have you ever had a broken heart experience?
- c. In this excerpt Brackley seems to imply that the purpose of a Catholic University (or a Catholic group within a university) is to educate and work for justice. Do you buy this? Why or Why not?
- d. What is your school educating you for? Is there unity or a discrepancy between what your school is preparing you for and what you believe they should be preparing you for?
- e. What would it mean for your school to radically embrace this mission of leveraging education in support of justice? How would this look on a daily basis, in your classes, on campus, etc?
- f. Does this article impact the way you think about being a student on a service trip like this? Does it add to/change/take away from your response to "why are you here" in any way?
 - i. Report back to group, and as a large group come up with three values you'd like to represent while participating in this experience

6. CLOSING PRAYER

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