



The Rev. Lisa C. Flores
2011 Tapestry Conference
February 5, 2011

A few years ago the youth group at St. Peter's Fernandina Beach, FL created stoles for the clergy to wear on youth Sunday. Expertly sewn and exquisitely detailed the stole and the matching frontal depicted our Gospel reading from today. It was a light blue stole that had a number of different materials and textures to represent the Sea of Galilee, a boat, and the sun. The words "follow me" were ironed on in a vertical pattern along one side. Being newly ordained, I was excited to add a stole to my vestment collection and was so impressed with the skill in which it was made that I missed the meaning behind one of the symbols in the artwork.

Fast forward a few years and I pull this stole out to use in a children's sermon at Christ Church Grosse Pointe. I am kneeling on the nave floor so that the children can see up close and touch the stole and give their interpretation of the scene depicted. One little boy said that the sun was rising because it was only part way out of the water. Brilliant! I took the stole off and looked at it with new eyes and a new interpretation. I asked why is the sun rising? And our young scholar said, "well, because you fish in the morning as the sun comes up."

I am sure you all can imagine the joy that I felt as this was being played out during the service. What validation for the work we do!

I have to admit that I love both of our scripture selections for this morning. Obviously, they were chosen to reflect the theme of our Tapestry Conference, but lend to us even more than that. It is the ultimate combination of what it means to be called and to follow. As ministers in the Church, both lay and ordained, we all have a story of how we were called by God. And it is in each of our stories that we find richness, grace, and most importantly the Holy Spirit.

Over the last few days, I have had the opportunity to listen to a few of your stories and to share my own. I am constantly amazed by the strength of character we exhibit through the process of call. I say strength of character because once we are called it is not up to us if we can live into that call. We have to sit among discernment committees, vestries, and clergy to prove that this call is valid. To put words to something that has so much of an emotional and physical response that words often can't really do justice. I also say strength of character because our call is ongoing. As Christian Formation people, you know that we are constantly being formed and the experiences we have shape and mold us. But what makes this so amazing, what makes us so amazing is that we embrace this change and grow not only in our personal faith, but we grow the kingdom of God.

We can be called. We can discern. We can ask all the right questions and get most of the answers, but we never fully understand what we are getting ourselves into when we are called by God. We have to step out fully embraced by our faith.

Paul writes in Ephesians, "Each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift. The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some

The Rev. Lisa C. Flores
Church of the Holy Communion
4645 Walnut Grove Rd, Memphis TN 38117

lflores@holychommunion.org
901-767-6987 ext 31



pastors and teachers.” This is who we are called to be! This is our calling! This is the grace that I find in each of our stories. I love how Paul writes according to the measure of Christ’s gift. Christ’s gift is 100%! This means we all, every single one of us is an apostle, a prophet, an evangelist, a pastor and teacher. Each one of these gifts is present in who we are and is manifested when God calls upon us.

These gifts of grace equip the saints for the work of ministry. Brothers and sisters, you are the saints that labor day and night for this Church. Your gift is 100%. Our theme this week was Equipping the Saints for Ministry. I hope we did just that. I hope that the time you spent here listening to Sheryl inspired you to live your life to the fullest and embrace the you that God created. I hope the time you spent in workshops gave you knowledge and ideas for growing your ministry. I hope the time you spent with friends, both new and old, refreshed your soul. And I hope when you return home and are living out your call you remember that you are a saint, grace filled with the gifts for ministry. Amen.