

Subject: What About You?
From: "St. Francis Episcopal Church" <vicar@stfrancisva.org>
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S  Francis



March 9, 2016

What About You?

*Now there are a variety of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but the same God who empowers them all in everyone.
I Corinthians 12:4-6*

Gift Colonization

This is a very familiar passage from Morning Prayer this morning. It raises some thoughts for me. Have you ever come across a local church which for the most part is organized around one ministry? For example, a church may be committed deeply to social justice because of the prophetic gifting of the leader. Or, a church may be committed to a varied, rich program of Christian education because of the teaching gift of the leader. Or, a church may be almost completely focused on the pastoral needs and concerns of the members because of the pastoral gifting of the leader. You are probably able to think of other examples. What can happen is the ministry of the whole local fellowship is organized to support and mirror the gifting of the leader. I call this gift colonization. There really is not anything morally wrong or inherently sinful about that kind of situation. But, I have to openly admit it does bother me.

As the Spirit Wills

What bothers me is that the Spirit of God gifts all Christians. Everyone has an essential, significant part in the Christian life. Everyone counts. As John Wimber used to say, "Everyone gets to play." God has given each and everyone varied, beautiful gifts. The role and responsibility of the church is to provide the ways for those gifts to be employed, manifested, put to use, and made powerful. It is the primary role and responsibility of church leaders to equip people for the use of any and all of the gifts God gives to them. Such work is a part of carrying out the disciple-making task Jesus calls us to do.

Just to be clear- it is not the primary role and responsibility of church leaders to save the church from decline, come up with new ideas, or launch new programs, etc. It is the primary role and responsibility of church leaders to equip, build up, encourage, train, cheerlead, release, and guide everyone in the ministry God has called and gifted each person to do.

A Suggestion

Instead of asking your church leader (pastor, vicar, rector, preacher) what you can do to help the church or your leader's ministry, why not ask a question like this, "would you help me carry out my gifting, ministry, or calling better?". Maybe you need to ask a more basic question, "Would you

help me find the ministry, gifting, or calling God has for me?". To know and pursue your calling using the gifts God gives you may actually cause your church to grow. Who knows, maybe the leader of your church has been praying to be asked questions like that.

Coming Attractions

Wednesday, March 9, 2016

4:00pm Vestry Committee

6:30pm Theology on Tap contact Richard Walker at
richardandhedy@yahoo.com

7:00pm Caregivers' Support group contact Susan Kidd at
sokidd@comcast.com

Sunday, March 13, 2016 Worship at 10:00am followed by pot luck

Please bring nonperishable food to worship to be given to the Food Pantry of the Goochland Free Clininc and Family Services.

Holy Week and Easter

Sunday March 20, 2016 worship at 10:00am with the Aspire Dance Academy visiting.

Thursday, March 24 Maundy Thursday service at 6:15pm

Friday, March 25, 2016 Good Friday service at 6:15pm

Sunday, March 27, 2016 Easter morning worship at 10:00am

Sunday, March 27, 2016 Symphony will meet at Symphony Manor at 9:00am. Contact Bobbie Levines at bobbiedrew@yahoo.com

Centerville Circle of Prayer

Paramount Builders that business would increase and many would benefit from the construction work done by this company.

Diocese of Virginia

For all the baptized in thier daily life and work.

Metropolitan Richmond

For Goochland County Public Schools, Dr. James Lane, Superintendent, that students would excel in their studies, teachers would be supported in teaching, and graduates would continue in college or in vocations that increase the common good in or communities.

Grace and Peace,

John Maher

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