

Lent 3: Episcopal Relief & Development Sermon Notes

Exodus 3:1-15

Like Moses, we are busy with our work. We have families to feed, worship services to plan, work obligations, children to raise, parents to visit, school to attend. Our lives are filled with lists and tasks. How else can we get through our days and weeks? We glance over the headlines of news of disaster around the world and either tune it out or feel so overwhelmed we turn away.

Moses had been raised in the center of power of his day and attempted to do something about the abuses he observed. His one attempt was such a failure that he was probably glad to run away, find a wife, settle down and tend the flocks of his father-in-law. The anger at the injustice he had seen was damped down to embers, only a small flame in his heart. He arose each day, made his perfunctory prayers, and went out to watch over the sheep. He was busy with the work of assuring they were well fed, had water and did not fall into danger of wild beast or wilderness. Yet, maybe there was a moment in the silence of the mountains or the soft noises of the contented herds eating their way across the hillside—a moment in the day of work that did not consume all of his mind, heart and soul. Perhaps in that space, the wind of the Spirit, the I AM, who sees all the pain and suffering and oppression of the world, whispered a word. Suddenly the flames flared up and Moses heard what God hears and saw what God sees. The little spark remaining of Moses' experience flared into a compelling call to join God in making space for all people to leave their slavery and find a promised land.

As it was for Moses, so it is for us. We have busy lives and we have the call of God on our hearts to love our neighbors as ourselves, to bring hope and healing into the lives of our brothers and sisters. Often, it is not possible for us to go to where there is the greatest need. An answer to our quandary is to give to Episcopal Relief & Development. The money we earn through our work can be given to work miracles for others—our blessings can be shared through a network that has earned high praise for using one of the highest percentages of gifts for actual relief and development.

We have a chance to join this call of God to make space for the grace of health and well-being. Our concern for our neighbors around the world does not have to overwhelm us. It can be acted out in conjunction with others in small ways that can make huge differences: for those who have suffered from disasters, or who need a way to begin a small business to support their families, or whose health is endangered from lack of resources or even a simple mosquito net.

The Rev. Ann Fontaine is a priest in the Diocese of Wyoming and author of [*Streams of Mercy*](#), a meditative commentary on the Bible.

<http://www.authorhouse.com/BookStore/ItemDetail.aspx?bookid=33893>