

Lay Ministry Testimony

Jennifer Riestenberg

10/28/18

Hello!

My name is Jennifer Riestenberg, and I've been a member of Corpus Christi for about 2 years. Although I can hardly believe I've been here that long (the time has flown by) in those two years I've seen the many rewards of being an active member, or a steward, of this spiritual community.

When I first came to a Mass service here, I was completely new to the area. I had grown up in northern Minnesota and had been working in small towns for many years, so when I moved to Roseville for school, I had no connections outside my colleagues and classmates. With such welcoming members and a vibrant atmosphere, I was drawn to this parish. I felt that this is a place where I can belong, and I am grateful for the opportunity to be a part of it, especially as a part of the music ministry.

For nearly all of the two years I've been coming here, I've been singing with the choir and musicians. While I admit that I initially joined just because I like singing, I've come to understand more deeply what it means to share my joy of music with others. After a period of time singing with the choir, I was asked during practice if I would cantor the responsorial psalm for Mass. This was something I was unsure about. I'm not one to enjoy being in the spotlight, and I hadn't done much cantoring in the past. However, I learned to trust in the gifts I've been given and to trust that this is how I should use them.

I began tentatively but singing out the words of each psalm and hearing the words of the gospel in song helped me realize that it's all about the message. With each psalm, I became less concerned with my level of skill and more tuned-in to what it was telling me and, consequently, what I was sharing with those listening. The gift of music has the capacity to not only bring joy to others, but also reiterate what we learn from the sacred text. In short, I don't sing for myself, but for the sake of others. Realizing this effect of my gift, I found I was able to give up my uncertainty and trust in God's purpose for me. I trust that I have my abilities for a reason, and that God's will, will carry me through any challenging situation.

And so, I've found the place where my gift best fits, but I know I have other gifts as well. I will continue to discern where I may use them, always trusting that God has a purpose for them. I invite you to do the same. Whether you feel uncertainty or unfamiliarity with participating in a ministry, I encourage you to discern what gifts God has given you. Trust in those gifts and trust what together we can do with them.

Thank You