

**Bishop Lee's Charge to the Assembly**

**September 20, 2008**

**Millennium Development Goals Summit, St. Edmund' Episcopal Church, Chicago**

What can one person do? Each of us I suspect has asked ourselves what difference our prayers, our voice, our check, our feet and our hands can make in the face of such overwhelming needs of our global community. The disciples from time to time also questioned whether Jesus was taking on too much, reaching too far beyond what seemed prudent and manageable. But Jesus consistently demonstrated that God's love works exponentially through the willingness of one person to profess faith, whether it be a tax collector, a paralytic, a woman bleeding, a Samaritan, or an obstinate fisherman. An undefended heart and ready hands can work wonders. Jesus said "Follow me." And nets were set aside to cast a wider net. He told the crowd "Do not fear, only believe." And a little girl awoke from death. Twelve apostles ultimately opened their hearts and changed the world. We too are called to this work—one person, one congregation, one diocese, one church—of restoring all creation to unity with God in Christ.

What can one person do? Buy a net through NetsforLife. For \$12 your net can save a family from mosquito borne malaria. If each person in our diocese answers my challenge and buys a net then we will have provided 42,000 nets to save families at risk in sub-Saharan Africa. And more: Urge our government to fund and act on hunger, AIDS/HIV, education and health programs; support the work of Episcopal Relief and Development, and other groups working on the MDGs—Bread for the World, Care and Oxfam; bring what you learned here today back to your church and community, and enlist their support; pray, fast, and advocate on September 25; and sign the ONE campaign declaration, committing ourselves to working for a better and safer world, one person, one voice, one vote at a time.

What can one person do? Everything. Christ calls us to take up the cross and follow him to serve a hurting world, a world crying for help. What do we say? Yes, with God' help, we will.