

## TERESA FOLLAND



As we continue [#speakout2016](#) launched by @DioTruro today we hear Teresa Folland answering “Why am I a Christian?” Teresa joined St Martin’s Church as the Family Pastoral Worker in 2009. This year she leaves St Martin’s as she starts a new journey towards ordination.

“Why am I a follower of Christ? Well I think it has more to do with Jesus than it has anything to do with me. I had a privileged upbringing, not in a worldly sense, my dad was in and out of work due to poor health and mum helped to make ends meet by cleaning, piecework and selling home-grown fruit. My privilege was that I was loved, and knowing you are loved is a great foundation on which to build your life.

I had the privilege of being taught about the love of God from an early age through Sunday School and Girls’ Brigade whose motto is to seek, serve and follow Christ. I learnt that God sent his Son Jesus who lived an amazing life. He was humble, did good things, made people whole, stood up to the authorities, enabled the marginalised and he showed us, by example, how we could best live our lives by living within the will of God the Father; he even suffered a slow, painful death because he loved you and me.

Inspiring though all this is, at 13 I found it impossible to live up to; how could I with all my faults and self-centeredness dare to call myself a Christian? Surely God wouldn’t even want to be associated with the likes of me. But as I said, it’s more to do with Jesus than me.

At 16, I discovered grace, that’s a freely given gift to the undeserving. Through his death and resurrection Jesus had done it all. It’s not about how good I am or ever will be; it’s about a willingness to seek, serve and follow Christ.

I became a follower. In response to his love for me, I serve him; and in seeking, I discover more and more of his love.”