



# UNPACKING & DISPLAYING THE STOLES

## UNPACKING

- STEP 1** Open the carton carefully! A knife or razor can damage the contents. The stoles have been insured. If you find any damage inside the carton, contact FedEx immediately!
- STEP 2** As you unpack the stoles, find the inventory number on the back of each and check it off on the Exhibit Inventory. If any stoles are missing, contact the Project.
- STEP 3** Stoles that have raised fabric paint or glitter paint on them have been shipped with plastic liners between the layers. Save these liners for repacking.

## DISPLAYING

**TAKE CARE!** Please take the greatest care in displaying this collection. A number of these stoles are the ones that were given to individuals on the day that they were ordained. Many are handmade, and some have been given as memorials for friends or loved ones who have passed on. People's hearts and souls are wrapped up in these stoles; for many reasons they are irreplaceable. Treat them with all the care and respect that you would give the persons who first wore them!

**BEFORE YOU BEGIN** Give yourself plenty of time to set up the display, and if you have a large number of stoles, gather a group of volunteers to assist you. We recommend at least five or six volunteers if you have 100 stoles or more. We have received very positive feedback from volunteers who have helped with setup in the past, since it gave them a chance to handle the stoles and read the stories.

**CHOOSING YOUR DISPLAY SPACE** The best way to display the stoles is to hang them at eye level, so that all the names and stories can be read. Although hanging stoles from a balcony can be beautiful, it prevents people from reading the stories. Remember, although many of these stoles are works of art, *the names and stories are the important thing, not the artwork!*

**HOW TO DISPLAY THE STOLES** The stoles can be hung on a line, draped over rails in a chancel area or the back of a pew, or laid flat on tables. The stoles should always be hung with both panels facing forward, as they would hang if they were being worn. If you hang some of them along a balcony rail, make sure they are very secure; a line can be run behind the rail and the stoles clipped to the line, or you can hang them on coat hangers. To hang the stoles use stout clothesline or coated wire, such as vinyl-coated 12 or 14 gauge electrical wire. **Do not use bare wire**, which can leave black marks on the stoles. Stoles can be secured with wooden or plastic clothespins. **Do not use straight pins or any kind of tape!** If you use coat hangers be sure to avoid tarnished or rusty metal ones that can damage the stoles. Your local drycleaner may be able to supply you with new ones. Keep the stoles away from open windows or hot radiators.

## SOME WORDS OF CAUTION

- **DISPLAY THE STOLES INDOORS** Stoles may not be displayed outdoors for any reason unless you have made prior arrangements with the Shower of Stoles Project.
- **ABSOLUTELY NO ONE IS TO WEAR THESE STOLES** unless you have made specific arrangements with the Project in advance.
- **KEEP THE WEIGHT OF THE STOLES IN MIND** If you use wire or any other fixtures to hang the stoles, don't underestimate the weight that it will have to hold. Twenty stoles can weigh up to 30 pounds or more. If you are using coat hangers, use clothespins to keep the heavier ones from slipping off.
- **KEEP STOLES AWAY FROM CANDLES** Candle wax can splatter quite a distance in the draft of heating or air conditioning, and it is impossible to remove from some fabrics.
- **TAKE CARE WHEN PLACING STOLES NEAR COMMUNION ELEMENTS OR FLOWERS** While stoles placed on an altar or communion table make a powerful witness, do not place live or cut flowers near them. Also, don't set communion elements on them or make it too easy for someone to set a communion chalice down on a stole; a couple stoles have been badly damaged by grape juice "rings." You can avoid problems by covering the stoles with a piece of clear vinyl (available at any fabric store).
- **DO NOT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES ADD STICKERS, PINS, OR ANYTHING ELSE TO THE STOLES** Some stoles have ribbons or buttons attached to them, which must remain on them. However, these stoles are not to be used as a vehicle for your group's own stickers, buttons, ribbons or flyers!
- **CHILDREN** Children are drawn to this colorful display and can learn from it. You can avoid damage to the stoles and help your young people enjoy the display more by talking to them about the collection ahead of time and encouraging them to be very careful with the stoles. Don't allow children (or childlike adults!) to get near the stoles with punch or other refreshments.
- **PURPOSE** The Shower of Stoles collection has been assembled to raise people's awareness of the gifts of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people of faith in their service to God. This purpose should be clearly stated to viewers, and the collection must not be used for any purpose other than that which is stated in our Mission Statement.
- **LOGO** When publicizing your exhibit, only use the official Shower of Stoles Project logo. Do not create one of your own. If you need an electronic version of the logo, contact the office.



We maintain an archive of Shower of Stoles Project exhibits. We would greatly appreciate your sending us a few photographs, especially digital ones, and a description of your program! For more information about the Shower of Stoles Project, or to order video or print resources for your program, please visit our website at [www.WelcomingResources.org](http://www.WelcomingResources.org).

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