



## Mercy Courthouse

By Jules Miller

The biggest courthouse in Orange County, California, 11 stories tall, is called the Central Justice Center. If you ask long-time residents where the Central Mercy Center was, a few might refer you to Mercy Warehouse, a church-operated distributor for the poor, 20 miles away, but most would stare at you blankly.

That's understandable, since justice has nothing to do with mercy. Justice is getting what you deserve, your punishment if convicted of a crime, or the damages awarded by the court if you're a successful plaintiff. Mercy is receiving something you don't deserve.

Mercy, with one exception, usually isn't considered a good thing by the world. The one exception is ourselves; we want mercy when we do something wrong. For everyone else, give them justice. Well, maybe not always.

Ramona had just won her wrongful termination lawsuit. Three years earlier her employer fired her during a bad economy for a reason she thought

was unlawful. She could not find a job for another year, so she had to go on unemployment until it ran out and then go on welfare. She found another job after a year of unemployment, but it paid less than the job she lost. Finally, after still another year, she found a job paying even more than she was making from the employer who fired her.

During her unemployment she contacted a lawyer who said she had a good case and filed a lawsuit against her former employer. Settlement efforts failed when her former employer offered less than the wages Ramona had lost, so her case went to trial at the Central Justice Center. The jury found she had been wrongfully terminated. The jury awarded Ramona her lost wages, plus her attorney's fees, plus punitive damages approximately three times her lost wages.

Ramona, a good Christian lady who kept her faith throughout her unemployment, then astounded her

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### INSIDE: REFLECTIONS

## Showing God's Mercy

*Be merciful, just as your Father's merciful.  
(Luke 6:36)*

As recovering sinners, we have experienced first-hand the mercy of God. With the increasing secularization of our culture and the subsequent loss of our moral moorings, we will encounter more injured and critically wounded individuals.

We must be ministers of God's mercy and learn how to encourage others to step toward God and away from sin. Just like we did, most rationalize what they are doing and are influenced by a self-serving and a self-affirming culture driven in a conscience-warping world. We know that God loves them and is reaching out to them right now.



We are called not to remain indifferent to the pain and suffering sin brings to others. They are members of the family of God. They may not see themselves as his sons and daughters, but God the Father has not forgotten them and loves them. Mercy is divine and compassion has a human face.

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REFLECTIONS WEEK 1

## Wounds

By Michael Lacognato

*Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened ... (Matthew 11:28)*

I was working out at the gym recently and one line of a song that was playing struck me and inspired me at the same time. “Scars are souvenirs you never lose—the past is never far.”

We all have been hurt at some point in our lives. As kids, cuts and scrapes were common and healed quickly, but some injuries required stitches or even surgery to heal. Wounds aren’t necessarily confined to our physical bodies, as we are all susceptible to pain that comes from mental and emotional traumas.

The goal is to heal and get back on track. Like the lesson I learned when I approached an unfamiliar dog as a child and was bit in the face. My parents were there to help me and leave me with a solid life lesson. I still have two small scars near my nose that remind me.

I believe my relationship with God has been very similar to that dog bite incident. Like all of us, I have been hurt physically, emotionally, and mentally in my life. As I deepened my faith, I found that the wounds and pain still occur. Today, my first instinct is to look to Jesus for counsel, as well as others for help, to put me on the path to recovery.

This shift in my thought process has also allowed me to be aware of others who have been wounded, in pain and/or in need of care, and because of this awareness, I feel compelled to be a hand and a light to those who are in need of God’s guidance.

A good friend of mine recently lost his wife. He was hurting, in pain, and without direction. He isn’t a church-going person but believes in God. I could sense his need and I could feel his pain. It was then that I felt a calling to help heal him. Through conversation and prayers, he is comforted knowing God has a plan.

I know that pain is part of life. Instead of bleeding and waiting for the healing to come, I have learned to trust in Jesus to be my 911 call and let his light show me the way to healing.

*Michael Lacognato has worked in a marketing capacity for over 30 years and is active in a variety of volunteering efforts in and around South Bend, Indiana.*

### PRAY

*Lord Jesus, thank you for sharing your life with us in the midst of suffering, broken hearts, and woundedness. Please help us to feel your presence and guidance as we journey with you toward healing.*

### REFLECT

*The Lord doesn’t require us to be fully healed in order to help others. Ask the Holy Spirit to fill you more, so that you can minister to those around you at any opportunity.*

### DISCUSS

*When is a time you were able to help someone in pain by conversation or prayer?*

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## REFLECTIONS WEEK 2

## Target Rich Environment

By Jim Ingram

*Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. (Hebrews 4:16)*

People who have been in the military have a natural bond. I was a Marine during the Vietnam era, though a non-combatant. I've been going to the VA Hospital for several years. To use a military term, it's a "target rich environment" to talk and pray with people.

It's easy to engage with other vets in the waiting room. In addition to their medical problems, many are lonely. They appreciate having someone to talk with. And, when it's a vet, there's a level of trust.

Audiology is usually filled with vets and they do a good job caring for us. On one occasion, we were sharing the "where, when, and how" we served when Edwin, a WWII vet, came into the clinic in a wheelchair. He made the 60- and 70-year-olds look young. We all were interested in hearing his experiences and he quickly became the center of attention.

He seemed to be a crusty, Navy man filled with bravado until he got very quiet and serious as he began to share about a "terrible task" he had been given. Their ship had destroyed a submerged submarine. An officer had handed him a rifle and ordered him to shoot any survivors and he killed several defenseless enemy sailors.

For decades, he had carried a heavy burden for what he had done. He looked as if he was ready to start crying. The whole room was shocked and in silence. As he was wheeled away, I spoke up, "Edwin, God can forgive you." I believe God put us together so I could tell Edwin of God's forgiveness.

Now when I go to the VA, I challenge myself to engage with those around me and be open to the movements of the Holy Spirit.

*Jim Ingram is currently president of the Minneapolis-St. Paul Chapter.*

## PRAY

*May we recognize God at work when he puts someone in front of us and give us the wisdom on how to respond.*

## REFLECT

*Have I been bold when I know someone needs a prayer or a Godly word of encouragement? Do I let fear keep me from responding?*

## DISCUSS

*Where has God been at work in front of you? How did it go?*

## REFLECTIONS WEEK 3

## Ministry of Mercy

By Annie D. Stutley

*If there is among you anyone in need, a member of your community in any of your towns within the land that the Lord your God is giving you, do not be hard-hearted or tight-fisted towards your needy neighbor. You should rather open your hand, willingly lending enough to meet the need, whatever it may be. (Deuteronomy 15:7-8, NRSVA)*

We know that enduring difficulties brings a type of character that strengthens our hope for salvation (Romans 5:4), but what comes of willingly sharing another's burden—when we take up their cross and give our time, advice, resources, and prayers to someone who is struggling professionally, personally, financially, and spiritually?

For the women of the WorkLight chapter in Gilroy, California, their investment in a fellow member whose

cross was heavy-laden by the weight of divorce, custody battles, dead-end jobs, and a challenged faith provided not just relief but a greater purpose.

Two members of the chapter went to court to support Lupita during divorce hearings. When she needed to move out of the house she was renting, several sisters helped her move and clean the house. Letters of recommendation and updates to Lupita's resume were provided by another member after she lost her job. The sisters have also helped her three children in a supportive, encouraging way, especially with ideas for helping them develop a deeper faith.

While many have reached out to help their fellow sister, Lupita has given back even more in love.

"She has given her CIC sisters the gift of honest sharing of her heart and of her needs and gives us all the experience of a holy, sacred relationships where we are our truest, deepest selves," said Diane McGinty of the Gilroy Chapter. "We are with one another in our prayers. We experience one another's

joys and sorrows and grow closer to God as we share life together."

*Annie D. Stutley is a member of the editorial team living in New Orleans, Louisiana. Find her at [anniedstutley.com](http://anniedstutley.com).*

## PRAY

*Heavenly Father, grant me a joyful heart when I'm called to share the burden of another. Remind me that, even when it's inconvenient, carrying the cross of another is a command from you; it's how I can be most like you; and it's my duty in the path to salvation.*

## REFLECT

*How can you fulfill Jesus' command to love as he loved; and thus, play an active role in salvation?*

## DISCUSS

*What prevents you from taking an active role in hands-on ministry?*

# God's Way

By John E. Daly

*Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. (Luke 6:37)*

The death of a loved one is hard enough to fathom, but when it is suddenly brought on due to a tragic car crash, the impact changes lives for the family and many others.

As an attorney, I represented a family whose father had been killed in a car accident.

While going through the insurance paperwork, we discovered a policy that named his ex-wife as the beneficiary. I researched the law and found that the son and daughter should get the benefit and not their father's ex-wife. When I explained this to them, they decided that rather than pursue a legal claim they

wanted the ex-wife to receive the funds because she was in financial need.

Their mercy clearly showed me the legal rights of clients can be waived to show God's mercy. I think God knew more how best to use these funds than the attorney involved. Their generosity demonstrated that the legal way was not necessarily God's way.

My clients also informed me that they wanted me to contact the man who had killed their father to let him know he was forgiven. The man's representative was stunned. He could not remember a time in his career where the victims reached out to the person who had killed someone with mercy and forgiveness.

While we were going through the legal process, the representative told me his 16-year-old son had been killed in a car accident. His willingness to share his experience with me resulted in the development of a good working relationship that was rooted in the compassion and mercy demonstrated by my clients. We ended up resolving the matter without having to go to court.

*John E. Daly is an attorney and lives in Burnsville, Minnesota, with his wife of 43 years, Peg. They have two married sons and six wonderful grandchildren.*

## PRAY

*Father, you know what is best in all situations. Help me to listen carefully to your Holy Spirit when I am being called to demonstrate your mercy to others.*

## REFLECT

*Have you ever found yourself making not just a business decision, but the most loving decision for the situation you were involved in at work?*

## DISCUSS

*When I am at work do I consider what God would want me to do or do I instead think only of the best outcome for me?*

“The Word  
became flesh and  
made his dwelling  
among us.”

John 1:14



## Called To Be Merciful By John E. DeSanto

As a prosecutor and judge in the courtrooms of Minnesota for a half century, the criminal law offenders I've seen are no different than me. We are all sinners facing justice and hoping for mercy.

Here are a few examples of those I've prosecuted or sentenced—who truly were “just like me”—sinners in need of God's forgiveness and grace and hoping for compassion. A just outcome typically means deserved punishment, like jail or prison. A merciful outcome involves undeserved grace, especially when dealing with addiction or mental health issues.

I prosecuted a drug-addicted thief who stole property to support his chemical dependency. He kept getting incarcerated for over 25 years and was thought of as a hopeless crook by law enforcement. In the late 1990s, he was facing four more years in prison after his eighth felony. While awaiting his sentence he was diagnosed with cirrhosis of the liver and given about six months to live.

His attorney and I persuaded a compassionate judge to allow “Doby” to live out his days in a hospice outside of prison. Over those last six months of his life, I visited Doby two to four times a week, and prayed and read scripture (especially the Psalms) with him. Before he died, Doby repented his sins and surrendered his life to Jesus Christ.

In another situation, I recently presided over a case where the offender was a

“high risk” felon already on probation for earlier felony convictions.

At the sentencing hearing, probation and law enforcement officers wanted this young man sent to prison. At this same hearing, this offender's parents pleaded for their son to receive a sentence that would allow his well-documented history of chemical dependency and mental health issues to be finally addressed.

I exercised the discretion afforded me as a judge and placed this young man on a long probation term which included completion of a dual treatment program for chemical dependency and his mental illness diagnoses.

My loving Father has never tired of forgiving me when I have repeatedly contradicted his holy will. As a disciple of Jesus, empowered by the Holy Spirit, I felt called to be merciful to each of these offenders.

The Jesus prayer (“Lord Jesus Christ,” Son of the living God, have mercy on me, a sinner.”) reminds me of my personal call to be merciful as a disciple of Jesus.

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*John E. DeSanto lives in Duluth, Minnesota, with his wife Lana. He has been a member since November 1984 when he attended his first Challenge Weekend with his twin brother, Will, and their father.*

## Mercy Courthouse

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jubilant lawyer. “I don't want punitive damages,” she said.

Her lawyer tried to talk her out of it. “They're rotten people who fired you, they don't deserve your mercy,” he said.

“Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy,” Ramona said, referring to Matthew 5:7.

“Paying punitive damages will deter them from firing other people wrongly,” he argued.

“It's up to them whether they behave like the ungrateful servant,” she said, referring to Matthew 18:23-35. “As for me, the Lord's Prayer asks him to forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us,” she said, referring to Matthew 6:12.

Finally, Ramona's lawyer agreed to do what she wanted.

Ramona's lawyer told the employer's lawyer who reacted with skepticism. “What are you trying to pull?” was the response. Her lawyer then told the judge, who found her request unique, saying, “I can retire, for I have now seen everything.”

The judge held a special hearing, to make sure Ramona's waiver of punitive damages was voluntary (and to make sure she wasn't crazy). She repeated everything she told her lawyer. Finding her waiver voluntary, the judge said, “This sort of seems like the Prodigal Son parable,” referring to Luke 15:11-32.

Yes, mercy was provided at the Central Justice Center, to people who didn't deserve it. A Christian did it.

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*Jules Miller is a member of the WorkLight Board of Directors. He lives with his wife Sheila in Dana Point, California. He can be reached at [julesmillerlaw@att.net](mailto:julesmillerlaw@att.net).*

# Voices from the Conference

This year's annual conference was the first ever National Challenge Weekend. We celebrated 40 years of ministry as the Spirit united new igniters and experienced re-igniters equipping us to go from the mountaintop of the weekend into the hills and valleys of our everyday life and work.

"It was transformative. I was reluctant walking in but kept an open heart. I walked away having formed some deep spiritual relationships and friendships, practical things I can do to incorporate more prayer in my life, and a renewed zest for what I'm doing (which I see as a gift and given task)."

*Michele Wang, California*

"I was really moved by so many people uninhibitedly sharing bringing Christ to others. Examples of faithfulness, service, and preaching the Gospel filled the room. I want to imitate their example and share freely about the Lord."

*Christine Ziegler, Indiana*

"The Holy Spirit filled me with a desire for revival! I was overcome by the need to be intentional, open to his urging and the possibilities, and willing to put myself at the back of the line."

*Rick Null, Arizona*



"I had a powerful experience at the NCWE and came home more open and available to see where the Holy Spirit might lead."

It started right away on Monday where the passage I landed on was Luke 8:16 - "No one after lighting a lamp covers it with a vessel or puts it under a bed but puts it on a stand that those who enter may see the light." I have chosen a more behavioral approach to evangelization at my work, but I interpreted this as a call to do more. So, I decided at our Monday Personal Best meeting to share about the amazing experience and how good it felt to be surrounded by so many people filled with joy, peace, and love ... not because their lives were easy, but because of their faith.

The next day, my daily scripture email heading said "St. Luke, Evangelist." I knew this was another message for me to evangelize more boldly."

*Luke Cahill, Board member*



"For me, the Spirit spoke to me about two things: fear and faith. One Scripture that the Holy Spirit specifically underlined for me was John 14:12, when Jesus told the disciples: "I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father."

I realized through sharing, Bible study, and prayer, that I needed to confess my unbelief. How can I do "greater things" than Jesus? I need to lay down my unbelief, and my religious context, and fully submit to God's Word and the power from the Holy Spirit!

I've been serving behind the scenes on the Board and helping with WorkLight marketing communications. I am energized in these roles after the CWE. I am also feeling prompted to start a WorkLight Small Group and am praying about getting it started before year end. It's time that I have a more personal and direct role in joining this mission."

*Brian Dahl, Board member*

"It was powerful to see how the Spirit was working in the lives of the guys in our small group discussions. I came with four others and plan to work to get a group formed here."

*Christian Welp, Idaho*

"I suffered a stroke two years ago. After the weekend I feel like my old self with lots of new excitement for WorkLight and getting another Challenge Weekend going here in Palm Desert ASAP!"

*Jim Foudy, California*



## PRESIDENT'S NOTE



*Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. (Lamentations 3:22-23)*

### Mercy and Work

When Jeremiah wrote the book of Lamentations it was within the context of great sorrow at the fall of Jerusalem. From this place of sadness comes a verse of great encouragement and possibility. Many Christians today are heard rephrasing this scripture into the common language of "God's mercies are new every morning."

If God's mercies are new every morning, then what is our response? If Jesus has delivered us from death into eternal life, then what are we to do about it today? Each one of us has been given gifts to use in this lifetime. To serve our Father 24/7 is the greatest calling any of us can experience.

This year we came together in Scottsdale, Arizona, for the first-ever National Challenge Weekend. It was a profound weekend of scripture, renewal, and connection. Praise Jesus! We brought re-igniters and igniters together for the traditional Emmaus Walk, and then we sent them out two-by-two with the new Coworker Challenge.

Christians in Commerce has transformed the lives of countless men and women over the past four decades, and WorkLight is here to bring this movement of the Holy Spirit to the next generation. If you're a longtime member of this ministry, please pray for guidance on how to find and engage with the igniter in your life. If you're new to WorkLight, don't hesitate to connect and walk closely with your re-igniter. Together we are building God's Kingdom one relationship at a time.

As this year comes to an end, I invite you to join me in receiving God's mercies, giving thanks, and praying for guidance on how to get to work in the year to come.

With you in Christ,

Wes

# 2022

## DECEMBER

*"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me."*

Galatians 2:20

## THE FLAME

### WORKLIGHT PRAYER

Father,

*Fill us with your Holy Spirit  
that we may be made new  
and bring the presence of Christ into all we do;  
That we may grow in love for you, and for all;  
That we may be humble and wise stewards of your creation;  
That we may bring your light into our workplaces;  
That we may lead all to unity in you;  
Through Jesus, our Lord.*

Amen

**VISION** Being Christ in the workplace

**MISSION** To encourage and equip Christians to be God's presence in the workplace by the power of the Holy Spirit, exercising faith, integrity, and excellence

**VALUES** Christians in Commerce (DBA WorkLight) is an ecumenical organization committed to:

- Growing and being transformed in Jesus Christ
- Manifesting the gifts of the Holy Spirit
- Building strong brotherhood and sisterhood
- Serving God and expanding his Kingdom in all aspects of our lives

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