



From the Administrator

Merry Christmas! We will be taking a holiday break at VORP. Most of us will be away between Christmas and New Year's, although we will be checking messages to provide mediator support for those of you using that time to work on cases. Thanks to all our mediators and contributors for your ongoing support. The flood of cases we have been talking about has arrived, and we need your support now more than ever. We have some new things coming in the new year.

Last month I mentioned a shoplifter program that we are working on. With the great increase in shoplifting cases being referred to us by Probation it is necessary to develop a less labor intensive method for these cases. Our new Shoplifter Education Program will be coming online in January. This after-school session will invite 8-10 young shoplifters and their parents to look at why the offense was committed, to learn about the different life paths a person can choose and to make commitments not to steal again. Our facilitator will be joined by a retailer's representative to help the participants understand the true costs of shoplifting and how it affects their families. We are looking for volunteers to staff this new effort.

Continued on page two

The way of Christian witness is neither the way of quietist withdrawal, nor the way of Herodian compromise, nor the way of angry militant zeal. It is the way of being in Christ, in the Spirit, at the place where the world is in pain, so that the healing love of God may be brought to bear at that point.

N.T. Wright

Volunteer Mediator Training

January 13-14, 2006

February 10-11, 2006

Friday 6:30pm - 9:30pm

Saturday 8:30am - 3:30pm

Call 455-9803 to reserve a spot.

Victim Offender Reconciliation Program

of the Central Valley, Inc.

4882 E. Townsend Ave., Fresno, CA 93727

Phone: (559) 455-9803; Fax: (559) 252-4800

Email: vorp@fresno.edu | http://vorp.org

Reconciliation as Generosity and Invitation

By Tony Redfern

Mark and two friends vandalized John's house. It seems John had "talked" to Mark's ex-girlfriend!

Sadly, between the crime and the mediation, John's father was tragically killed in an accident. John's mother, Mary, now a widow, is the sole bread-winner. Her future is uncertain.

Mary agreed to meet with the offenders to recognize the offense, talk about ways to make things as right as possible, and make promises for the future. As her grief and mourning continued, she realized she did not have the physical and emotional energy to participate in the mediation. I agreed to tell her story and work on a restitution agreement with the three young offenders. (We utilized a VORP "Carry Agreement" designed for certain mediations like this one.)

After the mediation, I called Mary to express how the boys were impacted by her loss. I shared how they apologized for their offense and wanted to give her an amount of money above and beyond the actual cost of her losses. The offenders took responsibility for what they did and embody their remorse through a generous financial restitution. Mary cried with gratitude and thanked me for mediating.

But that is not the entire story. There was a second house vandalized that same night. The offenders could not remember where John lived so they vandalized another house thinking it was John's house. The second house belonged to Luke and Martha. Luke and Martha were present during the joint mediation meeting. They did not ask very much in terms of the restitution amount for their losses but talked about all the time that was lost in dealing with the damages. I asked the offenders how they could pay back Luke and Martha for the time that was lost. After a long silence, Luke invited the boys to do some work for him at his

From the Administrator-continued from page 1

If you would be interested in working with children and their parents in this way, give us a call.

Another new thing for the new year is the emergence of two or more church-based VORPs. Individual congregations will organize themselves to receive cases, assign volunteers and do followup, all backed by our central office staff. These efforts will allow congregations to be deeply involved in the life of the community as they bring healing and hope to victims and offenders. If you would be interested in having your church work with us in this way, let us know.

This season of the year celebrates the one who came to offer himself as a ransom for us. When we offer ourselves to victims and offenders, we give a gift that honors that greater gift. Blessings to you all, and a happy new year.

PLEASE CALL VORP AT 455-9803 IF:

You have time to volunteer helping coordinate projects and supervising kids while they work
Or if You have a project at home that you could use a little help with: housekeeping, cleaning out the garage, yard work, washing the car, taking down outside Christmas lights etc.

VORP Staff

Duane Ruth-Heffelbower	Administrator
Johnny Phouthachack	Agreement Manager
Jenna Preheim	Mediation Manager
Tamara Lane	Intern
Joe Montanez	Intern
Kindra Snow	Intern
Hans Gutierrez	Student Worker
Barry Guenther	Finance Manager

(Reconciliation as Generosity Continued from Pg. 1)

house. The work urgently needed to be done but it was too much for Luke and Martha to do by themselves. The offenders agreed immediately to help and felt good about being able to do something for the couple. Then, Luke did an amazing thing. Since the work was going to take most of the day, Luke invited the offenders to be his guests for lunch, and he would cook for them!

I am sure there will be more to this story in the days ahead.



To access mediator forms go to:

<http://vorp.org/forms>

VORP Board Members

Michael Blue, Chair	Arthur Wint
Dave Purvis, Secretary/Treasurer	José Chaparro
Eleanor Richards	

Non-Profit Org
U.S. Postage
P A I D
Clovis, CA 93612
Permit # 376



Victim Offender Reconciliation Program
of the Central Valley, Inc.

4882 E. Townsend Ave
Fresno, CA 93727
(559) 455-9803
<http://vorp.org>