Pray With Them
by: Doug Demetre

After leaving our Sacramento Chapter meeting one morning, I was deep in reflection as I entered our office suites. Many thoughts were going through my mind - not only that morning’s teaching, but also past reflections and teachings given by my CIC brothers.

The thoughts came flooding in; thoughts about God’s love. How much do I love? Do I trust that God is in charge? Do I really believe God and believe in him? Am I ready for when he calls me? Am I obedient to him? Am I making an impact and restoring my marketplace?

My wife and I shared separate office suites with two divisions of a large commercial landscaping corporation. They had just recently come to occupy two of the five suites, which had been empty for a long time. As I walked by the first office, I saw a man inside, intensely absorbed in a phone call. I suddenly felt led to pray with him.

I rationalized that this urge was probably just my own desire and shrugged it off. I continued moving and was walking by the second office when, seeing another man, the prompting came again: “Pray with this man.” Again, I thought it was just me. I took another step, then I heard, “Where are you going? Pray with them!” I remember thinking, “Ok, Ok! My arms are full. I promise to pray with them as soon as I unlock my office and put my things down.”

Within a week or two, one of these men had secured over $400,000.00 in new contracts, while the other had been entrusted with 400 acres to develop. A couple of months later, each of their divisions had obtained more than a million dollars in new business and were hiring new people. In fact, they were moving from our suites because they already needed larger offices.

What I hadn’t known was that before we prayed, both men had been in jeopardy of losing their jobs and were worried about what they were going to do. Furthermore, the first man’s neck pain went away. Glory to God!

The prayer that we said together in the marketplace that day changed the culture of our shared suites and the way we related to each other. Now, when I visit their new offices, we even pray in front of their employees.

Recently, I was told I had a fast-growing, cancerous prostate tumor. Upon hearing the news, both men prayed over me without hesitation and continued interceding throughout the surgery and recovery period. I know that prayer is the reason my doctor was able to say, “We got it out in the nick of time.”

Doug Demetre has been a member of CIC since 1993, and is currently the Sacramento Chapter President. He is a California Realtor and co-owner of a nationwide Lease Option company with his wife, Caren (Chairwoman of the WCIC Board). They have three children and nine grandchildren. Doug can be reached at dougdemetre@sbcglobal.net.
I Serve You, Lord
by: Lou Gionfriddo

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. (Colossians 3:23-24)

I know I serve Christ in all I do. I know I work for him. I know what it means to praise him in all things. I know what it means to trust him. I know the truth. And still, I stumble and I forget. It is the forgetting that bothers me most.

I work in the federal consulting field for a successful company in Northern Virginia. Just before Christmas, I went through a stressful period at work. My company was writing a large, multi-volume proposal in response to a very high-profile opportunity for a federal agency.

I had been asked to lead the effort on one of the components of this proposal. The proposal took every ounce of energy on the part of many people in my company, and many of us were working almost 20 hours a day for more than two weeks. One night, we even worked all night and still put in a full day’s work the following day.

I got so caught up in the work of writing technical and management content for the proposal, reviewing the content of other writers, and working closely with my colleagues, that I forgot who I was in Christ. I was working at it with all my heart, just as Colossians says. But, I was not even thinking about the next part of the scripture: … as working for the Lord, not for human masters.

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Two things happened not too long after this difficult period that truly caused me to look at myself and say, "STOP! You can’t continue on this path!"

A friend was talking with me about what was going on with him. He had many stressors in his life, including a new baby, running his own successful companies, and the purchase of a new home. He said he had realized he needed to take on a spirit of gratitude. I realized that I needed to be grateful in my own work situation.

Then, in January, I realized something else extraordinary. I am a “big picture” guy. I need to know the big picture whenever I am working on a problem or responding to a proposal at work. While praying one day, I heard the Lord speak to me very clearly. He said, “I am the Big Picture.” I saw immediately that the big picture is not about my company or a response to a government inquiry. I realized that I had not been focusing on Christ exclusively. I saw that he, my Lord, is the one I am serving.

I am exhilarated! There is still stress at work. There are still many things to catch up on at home. However, I learned two big lessons in less than a month’s time: First, to carry a spirit of gratitude in my heart, and second, to focus on Christ and see him first in all situations.

Lou Gionfriddo lives in Vienna, Virginia, and has been married to his wife, Ginni, for 40 years. They have four children and three grandchildren. Lou is a member of the Northern Virginia Chapter of CIC and works for an IT consulting firm in Northern Virginia. Lou can be contacted at lougio6@yahoo.com.

Pray: Lord, let me not forget your place in my life. Help me to remember that I work for you and for your glory.

Reflect: Remember those times when you have forgotten it is the Lord Christ you are serving. How do you approach your everyday tasks with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters?

Discuss: When have you realized you were serving a different master? What happened to turn your heart back to serving Christ?
**Men’s April Reflections**

**Personal Sacrifice**

by: Frank Adamo

For he says, “In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you.” I tell you, now is the time of God’s favor, now is the day of salvation. (2 Corinthians 6:2)

We started a men’s ministry at our parish about three years ago. During one of our leadership meetings we discussed the idea of having a men’s retreat. I immediately thought of offering a CIC Challenge Weekend for this event. I had heard about other chapters holding “commuter weekends” where the participants go home at the end of the day.

To introduce the parish men to CIC, we hosted two Challenge Breakfasts during our weekly Saturday morning Bible study times. Our guest speakers included brothers from one of the local chapters, as well as Jon Cassady from the CIC Office. Their testimonies inspired these men.

Then I remembered reading in the Challenge Newsletter that the Uganda chapters hosted Challenge Weekends for the men and women at the same time. Here was a great opportunity for collaboration!

At the 2014 Annual Conference I suggested this idea of hosting two commuter weekends, one for men and one for women, concurrently in our two separate church halls. The WCIC leaders in attendance thought this would work. We promoted the idea by asking the men we were inviting to bring their wives along.

What a blessed event! We conducted the Challenge Weekends from January 23-24, 2015. Thirty-five men attended from around the Valley, including 16 first-time attendees. Some were from existing local chapters, but had never been on a Challenge Weekend before. WCIC had 40 women attend that weekend, 20 of whom were first-time attendees. Participants from both groups included 16 couples. I firmly believe the Holy Spirit loves and is blessing our efforts in both CIC and WCIC!

**Making a Difference in the Workplace**

by: Frank Adamo

Whoever derides their neighbor has no sense, but the one who has understanding holds their tongue. A gossip betrays a confidence, but a trustworthy person keeps a secret. (Proverbs 11:12-13)

I have a colleague at work that people like to talk about. When it comes to his job, he is detailed and thorough to the point of irritating his coworkers. He gets the job done, but often takes a long time to finish a task.

In our office, people’s typical response to this individual’s work ethic is to tease him, gossip, and complain about him after the calls we make together. I choose a different attitude. I choose to build him up by making sure I compliment him if we are on a one-to-one call or in team teleconferences. These are sincere compliments, for he does many things very well. He knows I have his back.

I have come to learn that, for this man, his job is his life. He has no real hobbies other than reading and shopping online. When your work is such a big part of your life and others are making it miserable for you, how can that life be a happy and productive one?

When I let folks know the good job this colleague is doing, I put a stop to the gossip and bring Christian love and compassion into the workplace. This one small act may seem simple, but it is important in order to make the example of Christ in the workplace real.

**Pray:** Father, show me where I can collaborate with other men, women and ministries to further my service to CIC and WCIC.

**Reflect:** How can I introduce my friends, neighbors, church members and especially coworkers to CIC and WCIC?

**Discuss:** Have you recently invited anyone to a Challenge Group meeting, Challenge Breakfast, or Challenge Weekend? Please list the names of those you want to invite now.

**Pray:** Father, show me where I am gossiping or speaking ill of others. Let me see your truth in this area of my life.

**Reflect:** Who in my office, in my workplace or in the marketplace can I choose to uplift with my positive words or self-sacrifice?

**Discuss:** Have you been in a situation of gossip at work or in the marketplace? What could you have done to change this experience from a negative to a positive one for the people involved?
Men’s April Reflections
(continued)

week 4

Holding Each Other Accountable
by: Frank Adamo

After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray... (Matthew 14:23)

When reading Scripture, have you ever noticed you don’t see Jesus running from one healing to another, from one city to another? He took time at the end of the day to rest and to pray. Yet how many times do we find ourselves still slaving into the night to meet yet another commitment, send another email, or prepare for another business or ministry meeting?

I found a CD by Dr. James Dobson featuring a guest speaker, Dr. Richard Swenson, who talked about creating “margins” in your life. Margins are the reserve times we set aside to rest and to pray; times not filled with busyness.

I recently found myself tired and short-tempered with family and friends. I wasn’t depressed, I wasn’t unhappy, I was just too busy. I was doing some very good things, just too many, I was overloaded and overcommitted.

Have you ever heard the old adage, “If you want to get something done, ask a busy person”? That was me. (By the way, I never could find where that was in Scripture...) My Challenge Group was telling me, “You are way too busy!” My wife would remind me, “Honey, you don’t have to be all things to all people all the time.” And so, I have made a resolution to restore the margins in my life.

These margins focus on emotional energy, physical energy and time. I will always serve the Lord, but as Christians we are called to replenish our energy so that we can meet the needs of those who are right there in front of us – including ourselves.

Frank Adamo has been a member of CIC since 1987 and is a member of the Central Mesa Chapter. He has been married to his wife, Sheila, for 39 years. They have three grown sons and eight grandchildren. Frank is a Senior Contracts Manager in the Law and Contracts department at Honeywell. He can be reached at fadamo12@cox.net.

2015 Consolidated Income/Expense Projection

Brothers and Sisters,

As promised, each year we provide our income and expense projections for the current year to date in the April issue. We hope CIC has given you a reason to help meet our goals for 2015. The marketplace needs to be transformed and God is doing that through CIC. We are making a difference in the world and ultimately in people’s lives! Thank you and God bless you.

Terry Cassell, President

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<th>INCOME</th>
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*These funds are for local chapter use only (rental space, Challenge Weekends, fundraisers, insurance, etc.): not used by our home office.

Please contact our office if you need any additional details.
Women's April Reflections

week 2

Personal Sacrifice

by: Caren Demetre
- From the March, 2005 issue -

But the woman came and did him homage, saying, “Lord, help me.” (Matthew 15:25)

My son has been quadriplegic for the last 18 years. About ten years ago, he had a grand mal seizure (the first in his life). As I stood by his bed and watched this frightening experience, I prayed, “Lord, help.” He had a second seizure in the ambulance; I kept praying, “Lord, help us.” In the emergency trauma room, he had a third. After the seizures were under control, tests showed he had a brain infection (encephalitis). The seizures produced fluid in his lungs, giving him pneumonia. I found myself asking the Lord, “Why?”

After a couple of days, two of the neurosurgeons had a conference with my husband and me to prepare us for the looming possibility that our son would not make it. They did not see any medical opportunities for complete healing. We explained that we believed whatever God wanted would prevail. I was still praying, “Lord, help us. Thy will be done.”

God gave us three miracles: Our son did not die from the seizures, or the brain infection, or the pneumonia. The blessings kept coming from there. While he was in Intensive Care for 22 days, God sent CIC men and women to care for us. The nurse in charge of his case was a very devout Christian man who asked us if we would like to pray over our son. At different times, two other nurses also prayed over him.

Christ was alive in these brothers and sisters. He was active in my husband and me, despite our doubts and fears. He was active not just for our son, but for the nurses, doctors, and the other patients, as well as their families and visitors.

Caren Demetre is a member of the WCIC-Sacramento Chapter and the WCIC Board. She can be reached at demetre2@hotmail.com.

week 3

Redeeming Our Father’s Creation

by: Diane McGinty
- From the January, 2005 issue -

So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh… the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control… Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. (Galatians 5:16, 22, 23a, 25)

God calls us as his stewards to restore all of creation to his Kingdom. God expects much from us, but he gives us his Spirit so that we can be successful stewards. Os Hillman, the keynote speaker at the 2004 Annual Conference, said that a workplace filled with Christians is characterized by excellence, integrity, outrageous acts of love and service, and signs and wonders. We come to work to perform the tasks our jobs entail, but also knowing that God will use us to bring his light and presence to everyone we encounter there. We literally bring the Kingdom of God to the people in our workplaces. Surrounded by the fruit of the Spirit, they are eventually influenced by it.

Kathy and Beverly work in an oncologist’s office, and through their presence, living by the Spirit, the Kingdom of God is established in that office. A patient’s husband said to Kathy, who manages the scheduling and paperwork for the busy office, “You must pray a lot because everything you do, you do with grace.”

Beverly, a nurse who asks all her patients to pray she finds a good vein when inserting the needle for chemotherapy, brings them love and hope as she creates an atmosphere where they can express their deepest fears to one who loves them with God’s love. Beverly has also accompanied her patients to church.

These sisters experience miracles of God’s love in their workplace regularly!

Diane McGinty is President of the WCIC-Gilroy-Morgan Hill Chapter and is also on the WCIC Board. She and her husband, Kevin, live in Gilroy, CA, have their own financial advisory firm, and have five grown children and seven wonderful grandchildren. Diane can be reached at dmcginty@garlic.com.
The Fruits of Our Relationships as Sisters

by: Noralee Cole
- From the February, 2005 issue -

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:6-7)

Worry and anxiety seem to be recurring themes in my life and maybe in yours. I worry about money, failure, children, work, my spouse... You name it, I can worry about it. I even worry about burdening my WCIC sisters by asking them to pray for me. After all, there are certainly people with greater needs and there's only so much time in a day...

When I have allowed myself to share my worries and concerns with my sisters, there is so much hope generated from their wise counsel. It really is true that "a burden shared is halved."

One evening at a WCIC meeting, I was very uncomfortable after spending a long day at the computer. When I just couldn't stand or sit anymore, I decided to leave. My dear sisters would not let me leave without a prayer. Did I think of asking them to pray? Of course not! Their words were calming and their touch soothed my aching back. I felt a strong sense of peace and well-being as I was being prayed over. On the way home, the warmth increased and the sense of well-being continued through a stop at the market and getting ready for bed.

It was such a wonderful experience to feel God's love and healing through his caring servants, my dear friends. Why would we deny ourselves that experience? God wants us to bring everything to him so that we won't be anxious, and to humbly acknowledge the response to our prayers. By sharing their time and love, my WCIC sisters showed me that God loves me and wants me to be at peace. This is why we gather weekly with our sisters, who can be God's hands, arms, and voice in our lives.

Noralee Cole is a former member of the WCIC-Sacramento Chapter.

Pray: Lord, help me to turn everything over to you, knowing that you will provide. Thank you for my sisters, who show me your love and healing. Help us to grow closer and to serve each other with your love and commitment.

Reflect: Is it difficult for me to share my worries with my sisters for fear of either burdening them or revealing too much?

Discuss: When have your sisters helped to heal your worries? When have you been able to reach out to them in this way?

Workday Reflection Writers Needed

This year we want to put a special emphasis on expanding the contributions to our Workday Email Reflections. We especially are looking for personal stories related to fulfilling our mission in the workplace. If you have a story that fits the format of our daily reflections, please send them to info@cicintl.org. We will edit them as needed.

We are also looking for individuals in the local chapters who would be willing to be Workday Reflection stringers/ghost writers for others in their chapters who have inspiring stories to tell. If you’re willing to fulfill that role, please contact the office at the above email or by calling 703-205-5600.
Father,

You are my Lord and Creator.

You entrust me with a place of stewardship in your creation.

Fill me with your Holy Spirit:
That he may teach me to pray and live in Christ and as Christ;
That he may teach me love for family, friends and all people. A love that is selfless, humble, and wise;
That he may teach me stewardship of the talents, time, money and possessions you have given me. A stewardship that serves, is generous and brings honor to your name;
That he may teach me faithfulness to your call to Christians in Commerce. A call that unites us and builds your Kingdom in the marketplace.

Through Jesus Christ who is Lord.

Amen

Christians in Commerce
NEWS

Santa Cruz Planning Retreat

When he first agreed to serve as Santa Cruz Chapter President, Keith Rushing says, “I felt I didn’t know where we stood as a chapter. We were doing a lot of different activities whose purposes were not clear to me. I decided to find out.”

Keith felt that in order for the chapter to accomplish the vision and mission of CIC, they needed to start afresh with the “who, what, how, when and why” of the ministry. So, he sent a questionnaire to all the members and invited them to attend two planning sessions. He designated several topics for dialogue, which he shared with the chapter a few days before the first meeting. The objective was to develop a strategy for growth by examining past conduct and defining goals for the future.

“The support of the men was off-the-charts wonderful!” Keith said. “The input I received from them was so good and refreshing – I learned a great deal. Afterward, I felt I had a pretty good handle on where we were and where we needed to go. I think our biggest hurdles have to do with our identity and the way we are perceived by the local community.” He went on to explain that for the most part, the chapter has been seen as a parish men’s group associated with the church where they meet. After this planning retreat, the men are eager to take steps towards clarifying their identity as a chapter of CIC.

Santa Cruz member Luke Leonard summed it up by saying, “Through Keith’s leadership, we are focused on integrating CIC’s vision, mission, and values with a realization that ‘lives of service speak a language of faith that is far more persuasive than words.’"
Vision
Expanding the Kingdom by being Christ in the workplace.

Mission
We encourage and equip Christians to live the life of Christ by releasing the power of the Holy Spirit that is in them. We challenge them to be Christ to the people and circumstances in their workplaces by bringing his truth, love, healing, justice and excellence to the marketplace.

Values
As Christians in Commerce, we are an ecumenical organization united with the body of Christ to:
  · Know, love and serve God and others
  · Embrace the beliefs of the Nicene Creed
  · Release the power of the Holy Spirit in worship and work
  · Share the time, talents and resources God has entrusted to us
  · Enrich member participation in prayer, scripture, family and church life

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ALIVE!
Christ
Galatians 2:20
"...I no longer live, but Christ lives in me."

www.christiansincommerce.org