

Mercy

On the morning of October 2, 2006, Charles Carl Roberts barricaded himself inside West Nickel Mines Amish School. After murdering five young girls and wounding six others, Roberts committed suicide.

It was a dark day for the Amish community of West Nickel Mines, but it was also a dark day for Marie Roberts, the wife of the gunman, and her two young children.

On the following Saturday, Marie went to her husband's funeral. She and her children watched in amazement as Amish families — about half of the seventy-five mourners present — came and stood alongside them in the midst of their blinding grief. Despite the horrific crimes the man had committed against them, the Amish came to mourn Charles Carl Roberts as a husband and daddy.

Bruce Porter, a fire department chaplain who attended the service, was profoundly moved: "It's the love, the heartfelt forgiveness they have toward the family. I broke down and cried seeing it displayed." He said Marie Roberts was also touched. "She was absolutely, deeply moved by the love shown." (USA Today, October 7, 2006).

The world would be a better place if everyone could learn the importance of being merciful. It appears that everyone expects mercy from others but few expect to grant mercy to ones that have offended them.

There was a time when the "Golden Rule" was taught to young children, stressing the importance of "doing unto others as you would have them do to you" but now it seems as if we live by the rule of "doing to others before they can do it to us."

As Jesus is preaching to the multitude, He has addressed the attitude of those who will be blessed, and among those who are blessed are those who are merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

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