

# Opening the Doors of Mercy

## Week 6– Doors for Security

To Lock the Door? ....The Cost of Mercy

*“I believe that, in our particular contexts today, how we do mission needs first and foremost to be rooted in a commitment to dialogue. By this I mean that we need to cultivate a fundamental stance of openness, of respect, of friendship, of deep listening, of vulnerability.”*

Stephen Bevans

How do the reflections below speak to you about the cost of vulnerability in keeping the doors of Mercy open?

*“It is better to relieve a hundred impostors– if there be any such– than to suffer one really distressed person to be sent away empty.”*

Catherine McAuley.

Back in December, some farm equipment was taken, and Earthworks staff had collectively decided to put a padlock on the door. We had grown accustomed to our new rhythm: lock the street-facing door from the inside, leave through the door on the opposite side, and lock it with the small metal padlock I had purchased from the hardware store. On this 5 degree morning, as I fumbled with the key and the metal padlock I realized that the lock was frozen. For the next 30 minutes we tried to open the lock. Finally we found something that worked...and we were inside.

I am thinking about that lock now, and how in an effort to keep others out, we created a barrier for ourselves. I am aware that there is no one right answer for what we should have done. What is the morality of a locked door? In a world where so many of us have more than we need while others fight to stay alive, there are no simple answers. Those of us with privilege must be aware every day that we benefit from a system of inequality. How do we work for a more just system? And in the meantime, how and when do we share the resources that we have access to? The frozen lock was a reminder for me that every action we take comes back to meet us in some way or another. We are all impacted, and we are all connected. As we continue to navigate the lines of separation every day, let us know that our smallest decisions have weight, and let us build a world where locks are not necessary. <sup>1</sup>

Sarah, Cap Corps volunteer, EarthWorks, Detroit.

*“There is a sense in which we are all each others consequences.”*

Wallace Stegner

<sup>1</sup> <http://capcorps.org/tag/earthworks/>

