Silence spoke volumes on a playground one hot summer day in Dallas, Texas. Still swings. Motionless merry-go-rounds. No laughing or singing ... no children.

The playground was just as empty as her soul had been for the first three decades of her life. But just as a gentle breeze began pushing a lonely swing, the Lord began stirring the heart of Norma McCorvey, also known as Jane Roe of Roe v. Wade – the 1973 Supreme Court case that legalized abortion in America.

A voice deep inside her kept whispering: “It’s all your fault, Norma. You’re the reason this playground – and playgrounds all across this country – are empty,” she wrote in her autobiography titled Won By Love.

McCorvey’s “Jane Roe” signature on the dotted line of an affidavit made her the plaintiff in a landmark case that forever changed the lives of millions ... including her own.

Sliding back to the beginning

In 1969 McCorvey was 22 years old, divorced and pregnant for the third time. All she wanted was to get rid of her “product of conception,” but a state law limited her options. Poor and uneducated, she needed help.

Who better to turn to than two young lawyers who were ready to conquer the world by giving women the right to control their own bodies?

Sarah Weddington and Linda Coffee were seeking to overturn the Texas statue that outlawed abortion, and they needed a desperate and believable plaintiff. Pregnant McCorvey was the perfect candidate, but her story needed to be more plausible. Therefore, McCorvey and the attorneys told the court that her pregnancy was the result of a gang rape. So, she “needed” an abortion, and she deserved the right to choose – at least she thought she did.

“On March 17, 1970, I signed the affidavit that brought the holocaust of abortion into America,” McCorvey told the AFA Journal. “And I thought I was doing something right; I thought I was doing something good, and I was wrong.”
But before understanding her mistake years later, McCorvey realized Weddington and Coffee wanted her signature more than they wanted to help her. She was a tough-talking, abrasive, alcoholic drug user who worked many odd jobs. She was a bartender, carnival barker, construction worker and waitress, later living the lesbian lifestyle.

The attorneys expected McCorvey to fade away. But her signature made her a symbol of women’s rights, although her image was an embarrassment to the pro-abortion movement.

The movement’s leadership had very little to do with McCorvey. For example, she wasn’t even invited to the 20th anniversary celebration of Roe v. Wade. But there was one prominent civil rights attorney from Los Angeles who took notice of McCorvey and encouraged her to be proud that she was Jane Roe.

Gloria Allred befriended McCorvey and thrust her into the spotlight – via interviews, press conferences or public appearances – as often as she could. Allred did her best to make McCorvey shine. McCorvey’s life was consumed by abortion, although ironically, she never had an abortion herself.

Swinging to the other side

McCorvey made a “career” out of working in abortion clinics, one of those being A Choice for Women in Dallas, Texas. She earned six dollars an hour booking appointments. She also assisted in the actual procedures by comforting the women as they had their babies’ lives sucked out of them.

“I would go in the room and hold the woman’s hand, and a lot of times they would just draw blood because they were holding on [so tightly],” McCorvey said. But it was up to McCorvey to remind the women that everything was going to be ok, knowing she was lying.

It was only a matter of time before the lies became too much for her to bear, especially after Operation Rescue (OR) set up shop right beside the abortion clinic where McCorvey worked.

OR is now the nation’s leading pro-life Christian activist organization. It was then under the leadership of director Flip Benham, who McCorvey preferred at the time to call Flip Venom.

Assisting Benham was Ronda Mackey, a fiery young mother of two girls, Chelsea and Emily. Benham, Mackey, her two girls, and a host of pro-life activists worked relentlessly to save the innocent lives of the unborn while McCorvey fought hard for the survival of her clinic and her cause. Through it all, the OR gang took every opportunity to befriend McCorvey and love her.

But it was the friendship and love of the Mackey girls that eventually gave McCorvey a new cause for which to fight.

“It was [eight-year-old] Emily who eventually led me to the Lord,” McCorvey said. “She was an evangelist. She was a counselor. She would walk up to women going into the abortion mill and hand out literature and ask them not to go in and hurt their babies.”

More than that, Emily wasn’t afraid to love a woman so unlovable as Jane Roe.

Emily showered McCorvey, whom she affectionately called “Miss Norma,” with hugs and smiles and multiple invitations to church. Having given birth to three children, placing all three for adoption and now working in an abortion clinic, McCorvey had a hard time relating to children, much less being loved by one.

But it was Emily’s Christ-like love that won her over, and McCorvey found herself loving her back. Little did McCorvey know that Emily was introducing her to the Love of her life.
In July 1995, McCorvey finally accepted Emily’s invitation and went to church with the Mackey family. Jane Roe met Jesus Christ that day.

**Climbing toward Christ**

From then on, she was Roe no more. She was a new creation in Christ. But as with any new believer, sanctification is a process, and McCorvey had a lot of learning, growing and forgiving ahead of her.

“You know at first ... I carried a very heavy burden,” she admitted.

But in time she realized, as she wrote in her autobiography, “God did not view me solely through the lens of what I had done or how I had been used. Now, after I had been forgiven, Jane Roe was irrelevant. The woman He loved – the woman He saved – was Norma Leah McCorvey.”

She wrote, “In the first few moments of my conversion, the thought of abortion was not a factor at all. I realized I needed God. That need, and that need alone, consumed me.”

Her need for Christ was evident as she began spending time in the Word and seeking forgiveness from those she had offended over the years.

However, many found it hard to believe that Jane Roe could be saved by grace. Leaders in the pro-abortion movement saw it as a cry for attention. Pro-lifers were skeptical, and the media was all over it.

At times, McCorvey learned the hard way as she came to terms with her new understanding of abortion and tried her best to convey it to the media. How could the woman behind Roe v. Wade now be pro-life? McCorvey wondered the same thing.

“I love the Lord with all my heart and soul ... [and] it’s beyond my comprehension that He can take someone like me who was a hippy and a drug addict and a fornicator and all the other stuff that I did and forgive me,” she admitted.

“It was so hard for me to conceive that the Lord had forgiven me – especially after so many children had been killed,” she explained in her book. “But he has forgiven me and restored me,” and put a new song in McCorvey’s heart that He set to the tune of life and love.

**Singing a new song**

After her conversion, McCorvey left her job at the abortion clinic and went to work next door for OR. Two years later, she felt the Lord calling her to share her personal message so she founded Roe No More Ministry in 1997. It has since been renamed Crossing Over Ministry (www.crossingoverministry.org).

The purpose of her ministry is to use her life experiences to spread the truth, specifically shedding light on the lie behind Roe v. Wade.

Throughout the last decade, McCorvey has traveled to several countries, including Portugal and Uruguay, and to over 40 states sharing her story in a variety of settings ranging from church congregations to civic organizations. She has appeared on major television news shows and has testified before different congressional committees. McCorvey supports pregnancy resource centers and is working hard to overturn Roe v. Wade in an attempt to fill America’s empty playgrounds with the song of love that her soul now sings.

**SIDEBAR**

http://www.afajournal.org/0108norma_mccorvey.asp
In October 2007, Judy Wiggins, a post-abortive mom, met McCorvey. Together they wept over the death of Wiggins’ four children that she aborted according to the provisions set forth by Roe v. Wade.

“For her to hold me and to pray for me, and for her to ask forgiveness of my children in heaven for her opening the doors to abortion in America, it was very healing and very humbling,” said Wiggins, who is now the blessed mother of six children.

**More on the story**


**I Was Wrong** – A DVD documentary that captures the changed hearts of two women forever altered by abortion. Featuring the testimonies of Norma McCorvey and Joyce Zounis. (Vision Video 2007) Available at [http://store.afa.net](http://store.afa.net).