



St. Dismas Guild

Dec. 2018

"Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." Psalm 119:105

PO Box 2129 Escondido CA 92033 – www.stdismasguild.org

This Year we were able to send, free of charge, almost 1,900 packages and 48,000 Newsletters because of your prayers and generous donations.

Please help us to continue to spread God's message of Mercy and Love!



TESTIMONY

Dear St. Dismas Guild, I really appreciate the Bread of Life Catholic Bible Study. I have just finished up on Cycle B and was wondering if you could send me Cycle C? I have a 30-year sentence. I sure need out of here, but it's in God's timing, I'm sure.

I really wanted to give you all my testimony. I am a 66-year-old woman. I fought the law when I was younger, and you could spend 500 years in jail and your life is still in the system. I really know there is corrupt police officers, judges and court people. I've seen with my own eyes. I was from a little town. I even seen a good Judge killed, run off the road. That made me know it is not all of them, just some. But here I sit a DWI. I had quit drinking, I was said to have stage 4 Breast Cancer. Scary! But the medicine I took got me here. I take full responsibility for my getting behind the wheel with my meds. I should've left the car and walked if nothing else but hind sight is 20/20. With my precious DWI's earlier in my life got me 30 years. I learned a long time ago when the Police get your number, they don't forget you.

I really look back on my life and I wish I could change it, but not possible. The first time I went to Prison I asked God to take me away from all the misery, He did a 5-year sentence, I did 2 ½ years and I got out on Parole. I got arrested again. I did 5 years on a 6. I'm sure I'll never make 30 years, not even 1/2 or 1/3 or 1/4th of time. I still have cancer and I get feeling sorry for myself but all the 4 ½ years I spent in prison I have learned a lot. People are the same in here as they are in the world. I have taken classes, gotten back into Catholic Mass. I love the Priest, he is a great guy like Fr.... All 3 of them and the one with his wife volunteer. They are all great. So now I do my Bible Study with the group of girls. They have the strength to go on, I'm weak. I think of the Disciples what they went through in the early church in Jesus time. Really makes me think anyway. I will close this, I'm not very good at writing. But when I have everything together and get help, I will be in touch.

Sister in Christ that is trying to do Jesus Work, not mine but His. He gave His life to give me Life and I really do Thank Him. I tell the girls we need to go to Mass to get the things we are missing, Faith, Hope and Love. Love being the last commandment Jesus gave, to love our neighbors as ourselves. Love one another. Thank you for your time and all you do for these girls.

Sincerely Your Sister in Christ, B.H.

Dear B.H., thank you for sharing your testimony. God is really working in your life drawing you closer to Himself. Taking full responsibility for your actions is a big step in healing. Being in a bible study with some of the other women will strengthen you for the battle you are in. Take every thought captive in obedience to Christ. I see you are regretting the past and that's exactly what Satan wants you to do to pull you down. Resist him and he will flee. James 4:7 says, "Therefore,

submit to God; resist the devil and he will take flight." Keep your eyes on Jesus and follow Him as you are doing by making the choice to turn to Jesus and be in a bible study. He came to give you life, life to the full (John 10:10). Jesus is telling us in John 15:12-13, "love one another as I have loved you. There is no greater love than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends." He loves you with an everlasting love (Jeremiah 31:3). Continue to "Seek first His kingship over you, His way of holiness and all these things will be given you besides." Forgive yourself... God forgives you if you have repented and He doesn't want you to carry all this guilt around. God bless you. ☺

DOING TIME WITH JESUS

Dear St. Dismas Guild, I wish you could've seen the look of surprise, then the tears of joy on my face when I received all the materials you sent. I'm still in shock and awe over the quantity and quality of everything I received last night. The Cycle B study guide was started first thing this morning and you can be sure I will request Cycle C very soon. I will still be incarcerated when Cycle B rolls around again so I will finish the other months then.

The book of Revelation has always overwhelmed me so I am now encourage that I can be guided through it properly (with the book Revelation from Deacon Lawrence Michaels). The Matthew Kelly book (Rediscovering Catholicism) is undoubtedly a treasure. I gave my 8 x 10 Sacred Heart of Jesus picture to a very sick inmate several months ago so to have it find its way back to me again was awesome! I do the Divine Mercy Chaplet daily. I'm a recent, free world, convert, at 72 years old, slow learner... Your unquestioning love in providing for inmates is so wonderful! You will remain in my prayers. In God's love, J.S.

Dear J.S., We LOVE that you took the time to write a letter of appreciation to us. It is our honor and mission to serve those in need and especially to those seeking a relationship with God. You have chosen a great selection of books. Read and study daily and you will hear the Lord say, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." Mark 12:34

SACRED TRADITION

The Catholic Church has designated the four weeks preceding **Christmas** as **Advent**, a time to prepare the way of the Lord for His coming as our King and Savior. In addition, the Church teaches that:

When the Church celebrates *the liturgy of Advent* each year, she makes present this ancient expectancy of the Messiah, for by sharing in the long preparation for the Savior's first coming, the faithful renew their ardent desire for His second coming. By celebrating [John the Baptist's] birth and martyrdom, the Church unites herself to His desire: He must increase, but I must decrease (Catechism 524). www.catholiceducation.org

St. Dismas Guild: Catholic Evangelization through Scripture and ministry to the prisons.

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SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

By Fr. Richard Perozich

How do I get the Joy that comes from knowing Jesus and His great Love for me? I look forward to being on that mountain when He wipes away the tears...

The gift of contemplation comes from God. You do not contemplate on your own. We dispose ourselves to receive it when He chooses to give it. That's why in Lectio Divina there are four parts: Lectio, Meditatio, Oratio - a word-filled prayer, and Contemplatio - a prayer with minimal words. The last one is not attainable on our part, but the first three dispose us to receive it should God choose to reveal Himself so deeply that the Joy you seek is granted. In the meantime we live in the first three, doing what we can to be ready for His gift.

FAMILY MINISTRY

The Church's Dedication for December 2018: is dedicated to the **Immaculate Conception**, which is celebrated on December 8. The first day of December falls during the liturgical season known as **Ordinary Time** and is represented by the liturgical color green. The next 22 days fall during the liturgical season of **Advent** and are represented by the liturgical color purple. The remaining days of December mark the beginning of the Christmas season. The liturgical color changes to white or gold — a symbol of joy, purity and innocence.

Pope Francis Prayer Intention: Evangelization - In the Service of the Transmission of Faith: That people, who are involved in the service and transmission of faith, may find, in their dialogue with culture, a language suited to the conditions of the present time.

As we approach Christmas, I reflect on this year and the difficulty of the holidays due to passing of our loved ones that have gone home to be with our Lord. How hard this season can be with the loss of a loved one or being separated from those we love. Whether it is due to death, distance or circumstances, loneliness and the longing for a brother or sister, dad or mom, husband or wife, son or daughter is heartbreaking.

I look to the Holy Family, (Joseph, Mary & Jesus), and I reflect on their difficulties. Joseph didn't choose his path, Mary didn't choose her path, but both said YES to God and God's plan for their lives.

Jesus said, "For whoever does the will of my heavenly Father is my brother, and sister, and mother." (Matthew 12:50) Jesus tells us that we are all family and I turn to the Holy Family. I pray for strength to say yes to God as the Holy Family did. No matter our situation, we have a family in heaven to help us to become better husbands, wives, dads, moms, sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, and friends.

I find hope in our faith, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life." (John 3:16) How amazing to me that one child, Jesus Christ, can make such a difference in this world and a reminder to me that our reward is not here on earth, but our reward is eternal life with Christ. May



God grant us the grace to prepare us, not only to celebrate Christmas, but also to make our souls fitting for the reward of eternal life with Him.

PRO-LIFE

To whom this may concern: The question as to why I am **Pro-Life** is the fact that I respect and obey God's laws, "Thou shalt Not Kill..." (**Exodus 20:13, Deuteronomy 5:17, Romans 13:9, Leviticus 24:21, James 2:11, Mark 10:19**) Many of us know this commandment but in our personal lives do we obey it to its fullest? Do we "allow" God's creative actions to take place in our lives? Or perhaps, do we selfishly place obstacles before our Lord and do our own will? There are several ways in which we can stop God's will in bringing forth Life; 1. self abuse 2. contraception, self abuse, the sin of Onan in **Genesis 38:9-10** is the spilling of one's seed outside of the marital act. Besides this being tantamount to abortion, it perverts God's plan for the continuance of the human race.

The use of contraceptives as a sin is seen in **Revelation 9:21**, our lord when speaking of "majie potions" in the Greek text refers to abortifacient potions. Being that our Lord calls for repentance due to these actions means they must be sinful, hence not in compliance with God's divine will for humanity. It is seen many times in Scripture that when doing God's holy will He blesses with children and fertility (**Psalms 127:3-5, 1 Chronicles 25:5, 1 Chronicle 26:4-5, Exodus 23:25-26, Deuteronomy 7:13-14**).

Finally, God's will can be seen in the way He has ordered all things. It is the natural function of woman to bear children, **Romans 1:25-27**. Not only does our Lord order it that way but He promises salvation to women who do it, **1 Timothy 2:11-15**. Thank you, R.D.

Wow! R.D. you hit the nail on the head with all of these scripture references. Thank you for contributing to our Pro-Life section this month and continue to share this with everyone you meet. Keep up the good work.

See also: - References in the Catechism of the Catholic Church: CCC 2366-2372

WHY ARE YOU PRO LIFE? Write to us and tell us and we will consider featuring your answer in our next Newsletter.

RESOURCE

ROSARIES - Unfortunately, we are no longer sending rosaries to inmates unless they have an official form from their prison facility. Chaplains are welcome to Bulk order from us, send us an email or letter with amount.

BIBLE STUDY WORKBOOKS - Cycle C workbooks are in and available to request. The new Cycle begins on Dec. 2nd with the 1st Sun. of Advent.

SEEKING TESTIMONIES - Please write to us and tell us your story. Please format your testimony in this way - 1/3 Child/teenage years, 1/3 How did Christ change your life? and 1/3 How is God working in your life now? Please limit it to 500 words. Thank you...

Merry Christmas

**Advent and Christmas Blessings to you,
from all of us at
St. Dismas Guild**