



St. Dismas Guild

November 2019

"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

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF SERVICE!!!

We send, Free of Charge, on average 120 Packages & 4,000 Newsletters per month to prison facilities (currently in over 700) across the United States.

Please consider making a monthly donation to sponsor a new inmate each month.



TESTIMONY

Dear St. Dismas Guild, I am currently serving a 16-to-life sentence. I have never been in trouble in my life until now. I grew up in the Midwest in a very non-religious family. So, I never knew the Lord or Jesus Christ. But my parents did allow me to join other youth around our community to go to bible study. So, I did have knowledge of the Bible and God. I was seven years old when my parents divorced. My mom stayed alone, and my father remarried a very angry, alcoholic, new stepmom. She became abusive physically for the next five years of my life, which left me feeling alone, afraid, and sad.

At the age of 12 my older brother began molesting me, and he took my sacred virginity at the age of 14. So, years of abuse from my family left me so lost. At the age of 18 I began to sleep with men and do drugs. All the while I knew something was protecting me throughout all the pain and hurt. In 2004 I was in a violent relationship with a guy who abused me mentally, emotionally and physically. We ended up robbing and killing a man due to our drug addiction. I was arrested and placed in jail.

While awaiting trial, my guy committed suicide and I was alone. It was such a dark time for me, and I was only 20 years old. I was alone in my cell when I was given a bible from a lady. I began to read the word and visualize all the stories and people. I was then given a bible on Catholicism and began to study. I was able to speak to my jail priest and confess my sins. Then I accepted God and was baptized and confirmed a Catholic in December 2009.

Since then I have prayed every day and stayed faithful in my walk. While I still have a long journey, I now know the Lord saved my life, and my faith has grown even stronger. I have been tested, even in prison, but I always remember that My Lord and Savior *LOVE* me unconditionally and I am His! I will get through this journey too and be even stronger in my walk with God and my Faith. Thank you and God Bless, K.E.

Dear sister in Christ, K.E., "I have heard your prayer and seen your tears I will heal you says the Lord". 2 Kings 20:5 God cares about every detail of your life...James 5:11. He sees into the oceans of the human heart and He knows the secret of both. The Most High knows everything that can be known and understands the signs of ages.

"He knows all that is ever been and all that will be. He uncovers the deepest of mysteries He takes notice of our every thought and hears our every word." Sirach 42:18-20

Don't beat yourself up by all your past wrong doings rather anticipate them with HOPE. It is through the darkness in our lives that God allows our eyes to be blinded by the mud of shame and humiliation so that through all our brokenness His light will begin to shine and direct our ways. Basically, when God makes us fall it is to raise us up for His glory!

Even though we sin, IF we are sincere, God by His Divine Mercy and Providence is good to those who belong to Him. He will help you in every weakness and carry you through. Isaiah: 40:29-31.

Dear sister in Christ, don't worry about tomorrow, keep focused on each day now as a healing process and a new direction, then His LOVE will shine on you like the morning sun and you're wounds will be quickly healed"....Isaiah58:8-9

K.E. allow His warmth and LOVE to touch your heart... Pray, Hope & Don't Worry... Always TRUST and Believe and continue to move forward. If you are not already, begin praying for the murder victim and for your partner who died. Yours truly and always in Christ, D.O.

DOING TIME WITH JESUS

Dear St. Dismas Guild, Recently I became the Clerk for the St. Dismas Catholic Community here at this prison. Shortly afterward I was confirmed into the Catholic faith. At the age of 65 I didn't think there was anything that could make this much difference in my life. Since my confirmation on December 8 so many things have changed for me.

I was raised in a farm community in Kentucky. For the first seventeen years of my life I was physically abused by a father who was angry at God and the world for being crippled by polio in his youth. Around the age of eight an older relative began molesting me and continued to do so for over four years. While growing up I was trying to forget those things which are behind. But those things which were behind caught up with me and I ended up in prison with an extremely long sentence. Now I have been incarcerated for over 27 years. Only God has sustained me.

After taking the job as the Clerk of the Catholic Community, I have become more aware of God's presence in my life. He brought me through so much over the years and now I have become more fully aware of His goodness. A friend of mine loaned me the St. Dismas Guild newsletter and I was really touched by the testimonies. So, I thought that I would share mine. God is truly great.

I would like to have a Catholic Bible and Catechism. If you could, please send some prayer pamphlets with Saint's cards too. I'd greatly appreciate it, since we have very little literature for Catholics here. Sincerely, M.M.

Dear M.M., Human beings are made to be loved, cherished, developed into God-loving, faith-believing, moral-living adults by their parents and other trusted adults. In your case, as in many others, your development was neglected and perverted in violence and in sexual abuse by those who should have cared for you. I am sorry.

When others are abused, frustrated, oppressed and do not deal with these offenses against their humanity by bringing it to Jesus for reflection and forgiveness, they often do the same violence and abuse to others.

Jesus should have been given to you early in life in love and care for you as a boy and young man. He

reached out to you at a time when you were able to receive Him, His LOVE. While others who should have cared for you did not show you love, now Jesus Himself has come to your soul to soothe it, to teach you how to forgive, to show you your worth to Him and to the Father.

Hold fast to Jesus and give this new LOVE to others who need it as well, so that their souls find peace even as their bodies are incarcerated in a system where violence, anger, hate, and abuse may be present.

You have been chosen to show His LOVE to others. Take up your mission and **work out your salvation** by offering Jesus to others - **Philippians 2:12-13**. ALSO READ: **Psalms 131 & 139**. In Jesus, R.P.

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION W/FR. RICH

I have been sent to disciplinary segregation for **fighting**. So, I would like to request any books or **information on fear**.

I'm a very kind person and do my best to LOVE Jesus and follow Him and His words, but when another guy mouthed off to me, I was afraid to show weakness, so I punched him. I wasn't angry like so many of the secular classes here try to tell me, but I was scared, **afraid of looking weak** and then being taken advantage of. I know God is the only one I should fear, but I have so much fear in me of others that I can't break this cycle. **What would you suggest?** Sincerely, T.B.

Dear T.B., Prison is a different society. Your fear of appearing weak and thus being attacked later is justified. Since the response of a punch got you into segregation, how else might have you responded in that situation, in that environment to show no fear, but not to be suckered into a response which got you punished?

You know the environment better than us on the outside, and thus can in hindsight reflect on other means to ignore the insult without appearing weak. **2 Timothy 1:7** "For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and LOVE and self-control." ALSO READ: **Psalm 27:1&3, Psalm 23:4, Joshua 1:9, 1 John 4:18**

CCC 1808 - Fortitude is the moral virtue that ensures firmness in difficulties and constancy in the pursuit of the good. It strengthens the resolve to resist temptations and to overcome obstacles in the moral life. The virtue of fortitude enables one to conquer fear, even fear of death, and to face trials and persecutions. (Catechism of the Catholic Church)

SACRED TRADITION

THE CHURCH'S DEDICATION FOR NOV. 2019:

The month of November is dedicated to the **Holy Souls in Purgatory**. The Church commemorates all her faithful children who have departed from this life but have not yet attained the joys of heaven. St. Paul warns us that we must not be ignorant concerning the dead, nor sorrowful, "even as others who have no hope ... For the Lord Himself shall come down from heaven ... and the dead who are in Christ shall rise. <https://www.catholicculture.org/>

THE HOLY FATHER'S INTENTIONS FOR THE MONTH OF NOV. 2019: Universal – Communication and Reconciliation

That a spirit of dialogue, encounter and reconciliation emerges in the Near East, where diverse religious communities share their lives together.

PRO-LIFE

WORDS ARE IMPORTANT!

Words are powerful. The words used by both sides of the LIFE issue clearly and frequently shape the value system of society.

Semantics is a critical part of the abortion debate. When pro-abortion activists first adopted the word "pro-choice," it was certainly no accident. The phrase had a specific intention to elicit a strong emotional response and infer that abortion was a personal freedom. Any time we call them "pro-choice," we reinforce their argument (and subterfuge) and help them disguise what the "choice" really involves, namely terminating innocent human life. Therefore, WE MUST ALWAYS CALL THEM PRO-ABORTION.

In recent years, the pro-abortion movement has adopted new, misleading language. Phrases like "reproductive rights" or "reproductive justice" are an attempt to expand and convolute the debate and the issues. Make no mistake, the crux of their efforts is abortion and the massive profits that industry generates. So, our words must reflect their true intention, which tragically is abortion-on-demand.

Please make a commitment that your words will always be life-affirming. Innocent lives hang in the balance, so we must do our level best to protect them. ~ www.Pro-LifeArticles.org

APOLOGETICS

WHERE IS PURGATORY IN THE BIBLE?

- The first mention of Purgatory in the Bible is in **2 Maccabees 12:46**: "Thus he made atonement for the dead that they might be freed from sin."
- In **Matthew 5:26** and **Luke 12:59** Christ is condemning sin and speaks of liberation only after expiation. "Amen, I say to you, you will not be released until you have paid the last penny." Now we know that no last penny needs to be paid in Heaven and from Hell there is no liberation at all; hence the reference must apply to a third place (purgatory).
- Also: **Matthew 12:32 & Revelation 21:27**
From www.aboutcatholics.com

MESSAGE FROM SDG

Please know that each week we keep your prayer intentions in our prayers and that we pray over each package that goes out. We are especially praying for those requesting Priests to come into their facilities to celebrate Mass and hear Confessions and for those who are seeking healing from addictions.

We receive hundreds of letters each month. Each person's name is placed in our database to receive a **Monthly Newsletter** and their letter is placed in our Chapel to be prayed over daily and during monthly Mass.

We pray for abundant Blessings to be poured out upon each of you... Blessings, from all of us here at St. Dismas Guild

Call to Action

- TELL a Friend about our Free Bibles, Bible Study workbooks and Newsletters.
- START a Bible Study group.
- SEND us your Testimony.
- FORGIVE