



# St. Dismas Guild

December 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](http://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 800) across the United States.

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



## TESTIMONY

Dear St Dismas Guild, I want to thank you so much for the materials you sent me. As well as for everything else you do for Catholic inmates and those who are trying to understand the faith better. I honestly don't know what I would have done if it wasn't for St Dismas Guild. In such a hopeless place as prison there isn't a lot of people you can turn to. Spiritually, as a Catholic I try to bring others closer to God, through good example and doing good works for others, but as far as being able to relate with other Catholics, we are few and far between.

...The crime I committed was an honest mistake and I have apologized whole heartedly to the person as well as to their family and to the community...

During my incarceration I have taken the time to complete numerous self-help groups and substance-abuse classes to help ensure that an incident like before never happens again. I was originally sentenced to 38 months to 15 years for the crime I committed even though it was a non-violent act and the victim stated in court that she didn't want me to go to prison for what I did, but that was eight years ago...

Before coming to prison, I was far from a model citizen, but I was a productive member of society. I worked hard to provide for my family, and always had a legitimate job. I served in the military honorably and went to church on Sundays to pray to God. Just not every Sunday and didn't pray for the right reasons. I was raised in a strict Catholic family, believed in God and the Lord Jesus Christ, but somewhere along the way I became lost and never formed a personal relationship with HIM. I see now the error of my ways and that many of the problems I face in life stem from this.

So, I've also taken the opportunity during my incarceration to build on that foundation, strengthening my relationship with God. I now read scripture daily trying to come to a better understanding of the Word of God. I'm trying to become the best person I can be, the person God created me, in all aspects of life. So, it doesn't bother me what others think of me, because when I look into the mirror and see my reflection, I am happy with the person I see, and I know the Lord is too.

Again, I thank you so much for what you have done for me over the past eight years. I love reading your newsletter every month. Cycle A is now fast approaching, and I would like to ask if you could please send me the Bread of Life Bible Study Cycle A and a new Bible, as well as the book "You Visited Me" by Fr. Paulsen. I look forward to hearing from you soon. God bless, R.H.

*Dear R.H., In Isaiah 55:8-9 we read: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways..." Sometimes God's plan for us is hard to comprehend. God has a reason for keeping you confined in prison. It may be that the temptations and access to drugs will be too strong for you to resist at this point in your life. Trust in Him. "But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ..." 2 Peter 3:18 Then, God willing, the parole board will see the new man you are becoming. We are sorry, but the book you requested "You Visited Me" by Fr. Paulsen is no longer in print and*

*we have no more copies available. A Bible and Cycle A Bible Study workbook are on the way. Have a blessed Christmas.*

## DOING TIME WITH JESUS

Dear St Dismas Guild, Well, today I was feeling down, but the Mail call came around and I got your newsletter and it made me feel good! :) Thank you... I'm also writing to let you know that I'm in a new prison and I'm ready to start my new life with your "Call to Action" ... I'm going to tell my friends about your free Bible Study Workbooks and Newsletters! So, I'M ON IT!!! I'm ready to work, but I need all the stuff, so please send me all that I need. And if you could, please send me some pictures of God and mother Mary too. Thank you so much for your time. If you could, find me someone to keep in touch with. God bless you, M. G.

*Dear M.G., thank you for letting us know of your new address so that we can make sure your Monthly Newsletter delivery is not interrupted. We also appreciate your enthusiasm and resolve to help in the "Call to Action" to spread the "Good News." We sent you a few extra List of Books to share along with our complete Packet A (Bible, Cycle A Bible Study, Basic Catechism and pamphlets.) "For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, 'The righteous shall live by Faith.'" Romans 1:17 We do have a Mentor Program for those who are seeking help with Faith Based questions, but this is not a Pen-Pal option. Send us your questions and we will forward them on to a mentor. Happy New Year.*

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Dear St. Dismas Guild, thank you so much for being so faithful to me. You've continued to send me your newsletter no matter if I send you money or not. I thank and praise God, our "ABBA" Father, Jesus, our Joyful Teacher and Master, our Blessed Perfect Holy Spirit, the Paraclete (what does "Paraclete" mean?), our Glorious Most Perfect and Beautiful Mother Mary, that your newsletter still reaches me right when I need it!

Your newsletter (May 2019) is very nourishing both biblically and Catholically (is that a word?). I loved R.B.'s testimony, especially **Deuteronomy 4:1-6** and yes, **Romans 12:1-2**, though at this time I'm unable to be obedient to God the way I wish I could. I try but it is so hard. I just sin so much (mainly the healing ministry He has for me). I can't do the penance He gives me. And as for our Blessed Mother Mary, I do not honor her very much because I don't know how to do that. My mama has been mentally ill for most of my life and our Blessed Mother Mary is so much more precious and loving than my mama. (Would it help if I said more Rosaries?) Thanks again for all your Guild is doing for so many hungry Christians and to those who are not yet saved.

God Bless all of St. Dismas Guild and all their families, loved ones, etc., richly! **John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life."** Gratefully, Admirably and Agape Lovingly, D.M.

*Dear D.M., thank you for writing to us and for your past donations... there is no need to worry about not being able*

to contribute to our ministry, we are here for you whether you can donate or not. A short answer to; **what does "Paraclete" mean?** It basically means - the Holy Spirit as advocate, helper, comforter, intercessor, or counselor (John 14:16, 26). In response to **praying the Rosary** - In the 13<sup>th</sup> century, St Dominic received 15 promises from Our Lady for all those who faithfully pray the Rosary: We will send you the list, but here are a few... To all those who shall pray my Rosary devoutly, - I promise my special protection and great graces. - It's a very powerful armor against hell; it will destroy vice, deliver from sin and dispel heresy. - you shall never be overwhelmed by misfortune. - you shall not die without the sacraments of the Church. - you will enjoy great glory in heaven... So, as you can see it is very beneficial to pray the Rosary, especially if you had a difficult relationship with your mother... Turn to Mother Mary and let her wrap you in her mantel and lead you to her son, Jesus. Blessings...

### FROM THE PRESIDENT OF SDG

There was a huge country song that topped the charts for many weeks in 2004 by Tim McGraw - "Live like you were dying." There is so much truth in that song that I want to use it as a way to illustrate to you all who are currently incarcerated, that no matter what the current conditions are you still can choose Good over evil, Light over darkness, Peace over aggression, Strength of character over weakness of spirit. I have included the lyrics of the song here:

*He said I was in my early forties with a lot of life before me and one moment came that stopped me on a dime, I spent most of the next day's looking at the x-rays, talking 'bout the options, And talking 'bout' sweet times.*

*I asked him when it sank in, that this might really be the real end, how's it hit 'cha when you get that kind of news? Man, what'd you do? He said...*

**Chorus: I went skydiving I went Rocky Mountain climbing I went 2.7 seconds on a bull named Fu Manchu, And I loved deeper And I spoke sweeter, And I gave forgiveness I'd been denying, And he said, "Someday I hope you get the chance to live like you were dying."**

*He said I was finally the husband that, most of the time I wasn't, And I became a friend, a friend would like to have, And all of a sudden going fishing, Wasn't such an imposition, And I went three times that year I lost my dad, I finally read the Good Book, and I took a good, long hard look at what I'd do if I could do it all again.*

**Chorus...**

*Like tomorrow was a gift and you've got eternity to think about what you'd do with it, What did you do with it? What did I do with it? What would I do with it*

**Chorus...**

**And I watched an eagle as it was flying"**

*And he said, Someday I hope you get the chance, To live like you were dying, To live like you were dying, To live like you were dying...*

Yes, it is one of those songs that makes you stop and think... By your incarceration you have been given the "gift" of stopping long enough to think and rethink some of your past decisions.... especially those that you wish you could "do over". While it is true that currently you cannot go Skydiving, or Rocky Mountain climbing or ride a bull for 2.7 seconds,,,,, **you definitely can love deeper, and speak sweeter, and offer forgiveness to someone that you have denied it to.** Even from behind those locks you can find ways to be a friend that a friend would like to have.

And if you would finally like to read the "Good Book" ...which of course is the Bible... **That is where St Dismas Guild Ministry can help. We have one, free of charge, waiting for you.**

Never forget that we are all dying from the moment we come into this world.... make sure you live like you are dying by doing all that you can to glorify the God that made you and saved you!

God Bless, and know that you are in our prayers,  
Deacon Mitch - President of St Dismas Guild

### SPIRITUAL DIRECTION w/Fr. Richard

"When I read the Bible, I don't know where to begin, what would you suggest?"

Years ago, when I started reading the bible, neither did I know where to begin. The bible can be divided into **Sections** - the law, historical, wisdom, prophets, gospels and acts/epistles.

The Old Testament –

**The Law:** Genesis to Deuteronomy

**The Historical Books:** Joshua to 2 Maccabees

**The Wisdom Books:** Job to Sirach

**The Prophets:** Isaiah to Malachi

The New Testament -

**The Gospels:** Matthew to John

**The Acts of the Apostles & The Letters**

Start at the first book in each **section** and read chapter 1. Next day read the next chapter from the same book in the section. You will finish some sections faster, so just start over in the same section

Continue to read the other sections and then start over when done. **6 chapters each day.** Then it will start to make sense. Bless you in your faith...

### PRO-LIFE

#### **The NEW YEAR and Doing Our Part to End Abortion**

As we look forward to a New Year, may we not forget the plight of many unborn babies over the past years? It would be a blessed and wonderful New Year's resolution if we as Christians would commit to do more for the unborn.

**Prayer to End Abortion:** *Lord God, I thank you today for the gift of my life, and for the lives of all my brothers and sisters. I know there is nothing that destroys more life than abortion, yet I rejoice that you have conquered death by the birth, death and Resurrection of Your Son. I am ready to do my part in ending abortion. Today I commit myself never to be silent, never to be passive, never to be forgetful of the unborn.*

*I commit myself to be more active in the pro-life movement, and never to stop defending precious life until all my brothers and sisters are protected, and our nation once again becomes a nation with liberty and justice not just for some, but for all, through Christ our Lord. Amen!*  
Author of the Prayer – Unknown

### SACRED TRADITION

#### **THE CHURCH'S DEDICATION FOR DEC.**

December is dedicated to Advent and the coming of Christ. This refers to the preparation for the celebration of remembering Christ's birth more than 2000 years ago, but also the prayerful, spiritual preparation for the second and final coming of the Lord.



May the Love of baby Jesus surround you with Peace and Joy this Christmas... **Christmas Blessings and a Happy New Year, from all of us at St. Dismas Guild**