

St. Dismas Guild
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St. Dismas Guild ~ Prison Ministry

“Lord, when did I see you ...in prison, and not help you?” Matt. 25:44

St. Dismas Guild is a nonprofit organization which provides Catholic Bibles and Bible Studies, free of charge, to inmates. Donations can be made on our website or by mail, (details at the bottom of this Newsletter).

Please be a partner and sponsor an inmate each month.

August 2020

TESTIMONY

Dear St. Dismas Guild, Greetings! I would like to give you a little bit of my testimony. I grew up in a Protestant Christian household. My Mother kept me in church two nights a week and on Sundays. But I always felt there was something lacking. At about thirteen I got into a habit of a homosexual lifestyle. Between ages 15-19 I got locked up, then foster care. I was also sexually molested by my father at age 15. I got locked up again as an adult at 19 years old. Between then and now I’ve tried to fix my life with a lot of religions.

I’ve tried Islam, the Bahai Faith, Siddha Yoga, and Wicca. I was first introduced to Catholicism in 2009. I knew I had found something real and special. But I ran away from it because a lot of people were telling me that Catholics were idol worshippers. And also, the scandals with child molestation kept me at bay. However, the more I ran from it, the more the Lord kept calling me back. I’ve also searched the Scriptures and found that every point of doctrine is Biblically confirmed and accounted for.

As of right now, I am comfortable with the Roman Catholic faith. I am working on getting a Rosary and a guide on how to pray the Rosary. In the meantime, I am reading the Bible and I pray the Hail Mary and the St. Michael prayer. I also draw comfort from Sirach2:6, 18. Once I am released, I plan on becoming a Confirmed Roman Catholic. Thank you for your time and God Bless. J.H.

Dear J.H., It sounds like you are being grounded in the word of God from the two verses from Sirach 2. Verse 6 says, "Trust God and He will help you; make straight your ways and hope in Him" and 18 says, "Let us fall into the hands of the Lord and not into the hands of men, for equal to His majesty is the mercy that He shows." If you really believe in what those verses say you do not have to look back and fall away again. Develop your personal relationship with the Holy Spirit, your Comforter and Teacher. He will guide you to all truth. He will guide you to Jesus, who is the Word made flesh, and remind you of

all He said and did while He walked this earth. Continue to read and study the scriptures asking the Holy Spirit to teach you. The Lord is merciful and loving but He is also a just God. Look in the scriptures on homosexuality and see what it says and read the Catholic Answers pamphlet that we sent you. You are blessed that your mother brought you up in a Christian home. Be thankful for your blessings and do not look back at the bad things but keep your eyes on Jesus, the perfecter of your faith. We will be praying for you.

DOING TIME WITH JESUS

Dear Friends at St. Dismas, I wanted to thank you very much for the prayers in your Prayer Book, I noticed just tonight in **“Jesus, Remember Me”** which I had for a long time, but tended to pass over in favor of others.

Well, it is time for the prayers for “When in Despair, Distress and When You Are Depressed.” I had not really needed them till now, but I am so very, very grateful they were in there! I have worn out the Prayers for the Sick and the Forgiveness Prayer, and so very many others until I had not even noticed the Despair, etc. prayers.

Now we are not only on total lockdown, but I had shortly before it received news that I qualified for release under the Cares Act (Covid19 Release) but only if I can find a residence address to give them someone to take me in. I had put myself down as homeless because I felt sure I’d lose my home to auction for unpaid taxes, and I wanted a fresh start anyway. But I began writing again to people I’d known when I was free and helped them, figuring they would help me now, and they obviously won’t do anything. My old boss at the Crisis Center was glad to hear from me and promised to try, but I have no news, just dredging up the past, and memories of my pets that starved and thirsted to death, and fueled a lot of misery for me, and crushed me as I was sad anyway.

I want to let you know, **those prayers made me feel better, and to ask you to please pray for me.** Thank you for sending me that book and the prayer cards. Take Care, J.B.

Dear J.B., In the fog of depression, our thoughts and memories are often used by the evil one to torment us and

try to make us lose hope. We are in a battle and “... our struggle is not with flesh and blood but with the principalities, with the powers, with the world rulers of this present darkness, with the evil spirits in the heavens.” *Ephesians 6:12*. So whenever these dark thoughts come on you remember that Satan is a liar and he has been defeated. **GOD LOVES YOU INFINITELY**. He delights in you. He has plans for you “...plans for your welfare and not for woe, so as to give you a future of hope” *Jeremiah 29:11*

In a homily this past April, Pope Francis spoke about selective memory. He said, “it always makes us see the bad side of what we are going through and forget the good things that we have received.” Throughout the day, whisper a ‘thank you Lord’ for things that you take for granted, a good night’s sleep, a hot shower, a smile or a kind word. “**Bless the Lord my soul; and do not forget all His gifts.**” *Psalm 103:2*. “**Accept whatever happens to you**” ...*Sirach 2:4*

“**Trust Him and He will help you....**” *Sirach 2:6*
“**Finally, ... whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.**” *Philippians 4:8*

We are very happy that the prayer booklet is helping you. That is the goal. The Lord bless and keep you and know that we are praying for your special intentions...

MESSAGE FROM CHAPLAIN IRWIN

Dear Brothers and Sisters, my name is Darren and I'm a Chaplain at one of the jails in San Diego County. My thoughts and prayers are with you all during these crazy times. **I challenge you though to find the opportunity to go deeper in your relationship with our Lord, our Creator, and our Savior!** This is a great time for each of us to serve our Heavenly Father. We are all called to be a Light in the darkness. Matthew 25 verse 31-46 tells us how we serve our Heavenly Father, it is by serving others!

If you have the means, and one of your brothers or sisters is hungry, **feed them** your cookie, or apple or whatever will bring them joy in that moment. If one of your brothers or sisters is too poor to purchase new socks, or some article of clothing from commissary, and you have the means, **clothe them**. **Jesus tells us to visit those that are imprisoned.** *Matthew 24:44*

So, say a kind word to one person today. Even if they do not deserve it. Especially if they do not deserve it! Tomorrow say two. You will not remember the cookie you gave away, or the socks you never wore, or the kinds words that only took a few seconds to say, but your brothers and sisters will. And your Heavenly Father will! **So be a Light in the darkness and serve God by serving those around you!** God Bless! Chaplain Irwin

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION w/Fr. Richard

I received a book explaining how Jesus was married to Mary Magdalene. I would like to learn more on that subject if you can please send any material regarding this?

Thank you for turning to St. Dismas Guild so that we can teach you the truth, that you may not be deceived by others.

Nowhere in the Holy Bible does it say Jesus was married to anyone, nor does it say that Mary Magdalene was married. In Bible Study we have a saying, “Never make an argument from absence in Scripture.” Please read *Galatians 1:6-9* “**If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let them be under God’s curse!**” *Galatians 1:9*

St. Dismas Guild: 501(c)(3) non-profit organization ~ PO Box 2129 Escondido CA 92033
Evangelization through Scripture and Ministry to prisons. ~ www.StDismasGuild.org
On Facebook and Twitter @StDismasGuild

PRO-LIFE

(Message from the late Deacon Ken Finn from the Bread of Life Bible Study Lesson from the 15th Week of Ordinary Times.)

Today we might look around and say what kind of suffering are we to endure? The horror of abortion has become so commonplace that those who speak out against it are subject to ridicule, and economic and social rejection. Today many people are going to prison for the crime of trying to save unborn babies. We have read about the Babylonian god "Marduk" (mentioned in Isaiah 46:1 and Jeremiah 51:44) where the people sacrificed their children to the "fires of Marduk." Today we see millions of children being sacrificed to the great gods of "greed and convenience." The price for practicing our faith can be extremely high, and it can, in some places, result in death. We must not become complacent in the comforts of our society and ignore the responsibility to live as Jesus did. **We must continue serving others, giving up our own rights, and resisting the pressures to conform to the world which always exacts a price.**

We are people of hope and must not become pessimistic. We await God's new order that will free the world of sin, sickness and evil. In the meantime, we cannot watch, and stand by and do nothing, while they drag the defenseless innocents to their death. This passage refers particularly to abortion (Proverbs 24:11). We must remember that one day we will be resurrected with bodies, but they will be glorified bodies like the body that Christ now has in heaven (1 Cor. 15:50-56).

SACRED TRADITION

THE CHURCHES DEDICATION FOR AUGUST: ... is to **The Immaculate Heart of Mary**. The entire month falls within the liturgical season of **Ordinary Time**, which is represented by the liturgical color green. This symbol of hope is the color of the sprouting seed and arouses in the faithful the hope of reaping the eternal harvest of heaven, especially the hope of a glorious resurrection. It is used in the offices and Masses of Ordinary Time. www.catholicculture.org



FEAST DAYS: **August 6th - Transfiguration**, The Transfiguration foretells the glory of the Lord as God, and His Ascension into heaven, **August 14th – St. Maximilian Kolbe**, patron of journalists, families, **prisoners**, the pro-life movement and the chemically addicted. Imprisoned in Auschwitz during the World War II, he offered himself in exchange for the father of a large family who was to be executed, **August 27th – St. Monica**, patron saint of abuse victims, wives, alcoholics, and widows. She prayed for her son Augustine’s conversion for 17 years. **August 28th – St. Augustine**, son of St. Monica and patron saint of Brewers because of his conversion from a former life of loose living, which included parties, entertainment, and worldly ambitions. His complete turnaround and conversion has been an inspiration to many who struggle with a particular vice or habit they long to break.

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Encouraging you to participate in our Bread of Life Catholic Bible Study workbook, currently in Cycle A.

**Let the Peace of Christ be with you always,
St. Dismas Guild**

