

St. Dismas Guild  
P.O. Box 2129  
Escondido, CA 92033

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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 Study workbooks, etc., free of charge, to inmates.

Donations can be made on our website [www.StDismasGuild.org](http://www.StDismasGuild.org) or by mail, PO Box 2129, Escondido, CA, 92033.

**Thank You to those who sponsor an inmate each month.**

**November 2020**

## TESTIMONY

Dear St Dismas Guild, back in early 2000's I was sentenced to 50 years to life for my 3<sup>rd</sup> D.U.I. within 7 years and failure to appear on those charges under California's 3 strikes law. For many years I was addicted to multiple intoxicating substances. I used these substances in order to cope with life's problems instead of Trusting in the Lord. I somehow felt if I could make myself feel better that my problems would go away.

I began my sentence at one of the worst Level IV yards in California, where we were on lockdown most of the time. At 50 years old I did not have much Hope of ever getting out of prison. I began reading your newsletter and all the testimonies. I prayed for God's mercy and grace. I was blessed with a Catholic Bible and returned to my Catholic faith and began attending mass again. My faith in Christ today can NEVER BE SHAKEN AGAIN!!! God has taken away any urge to use any intoxicating substances. I AM 16 YEARS CLEAN! I realized that I was putting these intoxicating substances above everything in my life, breaking God's first and most important commandment.

Mark 11:24 says, *“Therefore I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they will be granted you.”* Prayer and Faith are Very Powerful, God has opened many doors for me and in August I was granted parole!

One scripture that has helped me is, *Romans 13:12-14, “the night is far spent, today is at hand, therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and Put On The Armor Of Light. Let us walk properly in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill its lusts.”*

When I was in my addictions, especially crystal meth, I could not wait for the night as that was the time for carousing and chasing after my addictions, fulfilling the lust of the flesh. We as Christians, are people of the New Day that will dawn with the return of Christ and therefore instead of planning for nighttime behavior, we should be

concentrating on conduct that is constant with avowed interest in the Lords return.

Today I am still receiving the newsletter. The many positive testimonies gave me hope when I had none and are proof of God's Mercy and Grace if we continue to have Faith in Him. May the peace of Christ be with you all. I pray that my testimony may give someone help who believes all is lost. M.S.

*Dear M.S., Wow! You have said it all and so beautifully expressed, there is not a whole lot more to say. Many of us are or have been full of despair/loss of Hope. It may take years or even a lifetime, but **Never Lose Hope!** To come out of all this darkness proves the Power of God. God is Always there for us, but we are the ones who must open the doors of our Heart to Him and let Him call us out of our darkness and into His Wonderful Light. **"For you were once darkness, but now you are LIGHT in the Lord. Live as children of LIGHT."** ~ Ephesians 5:8 Your testimony is an inspiration to us all. Thank you for sharing God's story in your life. We are fortunate to be here to assist in any way that we can and **thank our donors for all their support.***

## DOING TIME WITH JESUS

Dear St. Dismas Guild, Yesterday I experienced my first true encounter with the power of prayer. I said three prayers: Glory Be, Hail Mary and Our Father, with the Sign of the Cross. As I prayed, I concentrated on my honest intention to repent before I went in front of the Disciplinary Team at my prison for my recent case of substance abuse. I went before the team and instead of denying everything I owned up to my problems and asked for help. I was asked to step out while they made their decision. The penalty for my actions could have been 60 days in Disciplinary Confinement and loss of all my gain time.

When I was told to step back in, I was told I was being cut a break. I was given 20 days Disciplinary Confinement with Loss of NO gain time. (They could have taken 286 days). I have been placed in substance abuse class and I was given 10 days credit toward my confinement sentence with 10 days left. It was truly a paranormal experience. If I

haven't been convinced of the power of prayer before, I am now truly a believer. I am going to abstain from substance abuse and pursue a life with Christ.

Thank you for doing what you at St. Dismas Guild do and providing a light for those in Dark places. Most Sincerely, R.S.

*Dear R.S., Thank you for sharing your experience with us. To paraphrase 2 Chronicle 7:14, When you humble yourself before God, pray to Him and turn from sin, then He will hear you.*

*God heard your prayer and gave you the wisdom to honestly own up to your faults and ask for help. When you admitted that you were responsible for your failures, you were given another chance and given a lighter penalty than you deserved. This is also what happens in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Just as you humbled yourself before God in prayer; in confession we come before God in humility and sorrow. We own our sins and confess them. Then we are absolved by the Priest and given a penance to perform. As happy as you were to receive a light sentence on earth, just think how great the happiness will be someday when we see the severity of our sins and the enormity of God's Divine Mercy. "He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor requite us according to our iniquities." Psalm 103:10*

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Dear Friends at St. Dismas Guild, First of all, I ask for forgiveness in not writing and I also noted the "Return Service Requested" on all your newsletters to me, so I've decided to write right away from now on when I receive your letters. I think I remember my letter was in "March" but I don't remember the year.

Regardless of the reality of the Covid-19 pandemic, I must remain positive mentally, physically and verbally. And the "St. Dismas Guild Catholic newsletters" have been so positive and uplifting that the Spirit really "touches" me to be more socially-minded and to keep my mindset focused on "positive Spiritual things" and not on the negative aspects of our lives and actions.

I must say that positivity needs to be "out-spoken" for the benefit of all, including our President Trump, former Vice President Joe Biden and all others in our governments and the church today. We should remember always to let our speech be positive and uplifting to all our brothers and sisters everywhere all the time, instead of sometimes. This universe is full of good people and good people should be good and positive to everyone.

We are in the Light of Heavenly Awareness and we should remember that ALWAYS in our communication and actions. God is always here, watching, and let us remember that always. Thank you for your ministry and take care and I will write again soon. As always, P.R.

*Dear P.R., you are so right about us being positive in our Actions and Words. It reminds me of this scripture, "Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth each one of you with his neighbor, for we are members of one another." Ephesians 4:25 Just think how much better the world would be if we all did that... Keep up the Great Work!!! Please share our Ministry with others around you so we can spread the Good News of the Gospel. Just write to us and request a few extra Lists of Books and we will send them for you to share. Blessings...*

**SPIRITUAL DIRECTION w/Fr. Richard**

Inmate Letter questioning homosexuality and worshipping Mary and the Saints?

*Human beings are created male or female and by nature oriented toward the opposite sex for unity and creating new life. Sometimes our life experiences delay our development so that our sexual desires do not match our created sex at times in our lives. If we resist the temptations to act*

*unchastely, it helps us to mature so that our desires match God's plan. Sometimes, that does not happen quickly. Turn over your sexual desires to Jesus, even if they are sinful temptations. He will take them to the cross and deliver you in His time to chastity.*

*Catholics honor those Christians who have followed Jesus away from temptation into holiness. We call them saints or holy ones. Those of us still on earth are saints, that is holy ones, because we are baptized, and Jesus and the Holy Spirit lives in us. 1 Corinthians 6.*

*Those who have died and are still being purged from their sinful desires are destined for heaven. Those who have died and followed Jesus we call saints. They pray for us, give us an example, teach us by their words.*

*Mary is the greatest among them. She is the mother of Jesus, thus the mother of God. Mary was full of grace; St. Matthew tells us. At the cross, Jesus gave her to us by saying to her and to St. John, "Woman behold your son; son behold your mother."*

*As our mother Mary prays for us to follow Jesus, asking Him for grace, mercy for all of us. She followed her Son perfectly, so we love her and honor her, just as God the Father did, choosing her to be the mother of His only begotten Son. If she is good enough to be chosen by the Father to be the mother of His Son and to conceive by the Holy Spirit, then she is good enough for us to honor her too.*

*1 Thessalonians 3:13, "...to the end that He may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints."*

**PRO-LIFE**

*"...Abortion has already killed over 62 million babies in the USA since 1973. We could help save the lives of millions of babies. ...With the November 3rd election coming up, we have the means to right this terrible wrong."*

**Vote Pro-Life!!!**

**SACRED TRADITION**

**THE CHURCHES DEDICATION FOR NOVEMBER:**

*"...is dedicated to the Souls in Purgatory, whose feast is celebrated on November 2. With the exception of the last two days, the entire month of November falls during the liturgical season known as 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. The last portion of the liturgical year represents the time of our Pilgrimage to Heaven during which we Hope for reward. The last Sunday, which marks the beginning of Advent the liturgical color changes to purple, representing a time of penance. (catholicculture.org)*

**A Few FEAST DAYS:** Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> - All Saints - Today the Church celebrates all the saints: canonized or beatified, and the multitude of those who are in Heaven enjoying the beatific vision that are only known to God. Nov. 2<sup>nd</sup> - All Souls, also known as the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed and the Day of the Dead, is a day of prayer and remembrance for the souls of those who have died. Nov. 29<sup>th</sup> – First Sunday of Advent. A new liturgical year, the Church not only wishes to indicate the beginning of a period, but the beginning of a renewed commitment to the Faith by all those who follow Christ, the Lord. Nov. 30<sup>th</sup> - St. Andrew, Patron: fishermen; singers; sore throats; unmarried women; women who wish to become mothers.

*Encouraging you to write to us and request our Bread of Life Catholic Bible Study workbook. Cycle B is now available and begins the end of November. Peace of Christ, St. Dismas Guild*

