

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

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St. Dismas Guild ~ Prison Ministry

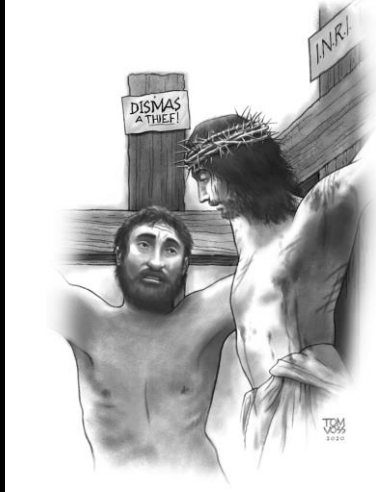
"Lord, when did I see you ...in prison, and not help you?" Matt. 25:44

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
or by mail, PO Box 2129, Escondido, CA, 92033.

We ask for God's Blessings over all our Volunteers, Donors/Sponsor, and especially to all the Inmates who write to us and share their Testimonies...

July 2021



TESTIMONY

Dear St. Dismas Guild, the peace of the Lord be with you, and to all the readers. My name is J.H., and I am writing to share an experience I had that led to a formula for living a more Christian lifestyle. I am currently an un-Confirmed, practicing Catholic. (I hope to be confirmed once things go back to normal.) One morning, after my morning prayer routine and daily bible study, I was reflecting on what I'd read and was feeling kind of disheartened because I thought, how can we ever possibly be pleasing to God when we constantly disappoint Him by continuously sinning? We ask for forgiveness for those sins, and He forgives us, but then we just continue sinning. Often times, when we say we're going to "live a better Christian life," we fall by the wayside because we try to do more than is realistic or what we are not capable of, and we fail, returning to our normal sinful ways.

With this in mind, I decided that I would set a goal every day to do just one thing that is pleasing to God. I call this a Mission for a More Perfect Christian Life. The mission is for 30 days, starting with a goal on day 1, making a new goal on day 2 while keeping day 1's goal, and so on and so forth. The object is to start small, one goal to achieve, and gradually add more and more as each day passes. Will you always succeed in reaching your goals? Of course not.

A good reference point to find things to make your goal for that day is the Bible and the Catechism. For example, my first day 1 goal was to refrain from using foul language after reading Ephesians 5:29. Did I succeed that day? No. But, during my night prayer routine, while examining my day, I was able to ask myself why did I not meet my goal? What other sins accompanied my failure to reach my goal?

Sins are like ants, where there is one, there is always more close by. I may not have completely refrained from cursing, but my usage of those words was significantly lower than normal, which I know was pleasing to GOD. So in a way, I did succeed in my overall goal! Pleasing GOD is more than just not sinning, we're also told to *LOVE* our neighbors. Consider doing one of the seven corporal or spiritual works of mercy. The goal is not to be perfect. You will never be

perfect. But applying this mission to your life could help replace sin as the norm to something pleasing to GOD.

Thank you, St. Dismas Guild, for the work you do for us who are incarcerated. GOD bless you. J.H.

*Dear J.H., Jesus says in Divine Mercy number 1485, "I never reject a contrite heart". Jesus also says in Divine Mercy number 1146, "songs that make an appeal to my Mercy Delight Me. To such souls I grant even more than they ask. I cannot punish even the greatest sinner if he makes an appeal to My compassion." Jesus does see your heart and the effort in TRYING to refrain from cursing or any other sin you may continue to repeat, and remember we are human, and yes, we will never be perfect. But **just like gold is tested in fire it becomes purified**. So, every time we try to not repeat the same sins, God with His Grace and Mercy continues to Purify and Transform us.*

*God is LOVE and His Mercy is endless. His LOVE and Mercy is poured out upon others to heal, to comfort, to have compassion and to forgive. He wants us to LOVE one another, And to be Merciful even as your Father is Merciful, (See **John 13:34, Luke 6:36**)*

I believe you are on the right path and your goal in your journey of transforming to God's ways instead of your ways.... O my Jesus, transform me into Yourself, for You can do ALL things!

Continue to keep your heart open, reach your goals asking the Holy Spirit to Enlighten and guide you. May this prayer be a light to your path.

*Jesus, help me to treasure the life you have given me as the gift that it is... I offered you my life so that it may not be the fruit of my plans, but the flowering of Your Love!
God bless you on your journey!*

DOING TIME WITH JESUS

Dear St. Dismas Guild, enclosed you will find a small donation. As a prisoner I do not receive enough cash to make donations to Monasteries or organizations that send me articles, newspapers, or mailings. But, due to a court order, prisoners could not be denied the stimulus payments approved by congress. Therefore, I am mailing all organizations a

donation for the on-going gifts. Due to the number of organizations, the amount isn't very large, but I know it will be gratefully received. Due to some problems with the amount of tax returns, the IRS notified our Dept of Corrections that they had not processed all the 1040 Tax Forms submitted before October 2020. I am currently working on trying to receive those funds and if I am successful, will send more at that time. Thank you for your support and dedication to the work you do. In Christ and Mary, C.S.

Dear C.S. In his first letter to the Corinthians, Saint Paul wrote "If we have sown spiritual seed for you, is it a great thing that we reap a material harvest from you? 1 Corinthians 9:11

When we say yes, it is a great thing. Knowing that you have very limited resources, the fact that you would first donate to organizations that provide for your spiritual welfare sets a wonderful example. That is the lesson that Jesus taught when HE spoke about the widow's mite. (Read Mark 12:41-44)

We give thanks to God and to you for your generosity and "we acknowledge this in every way and everywhere...with all gratitude." Acts 24:3

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Dear St. Dismas Guild, you have been and still are a true and faithful friend during my 18+ years of incarceration. In the many years in different prisons and different yards in those prisons, you have always had a presence there. Some prisons had great chapel programs, others practically none. I could always depend on Marie and Deacon Ken Finn to supply us with the Bread of Life Bible Study. Your supply of bibles and other materials showed your care and that of your donors, that we are not forgotten no matter what we've done to get here.

In the beginning of my sentence, I was lost and drowning in guilt and despair. **It was not until I totally surrendered my life to the Mercy and Love of Christ that my life started to turn around. It happened when I let go of the past and let Christ take care of the present.** The St. Dismas Guild was and still is a very valuable part of my spiritual journey. It will continue to remain a part of my life in and out of prison when I join Marie and Deacon Ken in Heaven. May the Lord bless, protect, comfort and grace you all now and always. A.T.

Dear A.T. So good to be friends with you. Your short testimony is so powerful. It seems like we must be at the bottom before we can start to climb up. Letting go of the past is not easy but exactly, as you say, what turned things around for you. God put the desire to change in your heart and you followed HIS lead. Surrendering to the Mercy and LOVE of Christ is knowing without a doubt God LOVES you and forgives you. That is what motivates us to LOVE others. Your rebirth has come, not from a destructible but from an indestructible seed, through the living and enduring Word of God. 1 Peter 1:23 Thank you for showing us that St. Dismas Guild has had such a powerful impact in your life and those in prison and that through the Bread of Life Catholic Bible Study you have come to Know, LOVE, and Serve God. Yes, my friend, looking forward to seeing you too in heaven where we will be praising and worshipping our LOVING God forever.

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION w/Fr. Richard

We receive many letters of hopelessness and contemplation of suicide. We want to assure you that we at SDG do care and there is Hope, LOVE and Mercy to be found in the person Jesus Christ...

CCC 2280 Everyone is responsible for his LIFE before God who has given it to him. It is God who remains the sovereign Master of LIFE. We are obliged to accept LIFE gratefully and preserve it for HIS honor and the salvation of our souls. We are stewards, not

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Evangelization through Scripture and Ministry to prisons. ~ www.StDismasGuild.org
On Facebook and Twitter @StDismasGuild

owners, of the LIFE God has entrusted to us. It is not ours to dispose of.

Be assured that we at the St. Dismas Guild are praying for you. The requests of all inmates are under the altar where Holy Mass is celebrated for the needs of inmates.

I cannot imagine your suffering and loneliness, but I know that it is real and strong after reading your letter. Suffering is part of God's plan for redemption for each person in different ways. Jesus, the Son of God, attained perfection through obedience and suffering, it says in the letter to the Hebrews.

St. John of Avila taught: "If you long for these festivals of heavenly joy, if you want to behold them and take part in them, be assured that there is no better way to reach them than the way of suffering. This is the way Christ and HIS disciples have always travelled. HE calls it a narrow way, but it leads straight to LIFE. That is why HE tells us that if we want to join HIM, we shall travel the way HE took. It is surely not right that the Son of God should go HIS way on the path of shame while the sons of men walk the way of worldly honor: The disciple is not above his teacher, nor the servant greater than his master. — St. John of Avila"

Even in your darkest moments Jesus cares, and we at St. Dismas care as well...

SACRED TRADITION

THE CHURCHES DEDICATION FOR JULY: ...is to

The Precious Blood of Jesus. 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: July 3rd – St. Thomas the Apostle, patron saint Against doubt, architects, and construction workers, July 6th – St. Maria Goretti, patron saint of rape victims, loss of parents, and young people in general, July 22nd – St. Mary Magdalene, patron saint of contemplative life, converts, and penitent sinners, July 31st – St. Ignatius of Loyola, patron saint of Jesuits, retreats, and soldiers.

PRO-LIFE

AMENDMENT CAN BRING FREEDOM

Annually we celebrate the birthday of our independence - the birth of our nation with parades, fireworks, and parties.

Why then do we have abortion laws which deny children their right to have birthdays? We have allowed this holocaust to go on too long. It should never have become a law at all! **We cannot honor the laws of man above the laws of God – one of which states "Thou shalt not kill".** We need to take off the blinders. We need to change. What we need is a human life amendment to the constitution outlawing abortion. Ruth Weber, Davenport Iowa ~ Pro-Life Articles.org

FROM THE DIRECTOR

I do apologize for any delays in requests during June and the July Newsletter. I did get sick (with pneumonia) and had to take some time off. I am on the mend now and all our volunteers have been diligently working to keep the packages coming. Thank you for prayers of continued healing. God Bless all our SDG Volunteers, we could not do what we do without them!!! Prayers of blessings for them as well, thank you... Please keep those Testimony letters coming.

Blessings, St. Dismas Guild

