

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

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St. Dismas Guild ~ Prison Ministry

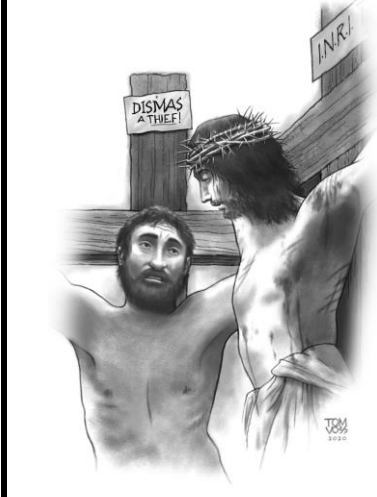
“Lord, when did I see you ...in prison, and not help you?” Matt. 25:44

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, and especially to all the Inmates who write to us, with their requests and share their Testimonies...

April 2022



TESTIMONY

Dear St. Dismas Guild, my name is O.G. and I am a repentant Catholic. I had turned away from my church and my faith for many years. In my ignorance I felt I had no room for it in my life and no need. I had turned my back on God saying He didn’t exist. I “knew” science was the answer to everything, not faith. I was addicted to pornography for many years. I thank our Good Lord for helping me turn away from that, but, unfortunately, all those years left a stain on me. Giving in to that disordered behavior and temptations in my past is what attributed to me ending up in here. I’ve been in here a little over nine months.

A couple of years prior to being incarcerated, I came across a video on television where a priest asked “Alexa” who founded the different Protestant churches. It concludes with him asking who founded the Catholic Church and his answer was Jesus Christ. That peaked my interest, to say the very least. That same week I looked up a church where I could go to Confession. It had been well over ten years since the last time I had been in a confessional. That same week I was back in church. In the church bulletin I saw a notice that a bible study class was going to start. I joined the group, and it opened my eyes. God truly works in mysterious ways. I know that my walk with Him is a continuous process and so I come to you.

On arriving here at this detention center, I asked for a Catholic Bible. I only received a copy of the Gospel of John. I found that most resources were geared toward Protestant groups. The bible study group here was made up of nondenominational Protestants. They read from either the King James or New King James version. The man who headed the study group is no longer here. A fellow inmate and I have tried to fill that void. I would be so grateful if you would be gracious to donate some resources to help us out. An English version of El Pan de Vida along with a study bible would be helpful and much appreciated. My knowledge is limited. I do not want to teach something that does not go along with the doctrine of the Catholic Church. Anything you could help us out with would be a blessing.

Thank you very much for your time and attention to this matter. Gratefully, O.G., a servant for the Lord.

Dear O.G., It is wonderful the Lord brought you back to the church and your faith. You have been given a great gift, the gift of faith. Romans 4:16 says, “All depends on faith, so that it may be a gift.” It truly is amazing how much God loves us to give us that gift of faith. Your search for truth is found in the greatest book of all time, the bible, because it says, “Faith comes through hearing and what is heard is the word of Christ.” Romans 10:17 Your eyes were opened when you got into a bible study. He is leading you to the truth of who He is and who you are. The consequences of sin, especially getting into pornography, stays with you but as you come to know Jesus Christ through the Word of God you will eventually be free of the effects of your sinful nature. Paul says in Romans 7:15, “I cannot even understand my own actions. I do not do what I want to do but what I hate.” Like the Prodigal Son our Lord’s arms are wide open welcoming you back. Stay under the headship of the Church as it is being directed by the Holy Spirit and it is the Holy Spirit that is your Teacher, John 14:26. God bless you.

DOING TIME WITH JESUS

Dear St Dismas Guild, ... We have a Catholic community of about a 150 people strong here where I am located. Most of our bibles and bible studies come from y’all. I don’t know how y’all can give all this away for free. But when I get out and get a job, I will donate faithfully to you. Please tell all your donors “thank you.” They are all precious and I believe God is going to richly bless them with a mansion in heaven. God bless you all! Our Catholic group here was about 8 to 20 people in 2014 when I landed on this unit. When we reached out to St. Dismas Guild, y’all sent a huge box of bibles and study workbooks and we all signed up for the newsletter which is gold to us.

Now I, like many inmates, work out to stay healthy. I eat good, take vitamins and other supplements. Well, our spiritual lives are no different. We can’t just show up for Mass once a week. We have to supplement our daily lives

with spiritual nutrition. That's where y'all are that pearl found in "the field." Since y'all have been there for us, we are 150 strong at Mass and at Rosary prayer meeting. Our entire group is even there at our RCIA classes to support the Catechumens. Sorry, this is so long, but we just want to thank you for loving and praying for us! T.P.

When Deacon Ken and Marie Finn founded St. Dismas Guild Ministry, 40 years ago (first Newsletter May 1982), this is the scripture on which they based their mission:

"Go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. As you go, make this proclamation: The kingdom of heaven is at hand, cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, drive out demons. Without cost you have received; without cost you are to give." Matthew 10:6-8

With trust in God's providence, much prayer and sacrifice, this ministry has been blessed with hard workers and generous donors who make this possible. You are the fruit of our labors. **"For you had gone astray like sheep, but you have now returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls."** 1 Peter 2:25. Thank you for your kind words and encouragement, it keeps us motivated. Please continue to pray for us as we pray for all of you.

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION w/Fr. Richard

INMATE QUESTION ABOUT WHY DO I KEEP SINNING and how to Lead a Catholic Services?

Dear T., any layman like yourself can lead a prayer service. If you have a copy of the missalette for the Mass, you can do everything except the consecration and communion. Instead of saying, "The Lord be with you", substitute, "The Lord be with us", and at the end, May Almighty God bless us."

If the other people present want to dialogue on the scripture readings, you could do that also. It would be helpful if you prepared using the **Bread of Life Catholic Bible Study guide**. If the men wish, you could use this to guide a prayer meeting as well.

St. Augustine says that there are two kinds of people dealing with sin. The first one is weak feeling he MAY sin should temptation come about. The other is already afflicted with evil, and most times will choose to sin if the opportunity arises.

I am 70 years old, yet still pray the children's prayer, **"Angel of God, my guardian dear to whom God's love commits thee here. Ever this day be at my side, to light, to guard, to rule to guide."** God Himself or through your guardian angel often will thwart the opportunity even though the strong temptation remains.

When St. Paul asked for his temptation to be removed, he was answered, **"MY grace is sufficient for you. For in your weakness, MY power reaches perfection."** 2 Corinthians 12:9 Thus you will always rely on God in time of temptation.

DEACON KEN'S CORNER

Letter from the late Deacon Ken Finn dated, June 1982.

"I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE GOD LOVES ME THIS MUCH..." Cindy is an ex-drug addict, a woman who has three small children, no husband and whose life has been in shambles. Her exposure to men has been a series of devastating humiliations and pregnancies. She has been used and abused but not loved. Therefore, it was very hard for her to put her Trust in the Lord. Cindy was facing time in state prison as well as losing her three children, and life seemed very dark indeed. As the weeks rolled by Cindy's heart began to open as she experienced the power of the Lord Jesus Christ through prayer, spiritual counseling, and Bible study. She now leads other hurting, despairing women to our scripture services and encourages them to join in and pray to the Lord for their needs. Cindy's transformation has been helped by a group of Christian

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Evangelization through Scripture and Ministry to prisons. ~ www.StDismasGuild.org
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volunteers who have agreed to help her in the areas of job skills, parenting, and drug abuse. She said, **"Chaplain I still can't believe that God loves me this much and that all this love is being sent my way."** Cindy was sentenced for her crime, and she received leniency from the court because of her change in attitude and she has been given another chance to keep her children when she gets out. Cindy will need the support of Christian fellowship when she gets out so that she can continue to grow in the Lord. I thank the Lord for letting the story end with a happy beginning.

SACRED TRADITION

THE CHURCHES DEDICATION FOR APRIL: is to the **Eucharist** and to the **Holy Spirit**. This tradition has developed because Easter Sunday often falls in April, ...and during the Easter celebration we remember the Eucharistic sacrifice Christ gave us and the **Baptism** in the **Holy Spirit**, which would come after Jesus's resurrection. - aquinasandmore.com



A Few FEAST DAYS:

April 14th, 15th, 16th - Sacred Triduum

- The last three days of Holy Week are referred to as the Easter or Sacred Triduum, the three-part drama of Christ's redemption: Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday.

April 17th - Easter Sunday - Easter is the feast of feasts, the unalloyed joy and gladness of all Christians.

April 23rd - St. George - **Patron:** archers; butchers; equestrians; farmers; field workers; herpes; horsemen; leprosy; plague; skin diseases; soldiers; syphilis.

April 24th - Divine Mercy Sunday - The Feast was recorded in the diary of St. Faustina granting the biggest promise of Grace from the Devotion of Divine Mercy. On this day, "On that day... The soul that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion shall obtain complete forgiveness of sins and punishment." (Diary, 699)

April 25th - St. Mark - **Patron:** Against impenitence; attorneys; barristers; captives; Egypt; glaziers; imprisoned people; insect bites; lions; notaries; prisoners; scrofulous diseases; Venice, Italy.

April 29th - St. Catherine of Siena - **Patron:** bodily ills; fire prevention; firefighters; illness; miscarriages; nurses; people ridiculed for their piety; sexual temptation; sick people; temptations. ~ catholicculture.org

PRO-LIFE

"THE POLITICAL REALITIES OF OUR NATION present us with opportunities and challenges. We are a nation founded on "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," but the right to life itself is not fully protected, especially for unborn children, the terminally ill, and the elderly, the most vulnerable members of the American family." *Laudato Si'*, no. 139, from Pope Frances ~ *Pro-Life Articles.org*

FROM THE DIRECTOR

TO GROW IN A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD... check out Marie Finn's (our co-founder) Bible Study PODCAST, it follows the GOSPEL reading, questions, and Commentary by her and her late husband Deacon Ken Finn, from *The Bread of Life Catholic Bible Study*. Link on our Website under the Bible Study tab.

A Blessed Easter Season to you all,
St. Dismas Guild

