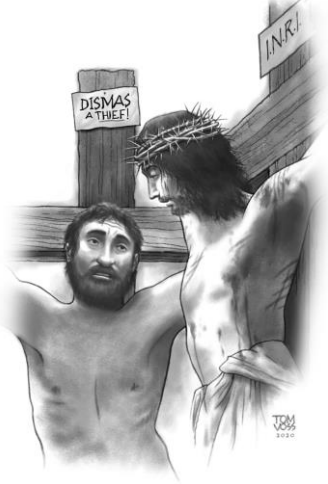


St. Dismas Guild
P.O. Box 2129
Escondido, CA 92033

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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.

Mar/Apr 2023

TESTIMONY

Dear St Dismas Guild, I have been receiving your newsletter for a number of years and really enjoyed the encouraging words and information. I am transferring to a halfway house and wanted to inform you so you can remove my name from the mailing list. Please keep up the good work and know that you had a part to play in keeping me strong in my faith and getting me through this tough time.

As a point of observation, I have noticed most Catholics don't know how to talk about their faith and most Christians don't know what the church stands for and what distinguishes it from any other "Christian" group. Of course, this isn't news to anyone who takes an active role in evangelization, but I would suggest your newsletter, add phrases or sections that teach how **the Catholic church is the church founded by Jesus Himself. We are the original Christian church**, and all others are not. Of course, we don't say this to boast, but to share the truth of who we are with those who believe in Jesus, and those who are still unsure. I have found that the simple fact opens the eyes of those who don't have a good understanding of early Christianity. For those inmates, who are not able to fully communicate the history of the church, the simple concept that the Catholic church alone was founded by Jesus is an easy way to bring people toward the fullness of the truth.

Thanks again for your newsletter and I'm thrilled to finally write to you asking to be removed from your mailing list because I am going home. God bless, C. G.

*Dear C.G., Congratulations! You have served your time and are soon to be going home. We are happy to have contributed to your return to God and His church. Yes, the Catholic church is the only church founded by Christ Himself while other churches have been founded by human beings. In the gospel of **Matthew 16:18**, Jesus said **“And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church...”** St. Peter's original name was Simon. Jesus changed his name to Peter, which in Aramaic means stone or rock. Jesus established His church by giving Peter and the Apostles the power to forgive or retain sin, the power to*

change bread and wine into His own body and blood, and the custody of the teachings of Christ and the authority to interpret these teachings through the Holy Spirit. No other church can make these claims.

*As you go out into the world, stay strong in your faith, and continue to study God's Word. We also encourage you to go to your local Catholic Church and receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation and attend Mass every Sunday. Associate with those who go to church and if your parish has a bible study go to it, if not, begin one. **“Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature.”** Mark 16:15*

DOING TIME WITH JESUS

St. Dismas Guild, I take this time to thank you for all the information you have sent to me. I've been moved to this new unit, and they have a strong Catholic Church here. I've been studying with the Bread of Life Cycle A that I received. I will be on this new unit for at least three years. I'd like to continue to receive your monthly newsletter. We have recently been issued a tablet and have been able to listen to Catholic podcasts, and they have helped me grow in my faith. I've been in prison for 15 years and may be here for another three. **I don't let this time get me down because I understand that I have to pay for what I did. I fell away from God for so many years and this was His best way to bring me back into His fold.** Since becoming closer to God, the anger I have had has left me. The blame I put on myself for not being there for my daughter has left me. I have a relationship with her and converse and show each other love. I thank you for helping bring me closer to Our Lord Jesus Christ. Your brother-in-Christ, E.A.

*Dear E.A., God bless your open heart! God knows all our hearts in every detail. You call it a blessing the day you entered prison. You were right about paying for what you did. Read **Matt. 5:25-26**, **“Amen, I say to you, you will not be released until you have paid the last penny.”***

*The beauty of all this is God's Divine Love and Mercy. As humans we look at outward appearances, but the Lord looks into our hearts. **1 Samuel 16:7***

God says, "I will remember your sins no more." **Jeremiah 31:34** Jesus will not hold our sins against us. "For I will forgive their evil doing and remember their sins no more" **Hebrews 8:12**.

Look at what our Lord has taught you in the past 15 years! Your faith has been rekindled, it's alive and on fire! God rewards those who seek Him. In **Hebrews 11:6** "No one can please God without faith, for whoever comes to God Must have Faith that God exists and rewards those who seek Him." By God's grace your heart has been opened and been saved. You were lost and now you have been found. Because God in His great mercy loves you for who you are, not where you've been or what you've done, as long as you have asked for His forgiveness. Read **Ephesians 2:4-10**. God's light is guiding you because you seek Him. As in **Jeremiah 29:11-14**, He will restore your life! May the love of Christ which is beyond all knowledge you are filled with His utter fullness of God....Glory be to Him whose power working in us can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine, glory be to Him from generation to generation in "the church" and Jesus Christ forever!! Read **Ephesians 3:17-19**.

God bless you, dear brother in Christ. May His grace and His words be rooted in your heart and continue to light your path on your journey walk with Our Lord.

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION w/Fr. Richard

Why do people pray to Mary and the Saints?

The fullness of the faith subsists in the Catholic Church. You can present these ideas to non-Catholics, but they may not understand them, and therefore continue to reject them.

We belong to the body of Christ and have the communion of saints: those souls already in **heaven**, those in **purgatory** on their way to heaven, and those of us on **earth**.

The Holy Bible teaches us that **WORSHIP** belongs to God alone. But in our communion of saints, we **PRAY** to, for, and with one another, to intercede for the needs of each one of us to God. **To pray means to ask**. Only God can grant anything that is good, so we all pray to Him. I pray for others as one of the saints, the holy ones of which the Bible speaks, on **earth**. I ask God to grant others what they need.

When we pray to the saints in **heaven**, we are asking them to join us in asking God to grant our needs, and they delight in that, bringing our needs to Jesus who can grant all things. As Catholics in our worship services, we do allow anyone to join us either in prayer or just to attend, but Only Catholics may receive Holy Communion.

PRO-LIFE

"Euthanasia and assisted suicide are never acceptable acts of mercy. They always gravely exploit the suffering and desperate, extinguishing life in the name of the 'quality life' itself." Pope John Paul II

SACRED TRADITION

THE CHURCHES DEDICATION FOR

MARCH: The Solemnity of **St. Joseph** is a special landmark this month in which we will celebrate the great honor bestowed upon the foster father of Jesus. Also, the Solemnity of the Annunciation (March 25) when we ponder Our Lady's fiat.

The entire month of March falls during the liturgical season of Lent which is represented by the liturgical color violet or purple – a symbol of penance, mortification, and the sorrow of a contrite heart.

"Lent is a time for believing, for welcoming God into our lives and allowing Him to 'make HIS dwelling' among us." Pope Francis

A Few FEAST DAYS:

March 17th – St. Patrick – Patron: of Ireland, died in 461.

March 19th – St. Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary

March 25th – Annunciation of the Lord

March 25th – St. Dismas was the so-called "Good Thief" who was crucified along with another thief and Jesus on the hill called Golgotha on the outskirts of Jerusalem. Writing centuries apart, two Church Fathers, Tertullian and Augustine, claimed that the three died on **March 25, the date that was designated as Dismas's Feast Day**.

The Gospel of Luke relates Jesus' conversation with the two thieves... Jesus is taunted by one thief, who challenges Jesus, "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us." **Luke 23:39** But the other thief ...acknowledges that Jesus is the Messiah, by saying to Him, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." **Luke 23:42** To which Jesus replies, "Amen, I say to you today, you will be with me in paradise." **Luke 23:43** <https://ucatholic.com/saints/saint-dismas/>

ST. DISMAS IS THE PATRON SAINT of Prisoners, Repentant Criminals – murderers, thieves, prostitutes, and those condemned to death.

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.



A Few FEAST DAYS:

April 6th, 7th, 8th – 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 9th – Easter Sunday – Easter is the Feast of Feasts, the complete and unreserved joy and gladness of all Christians.

April 16th – 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, "The soul that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion shall obtain complete forgiveness of sins and punishment." (Diary, 699)

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

April 25th – St. Mark – Patron: Against impenitence; attorneys; Egypt; glaziers; prisoners; Venice, Italy.

April 29th – St. Catherine of Siena – Patron: bodily ills; fire prevention; firefighters; illness; miscarriages; nurses; sexual temptation; sick people; temptations.

MESSAGE FROM SDG DIRECTOR

Our database records indicate that we are now in over **1000 Prison Facilities** across the United States!!! Thank you sharing our Ministry with others...

Praying you have a blessed Lent and Easter Season,
St. Dismas Guild

