

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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
San Diego, CA
Permit No. 2114

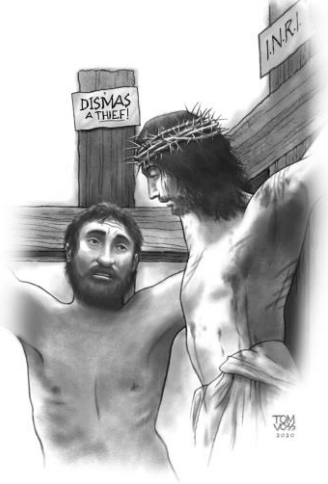
St. Dismas Guild ~ Prison Ministry

“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.

MAY/JUNE 2023



DEACON KEN'S CORNER

Letters from the late Deacon Ken Finn dated, April 1985, from Mission San Luis Rey Parish where he was assigned. *Italics are additions from Marie, 2023.*

As we continue to celebrate the Easter season, we are reminded that Jesus is alive; He continues to live among us. Alleluia means Jesus is Lord. Alleluia! He is still here saying to anyone who will listen, “Peace be with you.” He tells us in His Gospel, “I care about you.” He is real and is concerned about the unrealness in our lives. The unrealness comes from the so-called real world pushing power, status, wealth, education, and sex on to us. God’s will is where the real world is, and it is not God’s will that many of our young people be hooked on alcohol and drugs.

It is not God’s will that we have such promiscuity and blatant abuse of sex by our people. The result of this is a proliferation of all kinds of venereal disease. It is not the will of God that we have young people driving and drinking and killing and maiming innocent people. It is not God’s will that one of the highest forms of death between the age of 15-24 is suicide. It is not God’s will that every 22 seconds an abortion takes the life of a child of God. It is not God’s will to have discrimination in our country, our churches and even in our families.

It is God’s will that we have PEACE and SALVATION. It can only come about when we do exactly as Jesus tells us in His Gospel. He said, “Touch me, embrace me, hold on to me.” We are called to rely on Him, give our lives over to Him. We need to surrender our wills and hearts to Him, to really yield to Him. Trust in Him, believe in Him, have faith in Him. We need to surrender our wills and hearts to Him, to really yield to Him. Trust in Him, believe in Him, have faith in Him. This is the only way we can really have PEACE. Alleluia. (Jesus is Lord.) Alleluia!

“The Lord does not delay His promise, as some regard ‘delay,’ but He is patient with you, not wishing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.” 1 Peter 3:9

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, rely not on your own understanding, but in all your ways be mindful of Him and He will make straight your path.” Proverbs 3:5-6

+++++

She has been a prostitute since she was twelve years old and has lived a life of terror, humiliation, shame, fancy high living, alcohol, and drugs. She has been sexually abused and is now involved in sexual relationships with other women. She has been denied the presence of her mother – she was thrown out of her home at the age of 11. She sat there telling me all of this and every once in a while she would just shiver, like some evil ray of light was striking her.

She finally said to me, “Chaplain, do you think a piece of garbage like me has any kind of chance?” I smiled and said, “Jesus came for the sick, the hurt, and lonely. Do you qualify?” She looked at me with eyes that have seen not only hell, but Satan himself and said, “I am so sick, I am almost dead.” I shared with her that Jesus wanted her to touch HIM, rely on HIM, trust HIM, believe in HIM. She sat there and softly cried as I read her scripture. Then we prayed a healing prayer of repentance.

I ask you to hold this young woman up in your prayers. I believe in miracles, and I believe your prayers can open the gates of love and open this girls long ago turned off heart. Jesus is her only hope and cure. I felt overwhelmed with the presence of Jesus when we prayed and as I left her in her cell it was hard to believe she is only 17 years old. I ask you to pray mightily for the little flower of God.

There is no sin too great that God will not forgive. The only sin that cannot be forgiven is not believing in the One who God sent to take away sin, Jesus, His Spirit who lives today in you and me who believe. Our booklet, “Overcoming Sexual Abuse” tells you the key to healing is forgiveness.

DOING TIME WITH JESUS

Dear St. Dismas Guild, Hi! I’m an inmate and I’d like to share my story. I came to jail in 2001, and now, after 21

years I'm finally getting paroled. I've done your three-year bible study, **The Bread of Life**. It took a long time, but **it got me closer to the Lord**. I've been Catholic all my life, but never took it so seriously until I came to jail. Before I would go to Mass Saturday night, then go get drunk at the bar. I even left the church a year and a half before I came in. But once I came to jail, **I figured I better come back to church. I'm glad I did. It's the only thing that got me through these 21 years**. I've led rosary classes, helped baptize other inmates, and was a sponsor for a few. I love my faith. I ask for your prayers as I go out into the community after all this time. I'm probably going to be in a half-way house since I'm from this area. I know all the Catholic churches in this area. All I have to do is pick one. I will keep you in my prayers and thank you. God Bless. Sincerely yours in Christ, M.S.

Dear M.S., Best wishes on your parole. It may not seem so but your time in prison was a gift from God. You had the choice of how you would spend your years there and you chose to use your time prudently to study and grow in faith and love of God. You will find the world a very different place than the one you left 21 years ago. It will be necessary to use all that you have learned and experienced as you go out into the community. Scripture says "enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road broad that leads to destruction..." Matthew 7:13.

God has plans for you so associate with like-minded brothers, go to confession at least once a month and Mass every Sunday or more often if possible. Continue to read the Bible and the Bread of Life Bible Study to help you stay on the narrow path. Our prayers will continue for you and all the prisoners we have served over the years. "May the Lord, your God, show us the way we should take and what we should do." Jeremiah 42:3

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION w/Fr. Richard

Question about forgiving others and yourself?

Many times, anger directed outward toward another is anger inward against the self for failing to defend oneself, not knowing how to respond, and so forth. A person cannot stay angry at himself, so he projects it on to another. Review the situations in which you experienced the dysfunction in your family and how you felt. A young person cannot respond when he is betrayed, abused, cast aside. He wonders what he did wrong and is angry with self for not doing something to avoid the bad behavior of adults. After you know what angered you, forgive yourself. Then, each time the memory comes up and you wish to lash out at another, say, Ah, I have already forgiven myself and that person. It needs to be done many many times before the past no longer spills into and ruins the present. Thus, Jesus said 70 x 7 times.

PRO-LIFE

Message from St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta – "Every human being comes from the hand of God, and we all know something of God's Love for us through each person we encounter. Whatever our religion, we know that if we really want to Love, we must first, before anything else, learn to Forgive."

MESSAGE FROM MARIE

I know for me healing came when I repented of my anger. It seems many and probably most who are in jail have anger issues and unforgiveness. I first had to acknowledge I was angry. **Psalm 32:4-5, 8** tells us, **"For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength withered as in dry summer heat. Then I declared my sin to you; my guilt I did not hide. I said, 'I confess my transgression to the Lord,' and you took away the**

guilt of my sin." Once I did that the Lord said, **"I will instruct you and show you the way you should walk, give you counsel with my eye upon you."**

Ever since then Jesus has been my counselor, my spiritual director, along with the word of God, teachings of the Church, and my Pastor. I recognized that my anger was sin because it was toward someone who did something to me. Jesus' anger toward the Pharisees and money changers in the temple was because of what they were doing to someone else. They were cheating the people and desecrating His Father's house. His anger was not sin. **Ephesians 4:26** tells us, **"Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun set on your anger, and do not leave room for the devil."**

We are not fighting **"flesh and blood but principalities and powers of the nether world. Therefore, put on the armor of God, that you may be able to resist on the evil day and, having done everything, to hold your ground."** **Ephesians 6:12-13**

The things that grieve the Holy Spirit, with which you were sealed for the day of redemption are bitterness, fury, anger, shouting, and reviling. They must be removed from you, along with all malice. And be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving one another as God has forgiven you in Christ Jesus. He forgave you while you were still sinning, to forgive someone is a decision you can make and that decision you make will change your life. Love and forgiveness are decisions not feelings, the feelings come from the decisions you make.

SACRED TRADITION



THE CHURCHES DEDICATION FOR MAY: is to **The Blessed Virgin Mary**. **"THE MONTH OF MARY"** Devotion to the Blessed Mother throughout May originated in Rome in the 18th century to counter immorality and infidelity among students at a college there.

THE CHURCHES DEDICATION FOR JUNE: is to **The Sacred Heart of Jesus**. The Church celebrates the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus on the Friday following the second Sunday after Pentecost.



MESSAGE FROM SDG DIRECTOR

YOU ARE GOING INTO THE PRISONS, with your charitable donations...

Due to rising costs, we are at risk of closing our Ministry by the end of the year, but with the grace of God we are hopeful of our continued success.

Help us make a difference and keep our Ministry going strong. Your generous gift will help us continue to send our Bread of Life Catholic Bible Study workbooks, Bibles, Prayer Books, etc. to inmates each week, along with our bimonthly Newsletters.

Currently Serving:

- 1000 Prison **Facilities**.
- 58 New **Facilities** added in 2022.
- 5,900 Total receiving our bimonthly **Newsletter**.
- 62 avg. **New Inmates request** each month.
- 140 avg. **Packages** going out each month.
- 1,661 **Total Packages Sent** in 2022.

Recurring Monthly Donation Option on our website for Any Amount via Credit Card, at www.stdismasguild.org/donation.

Easter Blessings, St. Dismas Guild

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, Instagram, and Twitter @StDismasGuild

