

St. Dismas Guild
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St. Dismas Guild ~ Prison Ministry

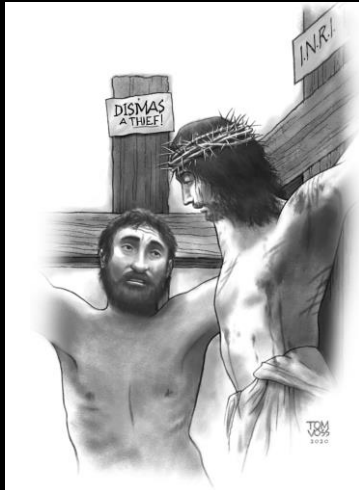
“Lord, when did I see you ...in prison, and not help you?” Matt. 25:44

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.

THE CHURCHES DEDICATION FOR AUGUST
is to **The Immaculate Heart of Mary**

August 2023



TESTIMONY

Personal question answered from the Bread of Life Bible Study... What is the testimony of the Lord you have to share? Do you have a personal testimony of how God has worked in your life? Have you shared this with your family and friends? Pray and ask God to reveal to you your own personal testimony this week. (Cycle A, pg. 96)

God called me out of darkness and into His wonderful light, from the sins of abortion, fornication, drugs, and alcohol at the age of 28 through the beautiful Art I studied in college of the Virgin Mary, especially the Annunciation images. I fell in love with her, and remember thinking, Jesus would have had a mother, wouldn't He? Soon after, she began leading me to her son Jesus, through Baptism, Confirmation, the Catholic Church, and my husband.

1/3 Where was God in your Life, Child/Teenage years? - I lived with my grandmother the first 7 years of my life and she took us to her Baptist church, and I enjoyed God's love. But in my teens, after her death, I fell away, and God was not allowed in my life. At 17 I had my first abortion because the adults in my life told me what to do. At 23 I had another abortion because I thought well this seems wrong, but it's legal and I've done this before, so I went ahead. Little did I know the destruction that would follow. I fell into a deep depression, drugs, and alcohol, etc. I could have easily ended up in prison or dead.

1/3 How did Christ change your life? - Mother Mary heard my pleas for help and maybe she knew that I wanted nothing to do with God, so she led me ever so gently in the right direction. I began seeking help from counselors about my dysfunctional family and destructive past and started attending Al-anon meetings that met at a Catholic Church. I could acknowledge "a power greater than myself," but I couldn't say God, so accepting "Higher Power" was okay for me at the time. I started feeling better and soon after met my husband to be who was a fallen away Catholic. We talked about many things and our Spirituality seemed important to both of us. He began explaining all things Catholic to me and it all seemed like The Truth, and I wanted more. I enrolled in the RCIA classes at the parish that was next to

my university campus, and he began to come with me. I soon realized I had never been baptized and could be forgiven of all my horrible sins and get a fresh start on life. I was Baptized at the Easter Vigil 1988 March 25th, the Feast of the Annunciation and St. Dismas.

1/3 How is God working in your life now? – By the Grace of God, I wake up each day and thank Him for another day to Live, Learn and Love... I say my prayers throughout the day, especially the Rosary, and make sure to attend mass each Sunday and other days during the week, along with adoration when I'm able. I thoroughly enjoy reading the daily readings and reflections from Word Among Us and DailyScripture.net and share my art photography on social media along with a scripture verse or prayer that I learned for the day. I also love completing the Bread of Life Catholic Bible Study and being prepared for mass each Sunday. I also try to get to monthly confession, and yearly retreats if possible. Once I realized how much God had forgiven the sins of my past, and how much He loves me, I knew that a personal relationship with Him was what I needed to stay close to Him and away from the sinful life I was leading all those years ago. My favorite verse has become, ***“So I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven; hence, she has shown great love. But the one to whom little is forgiven, loves little.”*** From **Luke 7:47** Blessings, S.S. – SDG volunteer

S.S., God loves you so much and had His hand on you before you were formed in the womb of your mother. Living with your grandmother the first 7 years of your life, taking you to her Baptist church, you enjoyed God's Love. It seems like you experienced His Love for you through the Word of God in those formative years. Your love for art and falling in love with Mary through the images of her lead you to Jesus. It seems like you needed a woman to lead you there. Your mom didn't raise you well, so our Blessed Mother touched your heart and led you to her Son. I can see how she stepped in and became a mother to you. Every child needs a mother's love. Our Lord protected you from ending up in prison or dead from the lifestyle you

were living. So many are in prison now because of drugs. For people that know you now would never have guessed you went through abortions, drugs & pre-marital sex. You are now, through the grace of God and choosing to cooperate with the Holy Spirit, being obedient to the Word of God and becoming more like the Virgin Mary each day. God bless you S.S., your obedience and purity will bring many to Jesus. **"I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. Choose life, then, that you and your descendants may live, by loving the Lord, your God, heeding His voice, and holding fast to Him."** Deuteronomy 30:19-20

and will continue to take us by the hand, walk with us step by step and guide our ways for the good He has in store for our lives, and life eternal! All for His glory!

DEACON KEN'S CORNER

LETTER FROM THE LATE DEACON KEN FINN, dated August 1983. She stood there at the altar rail and held out her hand to receive the Bread of Life. I was startled because she was recently released from prison and told me over the phone that she was doing all right. I forgot about her and there she was, she looked radiant. Her smile was the smile of someone who has found what it is to be really real. I handed her the Eucharist and she said softly, but joyfully, "Amen, Chaplain, Amen." I responded to her Alleluia (Jesus is Lord) Alleluia.

He healed this young woman, and He will heal you and me. All we need to do is reach out and touch Him and say, **"Here I am Lord, heal me."** Psalm 6:2 **"So if a son frees you, then you will truly be free."** John 8:36

PRO-LIFE

ST. MOTHER TERESA QUOTES

"We must not be surprised when we hear of murders, of killings, of wars, of hatred. If a mother can kill her own child, what is left but for us to kill each other."

MESSAGE FROM MARIE FINN

"God see's the heart we look at appearances." 1 Samuel 16:7 We all hunger for love, to love and to be loved. There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends. Jesus laid down His life for you and me because He loves us so much. There is no discrimination with God. Every heart looks the same, it is a muscle that beats and the flow of blood runs through the body nourishing it and giving it life.

Because we are temples of the Holy Spirit the blood of Christ becomes mingled with our blood and gives us life, life to the full. The love of God flows through our bodies when we turn to God and repent of our sins. We can work together, Catholic's and Protestants, by sharing in the works of loving one another.

SACRED TRADITION

THE CHURCHES DEDICATION FOR AUGUST: ... is to **The Immaculate Heart of Mary.** The entire month falls within the liturgical season of **Ordinary Time.**

A FEW FEAST DAYS:

August 6th - Transfiguration,

The Transfiguration foretells the glory of the Lord as God, and His Ascension into heaven.

August 14th - St. Maximilian Kolbe, patron of **prisoners,**

August 15th - Assumption of Mary - Feast Day

August 22nd - Queenship of Mary - Memorial

August 27th - St. Monica, patron saint of abuse victims, wives, alcoholics, and widows. Mother to St. Augustine.

August 28th - St. Augustine, patron saint of theologians, he led a life of loose living before his conversion.



FROM THE DIRECTOR

WE ARE CELEBRATING OUR 34th ANNIVERSARY of being an Incorporated Non-Profit Ministry August 18th, 1989, (Newsletter began in 1982) and we Thank All who have partnered with us over all these years...

*May the Lord bless and keep you,
St. Dismas Guild*



DOING TIME WITH JESUS

Dear St. Dismas Guild, my name is S.P. Since March 2022 I have been blessed to have your Bread of Life Catholic Bible Study as one of my daily resources for spiritual support and growth. Today it dawned on me how little of this book there is left as we near the conclusion of 2022. I was wondering if you could send me the next Cycle. As of now, I have just under four years left on my sentence (not including good time I hope to continue building and accessing.) I CANNOT imagine continuing my time here, nor when I get out, without your amazing workbook. I love how it gets me actively engaged in God's Word daily, and prepares me for our Sunday Mass. It's great to be "in-the-know" ahead of time before I watch EWTN on Sunday mornings. Thank you for any help you can provide to keep me plugged in and growing in faith to Our Lord Jesus Christ. Bless you all. S.P.

S.P., We are so glad the Bread of Life has helped you so much. It sounds like doing it you are growing in faith as "Faith comes through hearing, and what is heard is the Word of Christ." Romans 10:17 The good thing about the study is you can do it yourself and grow in your personal relationship with God. Experiencing His personal love for you helps you to love others the way He loves you. John 13:3 It can heal marriages if both the man and the woman do it on their own then come together and share their answers. Keep up the good work S.P. and when you get out keep it up and you won't end up back in prison.

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GODS PUZZLE - Poem by B.L.

I once thought my life was a puzzle, one I had to put together on my own, until the day you told me, that I am not alone.

You said you were there, through all the days and nights, you'll never leave me nor forsake me, that I should trust in you.

Lord that day was my redemption, one I will never forget, for today I feel you all around me, helping put together the puzzle of my life.

There are pieces that don't look right, and ones I don't understand, but I trust in you with all my heart, and all my soul, and all my mind, that you will use each piece for good. I cannot wait for the day, your puzzle is complete, for you. Will stand back and say, "it is very good."

B.L., Life is like a puzzle, everyday trials, decisions, and bad choices. But just like it says in Sirach 2:1 "My child, if you are going to serve the Lord, be prepared for the times you are put to the test." Every day we are put to the test with our faith. Sometimes good, sometimes bad. God will always surprise us. Every time we make wrong choices, the puzzle scatters and we fall. But as we learn from our falls, Jesus' love and Mercy continues to direct our ways with His will as we learn to Trust. See Proverbs 2:5.6, Ecclesiastes 7:4 & 20 and Sirach 2:18.

Life will always be a continued puzzle because we will always be faced with challenges and obstacles that arise when least expected. But God knows and sees our hearts,