

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 Studies, free of charge, to inmates.

Donations can be made on our website [www.StDismasGuild.org](http://www.StDismasGuild.org) or by mail, PO Box 2129, Escondido, CA, 92033.

### THE CHURCHES DEDICATION FOR OCTOBER:

is to the **Most Holy Rosary...**

**October 2023**

### **TESTIMONY**

Dear St. Dismas Guild, thank you so much for the work you are doing in prison ministry. It's easy to feel forgotten when you're behind bars. I'm 52 years old and this is my first time in prison. I received a long sentence for a D.V. assault involving my wife, now ex-wife. My family of three children all went to Catholic school. My wife and I were involved with church and school events. Although I attended Mass at least once a week, we seemed to be at our church all the time for some reason or another. I was really just going through the motions of being a Catholic, mostly for the kid's sake rather than for any true devotion to Jesus or the Church. After some problems came up with my business and some old issues with my wife that had never been properly resolved, I started drinking more and more and fighting with my wife.

**1 Peter 5:8 “Be sober and vigilant, your opponent the devil is prowling around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.”** That's good advice! I left the door wide open for the Adversary to walk right into my life. Soon I was angry all the time, and one night it all exploded. The next day I was in a jail cell withdrawing from alcohol and other stuff. I was at rock bottom. When I thought my life could not get any worse, I received divorce papers and then was informed our family home for the past 15 years was being sold. I had neglected to pay the mortgage and other household bills, so that was also my fault.

**When God is all you have you realize He is all you really need. For the first time in my life, I started praying and reading the Bible for hours and hours every day. I could feel Jesus' love.** After learning how to pray the Rosary, I felt the warmth of Our Lady comforting me. The county jail I was in didn't have much of a religion program and no Catholic services.

I was eventually released on bond. I found a good Catholic Church and a great Confessor. Although I lost my trial and was sentenced to prison, I accepted it as part of God's plan for my life. The facility I'm in currently has a

vibrant Catholic community and a great priest. We have Mass every Sunday and on Thursday evenings we read the Liturgy of the Hours and then watch a Christian speaker or movie. I am blessed that my oldest son speaks to me regularly and I'm praying that the rest of my family forgives me and lets me back into their lives. Thank you, Lord for all my Blessings! D.G.

*Blessings D.G., God has opened your heart. Just like all of us from the beginning when He created us, He had plans to bring about the future you hope for. Read **Jeremiah 29:11-14.***

*Life definitely has its challenges and obstacles that arise and were never in our plans. But God also gave us a free will. Read **Sirach 15:15-17.** He gives us the opportunity to choose.*

*And so, we fall and like you say, "Hit rock bottom". But that doesn't mean God doesn't love us, He's Just giving us another opportunity to learn from our mistakes and depend on His Will instead of ours.*

*God's mercy is endless, you were blessed to go to prison because, you have lost everything. God has given you this time to reflect on and focus on your new beginnings, turning back to the one person who loves you for who you are, God! He now becomes the focus of your life. As we surrender to Him fully, we know, "**He meets every need at the proper time.**" **Sirach 39:33** God knows our hearts and is also full of mercy full of forgiveness.*

*God's plan is so perfect that even sin, tragedy, and painful deaths are used to bring us to Divine Union. God wisely makes the problem itself part of the solution.*

*Mother Teresa wrote, "**Forgiveness is at the heart of a healthy relationship. Excuse rather than accuse... Forgive and ask to be forgiven. Forgiveness is a beautiful gift to those who hurt us.**"*

*It is not the soul that does God's will, but God who does the soul's will. Now you see His Light and He is redirecting your life to live for Him. Continue to embrace the catholic community that God directed you to. Continue to Persevere in prayer and never give up Hope for the rest of your family to forgive you.*

May Our Lord continue to heal your heart and the hearts of your loved ones. Embrace and enjoy your new journey. God bless you!

### DOING TIME WITH JESUS

Dear St. Dismas Guild, I am currently an inmate and I have been reading all the mail that I have been receiving from you. It has helped me in numerous different ways. It has **motivated me to look forward to a positive future and to not lose hope** in regard to the situation I am in. I've been able to get out of my bed more often and been able to become more sociable with the other inmates. I look forward to positive outcomes in my life and plan to better my life when I get out of here.

I am interested in these booklets: *The Book on Forgiveness* and *Speak the Truth in Love*. Please pick one and send it to me. I'd also like to ask if you have any coloring books I could have? Thank you very much for everything. Sincerely, G.H.

Dear G.H., It is good to know that the SDG newsletters and books are helping you. We would like to encourage you to share what you are learning with the other inmates who are experiencing the same depression and fears that you are. God put us here to help each other, sometimes just a smile or a kind word will totally change someone's day and yours, too. To quote Mother Teresa **"We shall never know all the good that a simple smile can do."**

Why wait until you are released to better your life; start today. Live each day knowing God loves you right now, as you are. Read **1 Corinthians 13:4** to see what love is. Then show that love to others and you will see how much your life will change. This is a Bible verse for you **"... this is what the Lord says, Fear not, for I have redeemed you, I have summoned you by name; you are mine."** Isaiah 43:1 We sent the two booklets that you requested, no coloring books, sorry...

### DEACON KEN'S CORNER

**LETTER FROM THE LATE DEACON KEN FINN, dated April 1985.** Anyone who serves God will discover sooner or later that the great hindrance to his work is not others but himself. He will discover that his inward man (spirit) and his outward man (soul or mind) are not in harmony. Whether our works are fruitful or not depends upon whether our outward man has been broken by the Lord. We need to become earthen vessels that have been emptied out (pride, vanity ego) and then filled with the power of His Holy Spirit.

I share this with you because it is a real fact of life in this kind of ministry. I ask you to place the names of doctors, ministers, priests, nurses, counselors, and teachers on your prayer request card and pray the prayer of repentance for these people. They need your daily prayers, so that they can do God's work and be fully effective. I have seen the power of intercessory prayer become manifest in prison and the hospital many times.

I begin every counseling in prayer, and I close every session in prayer. I share that the healing power in prayer is beyond comprehension and then I share some real results of prayer. I have seen over the last six years, many different kinds of therapy used for many types of behavior. In my experience I have found that the only answer is "Jesus," I have found (1) a daily time of quiet prayer, (2) a reading of Scripture, (3) a prayer of repentance (a review of the day's actions). Jesus Christ gives us the incredible gift of "choice", His love for us is an invitation, not a threat, and there is no fear because there is no punishment. I have shared with you testimonies of people in jails, hospitals and child abuse centers, and even as sad as they may sound, the joy is that God is among and healing His people.

**"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been purchased at a price. Therefore, glorify God in your body."** 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

### SACRED TRADITION

#### THE CHURCHES DEDICATION FOR OCTOBER:

"... is to the **Most Holy Rosary**. This is primarily due to the fact that the liturgical feast of Our Lady of the Rosary is celebrated annually on October 7th. It was instituted to honor the Blessed Virgin Mary in gratitude for the protection that she gives the Church in answer to the praying of the Rosary by the faithful." (Rev. Matthew R. Mauriello, Source: Catholic.net)



#### A Few FEAST DAYS:

- Oct. 2<sup>nd</sup> - Guardian Angels**, Guardian angels are the special angels assigned to humans, helping us throughout our lives from conception until death.
- Oct. 3<sup>rd</sup> - St. Therese of Lisieux**, patron of the Missions.
- Oct. 4<sup>th</sup> - St. Francis of Assisi**, patron of Animals, Merchants, and Ecology.
- Oct. 5<sup>th</sup> - St. Faustina Kowalska**, patron of mercy.
- Oct. 7<sup>th</sup> - Our Lady of the Rosary**, patron saint of Guatemala and North Carolina.
- Oct. 15<sup>th</sup> - St. Teresa of Jesus**, Virgin, Doctor of the Church, patron of headache sufferers and writers.
- Oct. 24<sup>th</sup> - St. Raphael the Archangel**, patron of travelers, the blind, and bodily ills.

### PRO-LIFE

**"EACH YEAR THE CHURCH** in the United States celebrates **Respect Life Month**, and the first Sunday of October is observed as **Respect Life Sunday**. As Catholics, we are called to cherish, defend, and protect those who are most vulnerable, from the beginning of life to its end, and at every point in between. During the month of October, the Church asks us to reflect more deeply on the dignity of every human life." **respectlife.org**

### MESSAGE FROM SDG DIRECTOR

**TO GROW IN A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP** with God, we encourage you to participate in **The Bread of Life Catholic Bible Study** workbook, written by our Founders Deacon Ken and Marie Finn. This workbook follows the Liturgical Calendar of the Church and helps prepare you for the upcoming Sunday Mass readings.

**We begin Cycle B the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent, December 3rd. this year.** Please wait until late Oct. to order. Thank you...

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**FIRST COME FIRST SERVE** - We have 80 little booklets on **The Baptism of the Holy Spirit**.

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*Let the Peace of Christ be with you always,  
St. Dismas Guild*

