

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](http://www.StDismasGuild.org)  
or by mail, PO Box 2129, Escondido, CA, 92033.

*The Churches Dedication For DECEMBER:*  
is to the **Immaculate Conception of Mary...**

**December 2023**



### TESTIMONY

To Whom it May Concern, hello, my name is W.C. and I am currently incarcerated. I was attending our Catholic service and saw a newsletter on our table. I picked it up and read it a couple days later. It was your September 2023 issue. I found it very interesting and inspiring to hear other prisoners' stories, especially the letter from J.J. points of his story seem reflected in mine.

I was not a religious person growing up. Both my parents were Catholic, but my dad was divorced and the church at that time was reluctant to baptize me when I was born, and my parents stepped away from regularly attending church. When I was 13, I was Baptized, given First Communion and Confirmed on Easter. After a year or so of attending regularly I, as a teenager, was given a choice and decided to stop attending.

Over the years I made some bad choices and let myself go down paths that led me to serving a 15-year sentence. While my legal issues were in pretrial phase **I started attending church regularly during the nine months** I was at a halfway house. At first it started out as just an excuse to get out of the house I was forced to be in if I wasn't working. **The more I attended though, the more I realized that Jesus was guiding me back to Him and a state of grace.** I found myself really reflecting on the decisions and actions that led to my criminal issues and really wanting to change. I have started that process and am still on that journey to become a good Christian and follower of Jesus. It is a struggle at times, but I find each day I try and each time I remind myself I am not alone on this road it becomes easier. **I am now spending time daily in prayer and trying to take time every day to read the bible (even if it is only a chapter a day.)**

I asked my mom and Uncle (who happens to be a Catholic Priest) to see if they could find me a Bible study by correspondence. Then the next week I found your newsletter. If that isn't a sign, I'm not sure what is! So, I would like to request more information on your bible study

program or, if you want, to just send the workbook. This is all new to me. I have been down since (date). **I have found great comfort in His Word and am excited to continue to grow my faith and strengthen my understanding of my relationship with Jesus.** If I could get on your mailing list for your monthly newsletter, that would be nice too. Also, in the September letter you mentioned two books available. If the booklet "The Book on Forgiveness" talks about forgiving yourself, I would be very interested in that. Otherwise, the other book "Speak the Truth in Love" would be fine too. Thank you for all your organization does. Being on this side of the fence can be difficult, but knowing others out there care to take time and money to help us means a lot. Thank you and God Bless. W.C.

*Dear WC, it is the Good Shepherd that brought you back. You're right He was guiding you back to Himself. He is always looking for strays. We sent you Cycle B of the Bread of Life Catholic Bible Study workbook. This is a simple bible study that draws you into a relationship with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. As you do the study talk to God and build your relationship with Him.*

*I know this Christmas time must make you feel sad being locked up away from your family and friends. So glad you find great comfort in the Word. "Cast all your cares on Him because He cares for you." 1 Peter 5:7 The Spirit is known as the comforter. The Word is Jesus, the healer. As you do the study ask the Spirit to teach you how to live out the plan God has for you. Jeremiah 29:11 says, "For I know well the plans I have in mind for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare, not for woe! Plans to give you a future full of hope." As you get into the Word of God the Spirit will convict you of your sins. "Then I acknowledged my sin to you, my guilt I covered not. I said, 'I confess my faults to the Lord,' and you took away the guilt of my sin." Psalm 32:5 In time He will guide you to all truth about yourself and most of all about Him, the Way, the Truth, and the Life to be lived. God bless you. We are praying for you and all prisoners this Christmas season and all through the year.*

## DEACON KEN'S CORNER

**LETTERS FROM THE LATE Deacon Ken Finn dated, Dec. 1982**, from Mission San Luis Rey Parish where he was assigned.

Christmas is the Time of Joy and Giving and we received the most wonderful gift of all when we receive Christ into our hearts on Christmas morning. I have seen the presence of Christ in many people this year and I am going to write about some of them in my Christmas list.

### I think Jesus is present...

When people give their time, money, and talent to make this ministry grow.

When a man completes a semester of high school for the first time while in jail and learns how to pray.

When a teenage murderer, who has been abused, since he was seven years old asks if God could still love him, and then begs the Lord to come into his heart and free him from all of his darkness.

When a former Hell's Angels' biker being tried for major crimes, gives his life completely over to Christ.

When a convicted murderer, who readily admits that only by accepting Jesus Christ into his life, he has a chance to survive a life sentence in prison.

When a young woman resists a would-be rapist, and is completely paralyzed because of this attack, and now prays that the Lord will forgive her of her anger and protect her, and her two little children.

When a young wife of a heroin addict, tries to live in hope of a miracle for her husband and tries to give her two little children a normal life.

When the father of a murdered child who still can't believe that God would let something this horrible happen to his family, still clings to God's healing power of forgiveness, hope, and Victory.

I close by saying thank you to all of you for saying "yes" to the Lord for your support. My family, and I hope the peace of Jesus will become present in the hearts of all and we pray for Gods blessings for you. Merry Christmas and God bless you.

## PRO-LIFE

"**THERE IS A HUGE DIFFERENCE** between 'regret' and 'guilt'. Once you have received Christ's forgiveness your guilt is removed *"as far as the East is from the West..." Psalm 103:12* an infinite distance. To emphasize this God says **He can't even remember it. (Hebrews 8:12, Isaiah 43:25, Acts 3:19, etc.)** But you and I will never forget what we have done, and we will always 'regret' it. The guilt is Gone...is removed and cast into the sea, never to resurface again. But we will always carry the regret and it should drive us to Love God more and appreciate His Mercy that much more. This should make us want to shout from the rooftops His Great Love and Forgiveness and Power to Heal.

"Every time we fight for other children not to be aborted our children did not die in vain. Every time we help a woman to heal after her abortion it honors our children that we aborted. It gives great glory to God when we share that message with others and bring them healing. It points to the Salvation that is in Christ Jesus and that He Delights to forgive and make whole again." Post abortive women writing to another post abortive woman who was grieving – Facebook post.

## SPIRITUAL DIRECTION w/Fr. Richard

**QUESTION ABOUT THE BOOK of Revelation and rapture?**

*The book of Revelation is in the style of apocalyptic writing, fantastic imagery to sustain the communities during a time of crisis. The warnings to the 7 churches in Asia minor to reform are followed by images of heaven, of*

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Evangelization through Scripture and Ministry to prisons. ~ [www.StDismasGuild.org](http://www.StDismasGuild.org)  
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*retribution against her enemies, and the coming of Jesus and the new Jerusalem.*

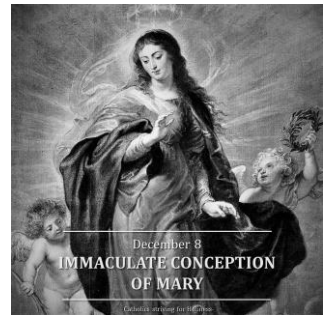
*Your jailhouse preachers teach what they know regarding Jesus' second coming from 1 Thessalonians 4 the dead will arise first, and then anyone left alive will be taken up by Jesus. Rapture is a word used to describe this event.*

*Since Jesus said, even He did not know the hour, He taught us to be ready for His coming. 1) Baptism by water and the Holy Spirit (John 3:5f), 2) Jesus command that we eat His flesh and drink His blood to have eternal life and to be raised on the last day (John 6:51-58), and 3) that we do the Father's Will so that Jesus and the Father make their home in us (John 14:23) which is obeying the commandments, worshiping, and being charitable. This will allow us to be raised from the dead or taken up if we are still alive when Jesus comes.*

## SACRED TRADITION

**THE CHURCHES DEDICATION FOR DECEMBER:**

...is to the **Immaculate Conception of Mary**, "From all eternity God chose with infinite wisdom the woman who would be the Mother of His divine Son. To prepare for the Word Incarnate a spotless and holy tabernacle, God created Mary in grace and endowed her from the moment of her conception with all the perfections suited to her exalted dignity. St. Thomas teaches that through her intimacy with Christ, the principle of grace, she possessed beyond all creatures a fullness of divine life." — *Liturgical Meditations*, The Sisters of St. Dominic (catholicculture.org)



### A Few FEAST DAYS:

**Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup> – First Sunday of Advent.** A new liturgical year, Cycle B, the Church not only wishes to indicate the beginning of a period, but the beginning of a renewed commitment to the Faith by all those who follow Christ, the Lord.

**Dec. 8<sup>th</sup> – Immaculate Conception of Mary, Holy Day of Obligation.**

**Dec. 9<sup>th</sup> – Juan Diego**

**Dec. 12<sup>th</sup> – Our Lady of Guadalupe**

**Dec. 25<sup>th</sup> – Christmas, Holy Day of Obligation.**

**Dec. 31<sup>st</sup> – Feast of the Holy Family**

## MESSAGE FROM SDG DIRECTOR

**A CHRISTMAS BLESSING:** "Heavenly Father, we give thanks for the birth of Your son Jesus Christ, who embodies the love and light of the world. On this festive day, may we be reminded of the Joy and Hope we can experience through our Faith in Your divine grace. Help us to focus on the True meaning of Christmas and to share the warmth and kindness of Your many blessings with those around us. Help us to open our hearts and accept the gifts of Peace, Love, and Joy that come through You. We ask for Your mercy and guidance as we continue our journey of Faith. Amen." Catholicreadings.org

*To grow in a personal relationship with God, we encourage you to participate in **The Bread of Life Catholic Bible Study**. This workbook was written by our Founders Deacon Ken and Marie Finn. It follows the Liturgical Calendar of the Church and helps prepare you for the upcoming Sunday Mass readings. **We begin Cycle B on Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023.** Request yours today... This is not a correspondence course.*

**Christmas Blessings,**  
**St. Dismas Guild**

