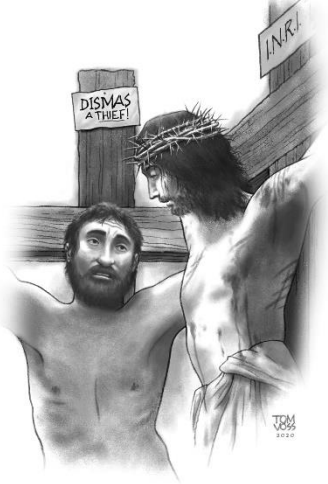


St. Dismas Guild  
P.O. Box 2129  
Escondido, CA 92033

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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 FEBRUARY:

is to the **Holy Family...**

**February 2024**

### **TESTIMONY**

Dear St. Dismas Guild, Now as an old year passes and a new year lay ahead, I reflect on another year closer to home and a new year ahead where I may be closer to my Heavenly Home. That depends on how much closer I follow the Word of God that I discover by doing the Bible Study you provide so faithfully.

When I was younger, I was in love with Christ and our Holy Mother Church. As a boy, the Mass was in Latin and music was Gregorian Chants among others. I lived for no other reason than to worship God and follow the tenets of the Catholic Church. **I loved that feeling of belonging to something that could end in paradise with Jesus and our Blessed Mother.** As I grew up, that feeling, that love waned. I look back at the reason for that loss of something I loved so much as a child and could only blame myself. **Christ hadn't changed, I changed.** I believed it was just the allure of the world's vices that had become more tangible to me. My parents stopped going to church and I followed that for years, and years, and years. It may be the same things a lot of my brothers in here find in prison and that rekindling of our faith.

**Yes, I had to go to prison. Yes, I had to come to prison to find Christ... again.** I believe with everything within me that if I hadn't come to prison, I'd be lost. Now, I can't believe I could exist in here without Christ. **He is my life; my love and everything and every way I find meaning.** If I hadn't found Christ in here (like He was lost) I would have nothing but death, the grave, and Hell. I'm now in a wonderful place with Christ by my side, even those times when He's carrying me. I wouldn't trade what I have in here with anyone or anything. I'm blessed, although sometimes it's hard to tell. I remember something St. Theresa of Avila said at prayer, "If this is the way you treat your friends, Lord, no wonder you have so few."

Now that I'm getting older, the body pains persist, but I offer them up for those souls whose needs are great in Purgatory, and other intentions. So that's my story and I'm sticking to it. **May the Lord bless, protect, comfort, and**

**guide you all now and always.** Sincerely yours, your brother in faith, AT

*Dear brother in Christ, AT, God is amazing and knows exactly what He is doing. So grateful, because we don't, for we are NOTHING without Him! He wants us to depend on Him instead of ourselves, and so He gave us all a free will. As in Sirach 15:14-17 "God in the beginning created human beings and made them subject to their own free choice. If you choose, you can keep the commandments; loyalty is doing the will of God. Set before you are fire and water; to whatever you choose, stretch out your hand. Before everyone are life and death, whichever they choose will be given them." We all make mistakes with our free will but God knows our hearts. In Psalm 112:4 "Light shines in the darkness for good people, for those who are merciful, kind and just." God knew what was in your heart. But he allowed you to choose your own path in life instead of His, like most of us. But it is through these wrong choices and His grace, He directs our ways to His. He allows us to fall so we can find our way back to Him. His mercy is endless and He forgives us and is very patient. See 2 Peter 3:9. AT, God Has truly blessed you and placed you where you needed to be to find Him. As you yourself said. You are remorseful for your sins and your heart has been open to receive All that He desires to give you. Actually, the moment He created you, He had plans for you. See Jeremiah 29:11-14. Like the prodigal son in Luke 15:24 "For the son of mine was dead, but now he is alive. He was lost but now he has been found." So happy for your new life, AT. Like you said, "with Christ by my side." He was always by your side. No matter how many times we may fall, He will continue to lift us up. May His light continue to shine in you and always be a reflection of His love to others you continue to meet along the way. Ephesians 1:18-19 "I ask that your mind be open to see His light so that you will know what is the HOPE to which He has called you, how rich are the wonderful blessings He promises His people, and how great is His power at work in us who Believe!"*

*God bless you, and continue to shine in His light!*

*Yours truly in Christ, D.O*

## DOING TIME WITH JESUS

Hi St. Dismas Guild, I want to say it is a blessing always to receive your prison ministry mail each and every month. It is a miracle to read how many inmates' lives have changed for the better through corresponding with you all through mail. Please continue working with us who are behind these prison walls. I have been in prison over 25 years and every day I truly find someone hungry for the truth! God Bless, HF

*Dear HF., What a gift it was to receive your letter! We so appreciate you taking the time to let us know how the St. Dismas Guild had blessed you. These are the moments that remind us why we work and pray so hard to bring hope and encouragement to those behind bars – because in equal measure, you bring hope and encouragement to us. May God continue to bless you for seeking Him. He is the author of every good thing in our lives, and His mercy is everlasting. I pray that He will give you peace and joy as you fulfill your time in prison, and that your heart would know the true freedom only Christ can provide.*

*Peace of Christ, St. Dismas Guild Director*

## DEACON KEN'S CORNER

**Letter from the late Deacon Ken Finn dated, May 1982. Blessed are the Meek** Some think being gentle and meek is being weak and wishy-washy. Meekness in a man or woman incarcerated can be uncomfortable and sometimes even dangerous to their own welfare. A deputy's example of gentleness, firmness, and fairness is still the strongest example of Christ in the penal system that I see. I have been blessed to be serving in jail where there are so many Christian examples of Christ within the staff. I urge you to pray for the men and women who work at hospitals and in jail facilities where pain, loneliness, and even death are consistently in evidence.

## SACRED TRADITION

**The Church's Dedication for February:** "...is dedicated to the **Holy Family**. The special devotion which proposes the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph as the model of virtue of all Christian households began in the 17th century. ... The feast was welcomed by succeeding Pontiffs as an efficacious means for bringing home to the Christian people the example of the Holy Family at Nazareth, and by the restoration of the true spirit of family life, stemming from, in some measure, the evils of present-day society. ~ catholicculture.org



### A Few FEAST DAYS:

**Feb. 2<sup>nd</sup> – Presentation of the Lord**

**Feb. 6<sup>th</sup> – St. Paul Miki and Companions, Martyrs**

**Feb. 8<sup>th</sup> – St. Josephine Bakhita**

**Feb. 11<sup>th</sup> – Our Lady of Lourdes**

**Feb. 14<sup>th</sup> – Ash Wednesday – Lent Begins**

**Feb. 22<sup>nd</sup> – Feast of Chair of St. Peter**

## SPIRITUAL DIRECTION w/Fr. Richard

**A Catholic Primer** God is the authority for truth and for belief. He has revealed Himself and His Truth in salvation history, recorded in the Holy Bible and the Tradition of the Holy Catholic Church.

These real authorities, which can be trusted, reveal that Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God the Father. At the Father's appointed time, Jesus took flesh by the power of the Holy Spirit and was born of the Virgin Mary with two natures, divine and human.

He taught God's truth that man could be forgiven of his sins and have eternal life after death in a new and resurrected body.

That first forgiveness is given in baptism. After that through the sacrament of Penance, sins are forgiven.

People walk with God here on earth when they are free from sin and consider God above their earthly desires. When Jesus comes again, those who are faithful to Jesus will walk with God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit forever.

Go to Confession, receive Holy Communion, and think of God, walking with Him as best you can by His grace in this life on the journey to eternal life.

## PRO-LIFE

**"How can there be too many children? That is like saying there are too many flowers."** - St. Teresa of Calcutta

**"Over 32,000 boys & girls have been saved because of the overturning of Roe v Wade. So don't let anyone tell you that darkness is winning. 32,000 lives."** - Lila Rose

St. Dismas Guild Rosary for Life meets every Friday from 10:30 – 11:30 am in front of Planned Parenthood in Escondido, CA

## MESSAGE FROM SDG DIRECTOR

**Some exciting new offerings from the St. Dismas Guild Library:**

**This is My Body** – a lovely pamphlet on offer from Presentation Ministries featuring twenty beautiful meditations on the Eucharist. This powerful food for thought and prayer will nourish your spiritual hunger for our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament.

**First come, first serve! A Blue-Collar Answer to Protestantism: Catholic Questions Protestants Can't Answer** – "How to explain and defend Catholic teaching using common sense, simple logic, and the Bible."

**How to write a Testimonial:** We welcome personal testimonies and questions for our Spiritual Director for the Newsletter, though we cannot publish each one we receive. Please write and tell us your story. **Format your testimony in this way** – 1/3 Child/Teenage years, 1/3 How did Christ change your life? 1/3 How is God working in your life now? Please limit your testimony to 500 words.

**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 began Cycle B in Dec. 2023. Request yours today...**

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

