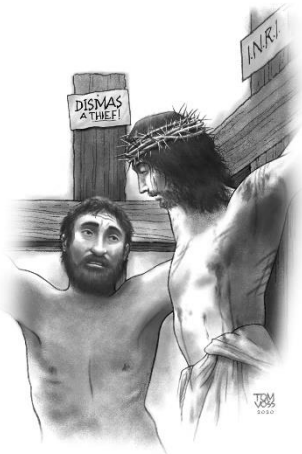


St. Dismas Guild
P.O. Box 2129
Escondido, CA 92033

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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 or by mail, PO Box 2129, Escondido, CA, 92033.

We have been Blessed over many years by one Sponsor in particular and wish to extend our deepest appreciation to **A1 Self Storage** - www.A1Storage.com

March 2024

TESTIMONY

To Whom it May Concern, Hello, my name is J.W. and I am serving a life sentence in prison. I recently converted to Catholicism from Non-Denominational Christianity. Since then, I’ve been learning a lot from one of our Chapel Orderlies who has been a Catholic his whole life and teaches our Catechism class. He lent me the December issue of SDG because it has the address and says that you provide Bibles and Bible studies to inmates.

Growing up, I was never taken to church by my family. I balked at the idea of going to church and didn’t believe that God was real even when my mom met Christ and asked me to start going to church with her when I was about 20 or 21 years old. I remember after I was arrested hearing my Christian cellmates, who spent a lot of time studying their Bibles and praying, start making negative comments and attacking Catholics. That didn’t sit too well with me. It felt wrong in my heart. Then I came across *Rome Sweet Home* by Scott Hahn and it moved me to start learning about the faith. **Now I have been baptized into the Church on August 16th along with First Holy Communion.** Our Bishop is scheduled to come to the prison on February 14th, 2024, to do Confirmation.

I would like to find a Catholic Bible Study and I ‘m sure why this issue was lent to me. Can you please send me information or a workbook? I’m not sure what Bibles you provide but I would really like a Catholic Study Bible. I see a nice Ignatius Study Bible and a Great Adventure Bible in Ignatius Press catalog that a friend showed me. Either way, whatever you can send me will be greatly appreciated. Thank you and your organization for all that you do. It’s hard to feel loved in here sometimes, so it’s a special blessing when we see others out there that care enough to “visit those in prisons.” Thank you. May the Lord be with you and may Almighty God bless you. J.W.

Congratulations, J.W., on being baptized into the Catholic Church. Your baptism opened the door for God to be present to teach and guide you to all truth. Jesus says, “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life no one comes to the Father but through me”, John 14:6. We suggest you

read the whole chapter of John 14 in the New American Bible, we sent you. A lot is packed in that chapter. Jesus is so awesome in teaching us the truth on how to live our life in this crazy mixed up world where Satan is using people as puppets who are not obeying God’s Word. Obedience to God’s word brings life not death. John 10:10 says, “The thief comes only to steal and slaughter and destroy, I came that they might have life and have it to the full.” Get to know Jesus personally as you do the Bread of Life Catholic Bible Study, which is designed to help you develop a relationship with God. It’s hard to feel loved in prison and outside of prison because only God can fill that hole in a person’s heart. As you do the lessons each week Jesus will draw you to Himself and as you get to know Him you will get to know the Father and realize God is a God of love who wants only the best for you. Each lesson leads you to the Sunday Mass readings and you can receive spiritual communion on Sunday in union with those on the outside who are able to partake in the real presence of Jesus Himself when they receive communion. As your brothers and sisters who are downing the Catholic Church love them and share your love relationship with God through the word with them. God bless you.

Act of Spiritual Communion:

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.

I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul.

Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

DOING TIME WITH JESUS

Dear St. Dismas Guild, thank you for sending me your letter. I really thank God that I am able to write you. I’ve been trying to get in touch with God so I can change and be a better man for my family and for God, as well as for myself. It has really been a struggle to walk with God and make right decisions, and I beat myself up for it every night. I keep

letting my loved ones down and hurting the people I love, as well as the people around me. **I need to know God more so I can be a better man.** I need to do it for myself. It will be good for me to have a Bible to read while I'm in jail and a Bible workbook and any other books you can send. It would really be a huge help to me and my friends that are here with me. Thank you, M.M.

“Here I stand, knocking at the door. If anyone hears me calling and opens the door, I will enter his house and have supper with him, and he with me.” Rev. 3:20

God is knocking at the door of your heart, M.M., Your letter is an indication that you have decided to open the door of your heart and let Him in. He says to you, “I know your deeds; that is why I have left an open door before you which no one can close.” (Rev. 3:8) As you get into the bible study workbook answer the questions asking God to teach you. Say the scripture at the top of every lesson (John 14:26) and you will develop a relationship with God. Talk to Him and He will answer your every question because He loves you and is drawing you to Himself. If you have any faith-based questions, you are welcome to send them to us and we will forward them to our Spiritual Director for his response. May God bless you and keep you. May He let His face shine on you and be gracious to you. May He look upon you kindly and give you peace.

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION w/Fr. Richard

The Flesh vs. The Spirit

To live in the Spirit is to change, and move away from that, and live by the Spirit that was given to us in baptism, obeying God, receiving the sacraments, and being charitable to one another. See Galatians 5:13-26 for an in-depth exploration of what it means to live according to the Spirit, and what that may look like in the life and heart of a Christian disciple.

SACRED TRADITION

The Churches Dedication for March:

The **Solemnity of St. Joseph** is a special landmark this month in which we will celebrate the great honor bestowed upon the foster father of Jesus. Also, the Solemnity of the Annunciation and St. Dismas Feast Day (March 25) when we ponder Our Lady's fiat.



Except for the first day, the entire month of March falls during the liturgical season of Lent which is represented by the liturgical color violet or purple – a symbol of penance, mortification, and the sorrow of a contrite heart. All saints' days that are usually Memorials are shifted to Optional

Memorials during the season of Lent.

A Few FEAST DAYS:

March 17th – St. Patrick died in 461.

March 19th – St. Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary

March 25th – Annunciation of the Lord

March 25th – St. Dismas was the so-called “Good Thief” who was crucified along with another thief and Jesus on the hill called Golgotha on the outskirts of Jerusalem. Writing centuries apart, two Church Fathers, Tertullian and Augustine, claimed that the three died on **March 25, the date that was designated as Dismas's Feast Day.**

The Gospel of Luke relates Jesus' conversation with the two thieves... Jesus is taunted by one thief, who challenges Jesus, **“Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us.” (Luke 23:39)** But the other thief, the **Good Thief**, takes the opposite view. **The Good Thief** recognizes that Jesus is

innocent and has done nothing wrong He also acknowledges that Jesus is the Messiah, by saying to Him, **“Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” (Luke 23:42)** To which Jesus replies, **“Amen, I say to you today, you will be with me in paradise.” (Luke 23:43)**

DISMAS IS THE PATRON SAINT OF THOSE CONDEMNED TO DEATH...

<https://ucatholic.com/saints/saint-dismas/>

DEACON KEN'S CORNER

Letter from the late Deacon Ken Finn dated, March 1983. CHRIST, OUR HOPE

Two years ago, a young man of eighteen was convicted of murder and given 25 years to life. I have been writing to him and he has been growing in his walk with the Lord. He came back a few weeks ago for a modification of his sentence and I was amazed at how much he had grown in the Lord. We prayed together and he told me how much it means to get a letter from someone who is praying for him and helping him grow in the Lord: He said, “Chaplain, when mail call comes and there is a letter on your bunk, your whole body just lights up.” He asked me to ask all of you to pray for the men and women in prison, because there is so much evil around them that it is hard not to fall prey to sin. I ask for your prayers for this young man who is only twenty and still looks at twenty-three more years of serving time.

PRO-LIFE

O Mary, Mother of Jesus, and Mother of us all, we turn to you today as the one who said "Yes" to Life. “You will conceive and bear a Son.” the angel told you. Despite the surprise and the uncertainty about how this could be, you said yes. "Be it done unto me according to your word.”

Mary, we pray today for all mothers who are afraid to be mothers. We pray for those who feel threatened and overwhelmed by their pregnancy. Intercede for them, that God may give them the grace to say yes and the courage to go on. May they have the grace to reject the false solution of abortion. May they say with you, "Be it done unto me according to your word." May they experience the help of Christian people and know the peace that comes from doing God's will. Amen

MESSAGE FROM SDG DIRECTOR

We encourage you to take advantage of all the Presentation Ministries booklets, listed below, that have been graciously donated to us by their organization.

Speak the Truth in Love

The Book on Forgiveness

One Bread, One Body – Daily reflections to go with the scripture readings of the day. **We send one out with each request.**

How to Teach the Bible in The Holy Spirit

This is My Body

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

