

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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
San Diego, CA  
Permit No. 2114

## *St. Dismas Guild ~ Prison Ministry*

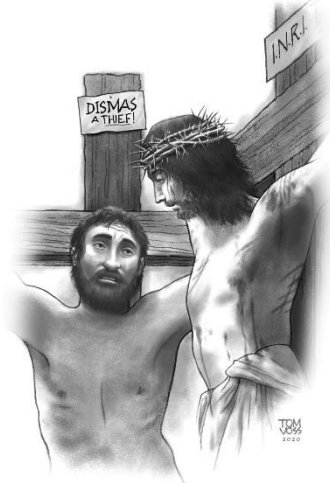
*“Lord, when did I see you ...in prison, and not help you?” Matt. 25:44*

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 Church’s Dedication for April is  
The Blessed Sacrament and The Holy Spirit**

**April 2024**



### TESTIMONY

Greetings, I write to you today from Texas Death Row to share my testimony, and present to you the full truth of Jesus Christ. Open your heart, open your eyes, and open your ears to experience the full light of Jesus Christ.

Before my arrest for capital murder, facing the death penalty, in April 2013, I had been an attorney in Texas, board certified in family law, an elected Justice of the Peace, Captain in military service, law school honor graduate, with a bachelor’s degree in criminal justice, and an Eagle Scout.

**I was what most Americans would call successful. But was I? The truth is that I was terribly lost.** I thought those accomplishments were mine, and that I didn’t need God. I had spurned religion and felt that only weak people fell for those delusions.

After my arrest, I had many questions, and no answers. Many of those questions related to my criminal charges, living conditions in jail, health issues, and all the things happening outside. I was held in total isolation. No TV, no phone, no radio. I was not even allowed to speak with or see any other prisoners. Within a month or so, my thoughts turned toward the spiritual. One of my attorneys was Buddhist, so I asked him for some books. I studied Buddhism for about 14 months. Although I did reach a certain level of inner peace, it felt incomplete.

When I was moved one county away to begin trial preparation, I was subjected to oppressive physical observation 24/7, 100% of the time, for six months. One evening, they asked if I wanted to go to church, which sounded like a great idea just to get out of that cell for a bit. So I attended the services with some local Christian volunteers for a few weeks. The man running the program noticed that I did not have a Bible. He told me I could get a Bible from the book cart, so I did. I also sent off for a Bible study course. While reading and studying the Gospel according to St. John, I was overwhelmed by feelings and thoughts that “this is the Truth I’m reading.” I also heard that wonderful, small, still voice telling me that this is the Truth. **And I Believed!**

After that moment, I began completing all the Bible studies I could find – hundreds. When I arrived at Texas Death Row, I had many more questions. By that time, I had seen and experienced the divisions within Christianity. Many of the Bible studies I completed had some very different ideas and teachings. They each had their own expert scholars who claimed to be led by the Holy Spirit. But they couldn’t all be correct, could they? Some groups are being deceived.

How would a person choose? I studied and prayed. Soon I realized the simple answer – **Trust in Jesus!** Who did Jesus trust? The Gospels clearly showed that Jesus trusted Peter most of all. Jesus trusted Peter to be the Steward of His Kingdom on earth, the Church. What Church is that? After more study, research, and prayer, I began to learn about the Catholic Church. What did I learn? The True Church of Jesus Christ must be: **one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.** The Catholic Church is the only church that can fully meet each and every requirement. In order to fully obey our Lord Jesus Christ, **we must submit to His authority and Divine Will in all areas, including His Church.** Jesus Christ granted authority to His Catholic Church, and He defends her teachings and lasting endurance throughout time. Saint Peter, along with his unbroken line of successors, act as the Stewards of Jesus’ Church, until His final return. **The Catholic Church is the one and only true path to full communion with Jesus Christ.** Peace, love, and joy to you all! E.W.

*Thank you for writing to us at St. Dismas Guild, and for sharing your testimony. We are always deeply moved and humbled when men and women open their hearts to share the vulnerable details of their journey with us. I praise and thank our Good God for the paramount grace and blessing He has poured out on you in His mercy, that He has brought you to His own heart and transformed you! Words fail, but I can echo the psalmist and say, “Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good, his mercy endures forever” (Psalm 118:1).*

*Your story reminds me of Servant of God Jacques Fesch; Fesch was a French convict who underwent a profound conversion before his execution. To the glory of God’s Name, he is now on his way to sainthood. In a letter to his mother, he exclaims, “Who can fail to discover all the beauty and goodness of God in the graces He gives us! It is so good when*

*He touches the soul. Such joy floods it that it can no longer desire anything outside of our Savior." I believe that God has touched your soul, and I pray that He will continue to do so.*

*I leave you with the assurance of mine and all our volunteers and patrons' prayers for you. Servant of God Jacques Fesch, pray for us. Under the Mercy, St. Dismas Guild*

## DOING TIME WITH JESUS

Dear St Dismas Guild, It is truly a blessing for all that you do for us prisoners as we struggle in our current environment, yet still have the ability to share God's words and grow in faith. For this, I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

The Bread of Life Bible Study is a tool I use thanks to you to be able to prepare my brothers for Mass. Every night, we gather before lights out, to discuss our daily "homework" as we call it. Our favorite is usually the personals as we open up with one another truthfully and from the heart - something most of us had a tough time doing at first until we saw the reality of how the Holy Spirit has filled us with joy and happiness.

Another tool I enjoy using are the monthly newsletters you send me. Each time I read through them, I realize that there is always a topic or two in which can be related to me or someone I know...

Again, thank you all so much for everything you have done I look forward to receiving next month's newsletter. J.G.

## SPIRITUAL DIRECTION w/Fr. Richard

### THE NEED FOR BAPTISM AND CONTINUOUS CONVERSION:

In man's creation, he is wounded by original sin, and is not destined for heaven yet because of this. Original sin separates us from God. Baptism cleanses man from this and orients him toward God. It is the BEGINNING of the way to heaven. Everyone does not cooperate with God's grace; some choose evil, and thus are not equal in saving grace because of the life they have chosen, despite the saving grace received in Baptism. For this reason, we must seek to be continuously converted by God's saving grace. One way we can do this is by making frequent, honest visits to the Sacrament of Reconciliation, with the firm desire to sin no more. St. Paul speaks about this need for continuous conversion after Baptism in *Romans 6:1-4* – *"What then shall we say? Shall we persist in sin that grace may abound? Of course not! How can we who died to sin yet live in it? Or are you unaware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life."*

## DEACON KEN'S CORNER

*Letter from the late Deacon Ken Finn dated, March 1985.*

Easter is a time to celebrate the risen Lord. He is risen from the dead, He has conquered death and because of Him you and I can face tomorrow without fear. He died and rose from the dead so that you and I could die and rise from the dead also. We can celebrate at this Easter time the incredible victory that Jesus Christ has won for us. We are really "Easter people" or "risen people" — all we have to do is say, "Yes Lord." He has paid the ransom for our sins and we are free, even if we are behind bars in some far-off prison. We ask, "Wow, what will it cost?" And the answer is our yielding our hearts and minds to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Jesus' gift to us is our faith and we really need to ask: what is faith? Faith is the loving response to the power and presence of God in your life. Faith calls for a response from you and me, to really be effective. I pray that this Easter season you will say to our Lord and Savior. Yes Lord, I thank You for dying for me, a worthless sinner. I thank You for rising from the dead for me, so that I can live

forever too. I respond to Your gift of faith to me with my own "yes Lord" which will be reflected in the actions of my life. This is a prayer that will come alive as we really experience the risen Lord in our own personal life. Happy Easter!

## SACRED TRADITION

**THE CHURCHES DEDICATION FOR APRIL:** is to the **Eucharist** and to the **Holy Spirit**. This tradition has developed because Easter Sunday often falls in April, ...and during the Easter celebration we remember the Eucharistic sacrifice Christ gave us and the **Baptism** in the **Holy Spirit**, which would come after Jesus's resurrection. - [aquinasandmore.com](http://aquinasandmore.com)

### A Few FEAST DAYS:

**April 7<sup>th</sup> – Divine Mercy Sunday** – The Feast of Divine Mercy was recorded in the diary of St. Faustina granting the biggest promise of Grace from the Devotion of Divine Mercy. On this day, all who receive communion may obtain total forgiveness of all sins, meaning that the person would go directly to heaven without suffering in purgatory. Plenary indulgences are granted by the Catholic Church by reciting certain simple prayers.

**April 25<sup>th</sup> – St. Mark – Patron:** Against impenitence; attorneys; barristers; captives; Egypt; glaziers; imprisoned people; insect bites; lions; notaries; prisoners; scrofulous diseases; Venice, Italy.

**April 29<sup>th</sup> – St. Catherine of Siena – Patron:** bodily ills; fire prevention; firefighters; illness; miscarriages; nurses; people ridiculed for their piety; sexual temptation; sick people; temptations. ~ [catholicculture.org](http://catholicculture.org)



## A NOTE TO TEXAS FACILITIES

*If you are an inmate located in Texas, we sincerely apologize if you are not receiving newsletters or other requested materials. We are seeing a high volume of packages and newsletters returned to us from Texas facilities. We know that Texas has switched to Media Mail and some facilities may have two addresses. We are doing everything we can to resolve this issue, but if you have any information that may help us ensure that our materials are received successfully, please send us an e-mail at [saintdismasguild@yahoo.com](mailto:saintdismasguild@yahoo.com). Thank you!*

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

*Having served as the St. Dismas Guild Director for the past few months, I believe it is time to formally introduce myself. My name is Gabriella, and I am a wife and mother of one sweet son. When not working for the Guild, I love to sew clothing, drink coffee, and spend time with my family! It is an honor to serve the imprisoned and our patrons through this beautiful ministry. Please pray for me as I strive to work and pray to the best of my God-given ability.*

*A Blessed Easter Season to you all,  
St. Dismas Guild*

