

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

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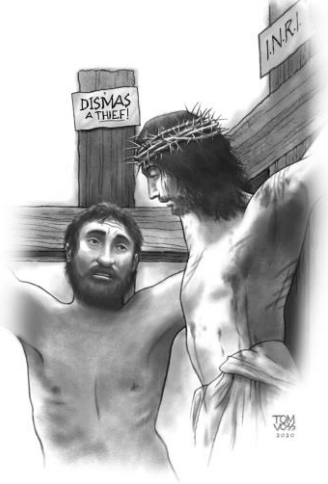
St. Dismas Guild ~ Prison Ministry

“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.

JULY 2024



TESTIMONY

Before I welcomed Jesus Christ into my life, I used drugs and women to numb the pain. I felt unwanted, worthless, and without purpose. I am the unwanted son of a MC 1% (outlaw motorcycle club). My mother was struggling with addiction issues of her own. My only male role models in my life were outlaws. I've spent the vast majority of my years in prison doing life on the installment plan.

My grandmother took me to Mass as a young child, but after many years away from the church, my faith was lacking. A few years ago, living a drug fueled miserable life, I started praying again and attending Mass. He has always been there and never left me!

I've been clean and sober since Christmas 2022. I didn't have the strength to do it myself but through Him all things are possible. My Father in heaven has always wanted me, and like the Prodigal Son, I have returned home. I've found purpose in life and want to help those still struggling with addiction and mental health issues find the peace and grace that our Lord has shown me.

God bless. J.J.

J.J. received a Prayer Book and the list of books

J.J.,

You were drawn back by the grace of God you received as a child to a new life free of drugs to a life of freedom. Jesus set you free when He went to the cross and took all your sins upon Himself. You didn't choose Him, He chose you. You chose to turn to Him that Christmas, 2022 by praying and going to Mass. Church is essential in staying on the right track. We are the Church. We are a body of believers who need God and each other to survive in this drug infested world. You chose to leave the outlaws and go to Mass with people who look to Jesus for direction and answers to their problems. Congratulations on making the right choice. You have a new gang now, a body of believers in Jesus Christ. You found them in Church where you get fed the food that gives you strength to make the right choices every day, plus you hear the word of God preached

*from the pulpit. The Mass is made up of the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Jesus says **everyone who eats my body will have everlasting life.** John 10:10 says, *the thief comes to steal and slaughter and destroy but I came to bring life, life to the full. Get into the Bible Study we have to offer. This will help you to stay on the right track and remember faith comes through hearing and what is heard is the Word of God.**

*The Peace of Christ Remain with You Always,
St. Dismas Guild*

DOING TIME WITH JESUS

St. Dismas Guild,

This is a moment in my life that is very dark indeed, a moment where my past decision have led me in such a hurtful direction to fully be aware of the pain I've caused. No matter the worst of my situations God is truly leading me toward a greater future, showing me each day a greater understanding towards life and happiness to seek my purpose. I have lost family and also people who I considered friends – but I never lost God, I felt like at one point as an alcoholic that I should give up all hope – **but through the Holy Spirit I've been led to believe different. Made to believe that there is hope and everything will be alright, that through my Lord and Savior there is peace and a new life worth to be seen.** With that being said I know without a doubt that the storm I'm in now is a passing memory, and truly in the end things will change as I follow His direction instead of my own. Your newsletters are a wonderful inspiration.

Thank you and God Bless, A.M.

A.M. was sent a Prayer Book.

A.M.,

We are so blessed Jesus left us His Spirit. He guides us to all truth and teaches us all about Jesus when He walked this earth in the flesh. You're right, the Holy Spirit does give you hope and a feeling of wellbeing. He reminds you of all Jesus said and did when He walked the earth (John 14:26). It sounds like you have come to know the third

person of the Blessed Trinity. God is the answer to alcoholism, drug addiction, and any other compulsive behavior you may have. This dark time in your life is turning into a bright realization of thinking of other people besides yourself. Your tears now are for the people you hurt by what you did to them. That's the power of the Holy Spirit enlightening you. To continue your journey, we are sending you *Overcoming Compulsive Behavior and the Bible study and a Bible. Do the study each week so you can be in line with those outside and you will be able to share with others.*

*God bless you and thank you for writing,
St. Dismas Guild*

DEACON KEN'S CORNER

LETTER FROM THE LATE Deacon Ken Finn dated, June 1986, from Mission San Luis Rey Parish where he was assigned.

I have asked the Lord to reveal to me what He wants from my life. He keeps giving me signs that He wants me to reveal to others His plan for all of us. My life has changed since I have accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Lord and Savior.

I can see how powerful His Holy Spirit is in the prison ministry. Sometimes when I leave the jail, I just sit in my car in the parking lot for a few minutes and just cry. I still can't get used to how brutal and savage mankind is to one another.

I have found that only through a daily quiet time with the Lord in the morning and daily scripture reading can I begin to function in a world of living hell. If anyone tells you there is no hell, then tell them to talk to those in prison, because prison is hell.

I close by saying that we are filled with the power of the Holy Spirit by Faith alone, however, true prayer is one way of expressing your faith. I suggest to you the following prayer that I personally use.

Dear Father,

I need you. I acknowledge that I have been in control of my life, and that, as a result, I have sinned against you. I thank you that you have forgiven my sins through Christ's death on the cross for me. I now invite Christ to again take control of the throne of my life. Fill me with the Holy Spirit as you commanded me to be filled and as you promised in your word that you would do if I asked in faith. I now thank you for taking control of my life and filling me with your Holy Spirit.

Love,

Deacon Ken Finn

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION w/Fr. Richard

Gifts of the Holy Spirit; What Does the Bible Have to Say?

In his first letter to the Corinthians chapter 14, St. Paul clarifies that speaking in tongues, speech unintelligible to others, is a prayer of that individual to God to build up the individual. If there is no one to interpret speech in tongues, people should be silent.

Prophesying is a higher gift wherein people speak in languages that can be understood for building up the church with instruction for both believers and non-believers. Verse 39 says, "strive eagerly to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues,"

All receive the Holy Spirit in baptism. Some gifts are further activated by God at His will in each individual, but never should be compared to the gifts of others. First Corinthians 12:7 says, "To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit." and in verse 12: "But one and the same Spirit produces all of these, distributing them individually to each person as he wishes."

Nowhere in the Bible does it say that one does not have the Holy Spirit if he does not pray in tongues. These men are

ignorant of the Bible, and are preaching themselves in order to control you, rather than to instruct you.

SACRED TRADITION

THE CHURCHES DEDICATION FOR JULY: ...is to The Precious Blood of Jesus. This month falls within the liturgical season of Ordinary Time, which is represented by the liturgical color green. This symbol of HOPE is the color of the sprouting seed and arouses in the faithful the HOPE of reaping the eternal harvest of heaven, especially the HOPE of a glorious resurrection. www.catholicculture.org

A Few Feast Days:

July 3rd – St. Thomas the Apostle, patron saint against doubt, architects, and construction workers.

July 6th – St. Maria Goretti, patron saint of rape victims, loss of parents, and young people in general.

July 22nd – St. Mary Magdalene, patron saint of contemplative life, converts, and penitent sinners.

July 24th – St. Charbel Makhlouf, patron of those who suffer in body and soul. Lebanese hermit with upwards of 29,000 recorded miracles – the most of any saint.

July 29th – Sts. Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, friends of our Lord.

July 31st – St. Ignatius of Loyola, patron saint of Jesuits, retreats, and soldiers.



PRO-LIFE

In light of recent rulings in Alabama and Texas, here is a reminder of what the Catechism of the Catholic Church (No. 2377) states on IVF. It is "morally unacceptable" because it separates the marriage act from procreation and establishes "the domination of technology" over human life.

MESSAGE FROM SDG DIRECTOR

In honor of St. Mary Magdalene's feast on July 22nd, we have included an excerpt from Catholic Answers and a prayer from St. Anselm to help increase your devotion to the friend of our Lord. "All four Gospels refer to a woman named Mary Magdalene. She is one of the witnesses of Christ's crucifixion, burial, and resurrection, and she is often named first in lists of women", says Jimmy Akin, "All this makes it clear that she was prominent in the early Christian community and was well-known by the authors of the Gospels."

*St. Mary Magdalene,
you came with springing tears
to the spring of mercy, Christ;
from him your burning thirst was abundantly refreshed;
through him your sins were forgiven;
by him your bitter sorrow was consoled...
Therefore, since you are now with the chosen
because you are beloved
and are beloved because you are chosen of God,
I, in my misery, pray to you, in bliss;
in my darkness, I ask for light;
in my sins, redemption;
impure, I ask for purity.
Recall in loving kindness what you used to be,
how much you needed mercy,
and seek for me that same forgiving love
that you received when you were wanting it.*

-Prayer by St. Anselm.

*Peace of Christ,
St. Dismas Guild*

