

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

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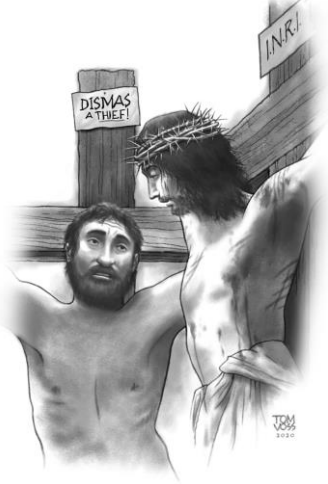
St. Dismas Guild ~ Prison Ministry

“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.

AUGUST 2024



TESTIMONY

Dear St. Dismas Guild, Thank you so much for the newsletters. The testimonies and guidance are uplifting and educational. I wish to add my short testimony for others to read. I was raised in a household where religion was not regularly discussed or practiced. I was told as a child that I was Catholic but had no concept of the meaning of that word. I asked to attend a Catholic high school and later attended Catholic college and graduate school. **It was not until I was incarcerated, however that I truly understood the power of Christ's sacrifice. I know that I can be forgiven and healed.** The presence of our Lord and Savior with me here keeps me from ever feeling alone. I would also like to inquire if there are any opportunities for serving the church following incarceration? Are any vocations available to a reformed former inmate? In His Service, C.S.

Dear brother in Christ, we are so happy to hear you enjoy our newsletter and yes, that's the beauty of God's plan in the ministry of St. Dismas Guild. The beauty and mercy of Our Lord's love is endless, and He never hesitates to forgive us no matter where we've been or what we've done in our lives.

*At times, we all make choices driven by our free will, a gift from God Himself. As mentioned in **Sirach 15:11-17**, our human tendencies and selfishness often lead us astray. However, the remarkable aspect of God's love and mercy is His unwavering willingness to catch us when we fall. Remember, Jesus never abandons us; rather, it is we who turn away from Him.*

*He has given you this time to recognize and embrace the beauty of His love, mercy and forgiveness. **“Those who seek Me eagerly shall find Me.” Proverbs 8:17.***

As you seek opportunities to serve in the church, trust in the power of prayer and perseverance. Asking Our Lord to guide you and reveal His will for your life. Rest assured, many doors will be opened to you to spread God's message to others, now that your heart is on fire and ready to serve Him. Never look back; always move forward, giving God

ALL the GLORY!!! Our prayer for you, read Ephesians 3:16-21

DOING TIME WITH JESUS

St. Dismas Guild, To the members, benefactors, and complete Guild. God bless you and thank you for all you do for us and especially me. Recently, I've been on a 21-day sabbatical. **I'm changing for the better every day. My faith is growing so strong. I love being a Catholic.** I'm filled with the Holy Spirit and so much love, it's amazing. You sent me the Bread of Life and I have studied every day religiously. It has helped me so much. Again, thank you. God bless. J.D.

*Dear J.D., Faith comes through hearing and what is heard is the word of Christ. You must be buried in the Word to grow so intensely. **1 Peter 4:8** says, **“Above all, let your love for one another be intense, because love covers a multitude of sins.”** You have come to know personally the forgiving love of God for you. See, **1 Corinthians 6:19-20.** He teaches you how to love. Your Teacher, the Holy Spirit, has taught you how to die to yourself for the good of others. He taught you how to forgive from the heart those who have offended you. That's real love and it is the Holy Spirit that has given you the ability to love and forgive. Both love and forgiveness are **DECISIONS** you can make every day because He, the Spirit, gives you the power to do that, **Acts 1:8**, and be His witness to others. Our prayers are with you, See also, **Colossians 3:12-13.***

MARIE'S MESSAGE

We are in a war. A war against the sanctity of marriage and family life. The forces of evil have already torn families apart through the evil of abortion, same sex marriage, promiscuity, chemicals, etc.

St. Mother Teresa told Deacon Ken, *“The family is such a beautiful gift of God—the place where we first learn that we are made for greater things, to love and to be loved. Spread the message of family love and unity through family prayer. I pray that many families may come to love God and each other through your Book. God bless you, Mother Teresa.”* **1 Thessalonians 5:17** says pray without ceasing.

The book is, *Secrets of a Happy Family*, the biblical role of each member of the family. When Ken and I wrote this book we experienced growth and intimacy in our relationship. I am looking at my life now as a widow and how I can communicate my love for my family through the phone and sending little quotes of the bible and seeing how I can keep in touch. We say the words I love you whenever we see each other. It is so important to hear the words that someone loves you.

Check our List of Books or Website for, *Secrets of a Happy Family*, written by Deacon Ken and Marie Finn.

DEACON KEN'S CORNER

NEWSLETTER FROM THE LATE Deacon Ken Finn dated, August 1984. **Justice**

This word "justice" could also be called love-justice. We convict and sentence men and women to prison terms, and we call this justice. We think that because a man or a woman is locked up and put away, justice has been served. We might ask ourselves: what happens when this man or woman gets out of prison? We need to ask ourselves: what happens to a man or woman while they are locked up?

We need to remember that by His Incarnation, Jesus has united Himself in some fashion with every human being. We also need to remember that if Jesus has united Himself in some fashion with every human, and if grace works in the hearts of all men and women of goodwill, then the limits of the people of God are never ending.

I have seen in our time a special obligation binds us to make ourselves neighbor of every person and of actively helping him when he comes across our path. Since the present social order does not and can not provide what it must for the people of the world, Christians must work to change and improve it. I am talking about loving the unloving, the uncaring, the untouchables, the unwashed, the outcasts, the social lepers, the perverted, as well as the lovable, caring, beautiful people of God.

We need only to look at Scriptures, **John 13:35**, "*By this will all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.*" Our Heavenly Father wills that in all men, we recognize Christ, our brother, and love Him effectively in word in deed. The reason for this ministry's existence is to show that every person is our neighbor. Every person is to be loved and served in obedience to Christ's command. "*Love one another as I have loved you.*"

Love, Deacon Ken Finn

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION w/Fr. Richard

On Discernment of the Religious Life...

The desire to clerical or religious life is called an "interior movement". The actual call to priesthood, diaconate or religious life must come from the bishop or the superior of an order. When a man discerns this interior movement, he presents himself to the vocation's director of the diocese or the religious order.

He is then examined and watched on the basis of his spiritual life, his personal conduct, fidelity to the church and worship in prayer, sacraments and charity. Some good holy men are not accepted for numerous reasons by those in charge of vocations. Others are accepted, and the reasons are not always given for the choice to accept or to deny.

The first step is to foster a habitual prayer life: divine office, living a holy, chaste life, prayer, service in the church as you are able such as Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, kindness to others, etc.

As an inmate, it would not be possible to initiate the process of discernment of clerical or religious life with a diocese or an order. This may feel a bit frustrating. The call to holiness does not depend on priesthood, diaconate, or religious brotherhood. It is there for every Christian,

and at certain times in your life experience, the interior movement is to holiness.

SACRED TRADITION

THE CHURCHES DEDICATION FOR AUGUST: is to the **Immaculate Heart of Mary**.

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.
catholicculture.org



A Few Feast Days:

August 1st – St. Alphonsus Liguori, patron saint of the work of the lay people, bishop, Doctor of the Church.

August 4th – St. John Vianney, patron of parish priests.

August 6th – Feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord.

August 14th – St. Maximilian Kolbe, patron saint of prisoners, families, and the pro-life movement, priest, martyr, prisoner in Auschwitz concentration camp.

August 15th – The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

August 18th – St. Helena, patron of converts and archaeologists, credited with finding the True Cross.

August 20th – St. Bernard, patron of candle makers, French monk, composed the Memorare prayer.

August 22nd – The Queenship of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

August 26th – Our Lady of Czestochowa.

August 27th – St. Monica, patron saint of mothers.

August 28th – St. Augustine, patron saint of theologians.

PRO-LIFE

Like pro-lifers today, St. Maximilian Kolbe fought the culture of death that was being promoted by the government. With his brother friars in Poland, he used every available technology to further the gospel. In the year 1941, St. Maximilian was arrested by the Nazis and taken to the Auschwitz concentration camp. There, he offered his life for another prisoner and was condemned to death in a starvation bunker. "*The most deadly poison of our time is indifference.*" – Maximilian Kolbe

MESSAGE FROM SDG DIRECTOR

The month of August is full of wonderful Marian feasts, most notably the Assumption of Our Lady. Interestingly, many of the saints of this month are intertwined in their Marian devotion. According to tradition, the painting of the Madonna of Czestochowa was a representation of Our Lady created by St. John after the Crucifixion of Our Lord. It remained in the Holy Land until discovered by St. Helena of the Cross in the fourth century. The portrait is also known as "Our Lady Queen of Poland" which is where St. Maximilian was martyred. Our Lady offered him a white crown of virtue and a red crown of martyrdom, and he chose both. Lastly, St. Bernard of Clairvaux also had a great devotion to the Blessed Mother, composing the Memorare prayer:

"Remember, O Most Gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known, that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy intercession was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence I fly unto thee O Virgin of Virgins, my mother. To thee do I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy, hear and answer me. Amen."

