

St. Dismas Guild
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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.

Sacred Heart of Jesus, I trust in You.
Sacred Heart of Jesus, I believe in Your love for me.
Sacred Heart of Jesus, Your kingdom come.

June 2025

TESTIMONY

St. Dismas Guild,
I was born into a Baptist Christian family and was fortunate enough to learn about Jesus at an early age. As a young boy, I attended church frequently and seemed to be on a path of lifelong fellowship with God. I became a victim of sexual abuse at the church I was attending for many years when I was a child. The traumatic situation resulted in a hatred toward God and religion. With time, I got older and found a distorted sense of comfort and drugs and alcohol. I kept using drugs and alcohol to fill the void of not having God in my life. I became angry and dove deeper into my addictions. The lowest point of my life came when I found myself starting a 30-year prison sentence for killing someone. **Alone in a cell, I thought of taking the easy way out but didn't want to face God because I was His enemy.** The inmate in the cell beside me had one book “An Anchor for the Soul” and I made the best decision of my life... **I read it! I accepted Jesus that day and I felt the void that had been in my life for so long finally get filled. Accepting Christ has been the best decision of my life;** I have joy and peace that came only from the Spirit of God. Nothing in this world can satisfy the soul except for faith in Jesus.
I am constantly trying to increase my knowledge in the faith so that I can help others find the same joy that I now have in Christ. Recently, my prison offered a St. Kolbe retreat for the inmates. At the time, I knew nothing of Catholicism except for the misinformed biases that I had heard throughout my life. I signed up for the retreat and went into it with an open mind. The introduction to Catholicism has changed my life and has grown my spiritual knowledge and faith more than I ever thought possible. Catholicism has provided structure where I previously had none. After the St. Kolbe retreat, I was referred to the Bread of Life Bible Study offered by Saint Dismas Guild. I thank God for the staff, supporters, and donors who have helped save my soul by providing Catholic books and materials. I still have a lot to learn about Catholicism, but I know with the help of Saint Dismas Guild and my newfound Catholic community, I will find great success. Your Brother in Christ, G.B.

*G.B., thank you for your powerful testimony. You truly were blessed to be born into a Baptist Christian family that taught you about Jesus. The traumatic sexual abuse you went through shows there are no barriers as to what religion you were born into. St. Mother Teresa says, “Religion is not something that you or I can touch. Religion is the worship of God—therefore a matter of conscience. I alone must decide for myself and you for yourself, what we choose. For me the religion I live and use to worship God is the Catholic religion.” (March 25, “Do Something Beautiful for God) Your family taught you about Jesus and He has brought you to where you are today. It doesn't matter what race, creed or color a person is Satan is out to murder, kill, and destroy whereas Jesus came to give life to the fullest. In John 10:10 Jesus says, “**The thief comes only to steal and slaughter and destroy, I came that they might have life and have it to the full.**” Sexual abuse at a young age damages an innocent child so much. Jesus has come to you to heal those traumatic years. **Healing takes time, and God knew what was best for you all along, so He is holding your hand through your journey towards healing. He will never leave your side.** In our book Overcoming Sexual Abuse it brings out that Jesus still had the wounds after He rose by having Thomas probe the nail marks in His hands. Your faith will grow as you listen to the Holy Spirit teach you and remind you of all Jesus said and did (John 14:26). The Bread of Life Bible Study will help you to grow in knowledge of the Word and the Church. It is a simple study to get you to know Jesus personally and apply the scriptures to your life through the personal questions. James 2:14 says, “**My brothers, what good is it to profess faith without practicing it**”. As Jeremiah 29:11 says for you GB “**For I know well the plans I have in mind for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare, not for woe, plans to give you a future full of hope.**” God bless you.*

DOING TIME WITH JESUS

My name is H.S. I am 27 years old. It hasn't been an easy journey, but thanks to God, he has taken me out of that dark tunnel I was walking in. Growing up my parents will take us to church, my brother, sister, and me were altar servers.

Baptized in a Catholic Church and did my first communion as well. It wasn't till I was in High School that I fell off from going to church and went into a dark road. Got to hanging out with the wrong crowd and picking up bad habits along the way. Got stuck in a bad addiction to where I was hurting all those around me. Completely just thinking of myself, not realizing the damage I was causing myself. Due to my addictions lead me to prison making bad decisions. **Coming to prison I came back home to the Catholic faith. I was able to do my confirmation here. It was such a blessing.** The way God has been working in my life is by talking to me through scripture showing me that he is by my side, that he loves me no matter what. God will be revealing something new to me every day. Having God in my life has helped me have that peace in my heart again, just to feel free even with being here in prison. Thanks to God that he took me out of that dark tunnel and lead me out into the light. I have filed to fight my case again and I have that faith that something good is going to happen. This is just a brief summary of my testimony, thank you for your time, God Bless you. Sincerely, H.S.

H.S., you have a very powerful testimony. Thank you for sending it. It sounds like from your growing up God was very present in your life being baptized in the Church, going to Church with your family, being an altar server and making your first Holy Communion. You were blessed to have parents that raised you in the church. “Train a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it” Proverbs 22:6. When you were baptized you received the grace of God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit who stayed with you even when you fell away. Falling away from God doing evil things does put the focus on self, works of the flesh such as fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and the like, but now that your back your focus is on learning more about God, the Holy Spirit. Yes, God is talking to you through the scriptures. Galatians 5:22-23 says, “...the fruit of the Spirit is Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.” When people see you producing these fruits they see the Holy Spirit in you. That’s what the cross is all about, the forgiving love of Jesus. “It is precisely in this that God proves His love for us: that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” Romans 5:8. Jesus died for you and even went out looking for you when you were lost. He loves you so much and has a plan for your life. That plan is for a future full of hope in that one day you will be with Him forever in Paradise. God bless you, H.S.

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION w/Fr. Richard

CURSING AND USING FOUL LANGUAGE OF body parts and functions are not good; blasphemies, that is using the name of God, Jesus, Mary, the saints, and damning people, are worse. Since these are acquired habits, they can be replaced by good habits of using Jesus’ name in prayer and praise, and by asking God to restrain your mind, heart and lips, and asking Him to drive any evil spirit from you which may be tempting you to do this, that God command that spirit to go to the foot of the cross. **“No foul language should come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for needed edification, that it may impart grace to those who hear”** (Ephesians 4:29).

Pray the Rosary as you have learned it. There is no need to be scrupulous regarding this holy devotion. The Rosary is not an object of display to draw attention to it or to a person. If it were on my neck, I could not pray the beads. If it is in my hand or my pocket, I can easily move my fingers over the beads. The New American Bible is a pretty standard Bible for Catholics. The Revised Standard Version is also

good. Take what you can get.

DEACON KEN’S CORNER

LETTER FROM THE LATE DEACON KEN FINN, dated June 1982.

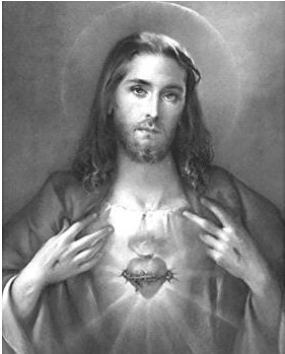
"Clergy" - "Father, please, over here please" These were the calls being made to the visiting priest who accompanied me on my rounds at the jail. Men and women were calling out to seek repentance and forgiveness from God. The pain and misery seemed like it was coming from all sides. The priest was moved to deep compassion and lovingly spoke the words of our Lord, the words of Love and Forgiveness. We stopped and heard a young transvestite explain why his life is so painful. We prayed with the young man and asked for the Lord's healing power to come upon him.

This priest is the pastor of a large affluent parish and the reality of these people's lives left great lines of sorrow in his face. He gave me a cash donation to buy some spiritual reading material for them. I will always remember not just his ability to solve financial problems, but for his Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and the compassion in his eyes and the Love in his heart. He is a fine Christ bearer of the light of the world in a very dark place like a jail, where the least of our brothers and sisters live.

SACRED TRADITION

THE CHURCH’S DEDICATION FOR JUNE:

is to The **Sacred Heart of Jesus**. The Church celebrates the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus on the Friday following the second Sunday after Pentecost. In addition to the liturgical celebration, many devotional exercises are connected with the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Of all devotions, devotion to the Sacred Heart was, and remains, one of the most widespread and popular in the Church. www.catholicculture.org



A Few Feast Days

- **June 8th** Pentecost
- **June 22nd** The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ.
- **June 24th** The Nativity of St. John the Baptist
- **June 27th** The Sacred Heart of Jesus
- **June 28th** The Immaculate Heart of Mary
- **June 29th** Sts. Peter and Paul

FROM THE DIRECTOR

ON MAY 8, 2025, CARDINAL ROBERT F. PREVOST, a Chicago native and prefect of the Dicastery for Bishops, was elected the 267th pope, becoming **Pope Leo XIV**. He is the **first North American pope** in history.

White smoke from the Sistine Chapel at 6:07 p.m. signaled his election, followed by bells and celebratory crowds in St. Peter’s Square. At 7:12 p.m., Cardinal Dominique Mamberti formally announced the new pope, and ten minutes later, Pope Leo XIV appeared on the balcony to give his first blessing.

In his first message, Pope Leo emphasized **peace, unity, and openness**. He highlighted God's unconditional love and called for the Church to be **missionary, spreading the Gospels throughout the world**. Quoting St. Augustine, he said: “With you I am a Christian and for you a bishop.” (USCCB.org) Please join us in praying for the Holy Father.

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

