



# St. Dismas Guild

April. 2019

**"Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." Psalm 119:105**

PO Box 2129 Escondido CA 92033 – [www.stdismasguild.org](http://www.stdismasguild.org)

Last Month we sent 125 Packages and 4.052 Newsletters,  
Free of Charge, because of your prayers and generous support.  
Thank you for helping us continue to spread God's message of Mercy and Love!



## TESTIMONY

Dear St. Dismas Guild, Thank you for the monthly testimonial newsletter. I enjoy reading other inmates' testimonies. It reminds me that others are going through the same things I am and some worse off than me are finding guidance and light through their walk with God. The newsletter is something I look forward to every month. I saw that you are seeking brief testimonies, so I felt obligated to give a testimony, because of how many times I've heard something that I needed to hear in one of your newsletters.

While growing up, my childhood years and teenage years were troublesome, yet enjoyable. I grew up knowing of and believing in God, going to church and trying to improve my walk with God. I was in and out of trouble during my preteen years, my parents divorced, and school became my unlikely safe haven. I learned to play guitar and got involved in theatre. I graduated high school and moved to Chicago to go to improv. school, and life was enjoyable.

After a few years it was time to admit defeat, not in my aspirations to become a comedic actor, but in my idea that I could control my alcohol and cocaine addictions. I moved back home and began attending AA regularly. This is where my walk with God grew stronger. After a few years of sobriety, I began traveling again to pursue a career as a comedian, going all across the U.S. to perform and experience life while sober. Not having a steady income, I returned home to make some money.

While back home I was wrongfully accused of a crime. I went to trial, was over-charged by the State, found innocent of the 1<sup>st</sup> count, but when the jury returned their verdict for Count II, it was not in my favor. It was a speedy trial. I was in and out of county jail in less than three months. I am now fighting my case on appeal and I have faith I will find justice. I prayed that God would speak to me through the court, so I'm taking this time to grow closer to God and believing in His plans for my life. I have been holding on to Ephesians 2:6-8. I pray this testimony can speak to someone else going through something similar. I know because of our faith in God, this too shall pass.

Once again, thank you for your continued outreach to people like me stuck in a bad place. Truly yours, J.A.

Dear J.A., You have had a head start in life growing up knowing God and going to church. Hebrew 10:25 says, "We should not absent ourselves from the assembly, as some do, but encourage one another; and this all the more because you see that the Day draws near." Although your parents divorced, they gave you a foundation. Continue praying and study of the scriptures while you are incarcerated and ask the Holy Spirit to teach you. Develop a personal relationship with Jesus through the Word of God. Thank God when He answers your prayer through the courts whether it is what you want to hear or not. "We know that God makes all things work together for the good of those who love

*God and are called according to His decree." Romans 8:28 God bless you.*

## DOING TIME WITH JESUS

Dear St. Dismas Guild, I want to first of all thank you for the support that you give us here in prison. God in Jesus' name through the Holy Spirit knows that we need every bit of it. I was born Catholic, but at the age of five years old I was adopted by my great uncle and aunt in Texas. I was physically abused by my step-father when I tried to stop him from hurting my mother. But my great aunt took me to church, and I became an altar boy plus made my First Communion. My great aunt taught me how to get on my knees every night to pray for myself and others. She taught me how to say the Our Father and Hail Mary every night before I got to bed. To make a long story short, they raised me the best they could. In high school I started hanging with the wrong crowd and then I began living a life of crime. I started having kids out of wedlock and not taking care of my responsibilities. Then I got caught up into a crime that got me 30 years in prison.

**God had a better plan for my life than I did,** so He put me in a place which I call Captivity (prison), just like Israel when they were taken captive by Babylon for being disobedient to God. I put myself in prison by not listening to God when He put all those people in my life to keep me on a path of righteousness. But since I've been locked up these 16 years I've been going to Mass, praying my rosaries, reading my bible and, most of all, staying out of all the negative things that go on in prison. I look at my life as the two criminals on the cross beside Jesus. I chose to be the criminal that asked for forgiveness and let Jesus lead my life forever (Luke 23:39-43). I want my story in life to end like this for me and all who are locked away in prison. I say thank you God in Jesus' name through the Holy Spirit Amen. Please keep us prisoners in prayer because we need it every day. C.D.

Dear C.D.. Being physically abused as a child is so hard to overcome. **"for man it is impossible; but for God all things are possible."** Matthew 19:26, Luke 1:37 What a wonderful great aunt you had that taught you the faith. Being adopted by your great uncle and aunt gave you the foundation you needed to know right and wrong. Getting in with the wrong crowd was your downfall. The contrast between what you were taught by them, going to church, and then associating with the wrong crowd can mentally mess you up and get you into lewd conduct, idolatry, sorcery, hostilities, ...outburst of rage, selfish rivalries, ...envy, drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, ...that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the Fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, ...kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. (Galatians 5:19-23). Your life and finding God's way in a place which you call Captivity (prison) is amazing. It sounds like you have had a total transformation in prison and gone back to what your aunt taught you. So glad you listened to God and are putting on the mind and attitude of Christ (Philippians 2:5-11).

## SACRED TRADITION

### THE CHURCH'S MONTHLY DEDICATION FOR

**APRIL 2019:** The month of April is dedicated both to devotion to the Eucharist and devotion to the Holy Spirit. This tradition has developed because **Easter** Sunday often falls in April, and when it does fall in March, the **Easter** season continues on through all of April. In essence, April is a month of **Easter**, 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.

**POPE FRANCIS PRAYER INTENTION:** Universal Workers in War Zones - For doctors and their humanitarian collaborators in war zones, who risk their lives to save the lives of others.

**EASTERTIDE – EASTER SEASON:** - The Easter Vigil is the "Mother of All Vigils." **Easter** Sunday, then, is the greatest of all Sundays, and **Easter** Time is the most important of all liturgical times. **Easter** is the celebration of **the Lord's resurrection** from the dead, culminating in His Ascension to the Father and sending of the Holy Spirit upon the Church.

There are **50 days** of **Easter** from the first Sunday to Pentecost. It is characterized, above all, by the joy of glorified life and the victory over



death, expressed most fully in the great resounding cry of the Christian: **Alleluia!** All faith flows from faith in the resurrection: "If Christ has not been raised, then empty is our preaching; empty, too, is your faith." (1 Cor 15:14)

The word "**Easter**" comes from Old English, meaning simply the "East." The sun which rises in the East, bringing light, warmth and hope, is a symbol for the Christian of the rising Christ, **who is the true Light of the world.** **The Paschal Candle** is a central symbol of this divine light, which is Christ. It is kept near the ambo throughout **Easter** Time and lit for all liturgical celebrations. (Excerpt - from usccb.org)

**DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY:** (April 28<sup>th</sup>) is a very special Sunday when the Divine Floodgates from Heaven are wide-opened and Jesus offers us the total forgiveness of all sins and punishment to any soul, who goes to Confession and receives Him in Holy Communion, on that day.

## SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

By Fr. Richard

How do I best use **Holy Water and Blessed Salt** for blessing my cell and protecting it from unclean spirits? And what is a good blessing for a lay person to use for the above?

*It is a priest who blesses sacramentals like water and salt. If you have a priest chaplain, please ask him to bless a container of holy water for your use in your space. If a priest is not available, you may ask God's blessing for yourself, pray the Lord's prayer, confess your sins, and make the sign of the cross with blessed water if you have it, and with your hand as you would do in Mass if you do not have holy water.*

*Blessed salt is used in the purification of the Holy Water. Holy Water is a reminder of our baptism. It can be put on the fingers before making the sign of the cross*

*on our person. Holy water and Blessed Salt can be sprinkled around the room as the Lord's Prayer is said for deliverance and protection from evil.*

## FAMILY MINISTRY

### CELEBRATING EASTER WITH YOUR CATHOLIC FAMILY:

"Making Jesus the center of your family's celebration can present a challenge when images of the Easter Bunny are so prevalent. Parents must take special measures to help kids understand that Jesus is the giver of Easter gifts -- His love, His sacrificial death, the salvation we have through Him -- not a big rabbit who hands out candy and colored eggs. Here are some ideas for putting the spiritual significance back into your Easter celebration.'

\* If your church does not celebrate Holy Week, attend Holy Week services at a church that does. Or celebrate each day as a family by reading passages of scripture that recount what each special day commemorates.

\* Celebrate the Resurrection of Christ by doing the kinds of things Jesus came to earth to do. Extend God's love to others by visiting the elderly and sick, gathering up clothing to take to a homeless shelter, or making and delivering food baskets to families in need.

\* If you don't usually do so, attend a sunrise service so your family can experience a little of what Jesus' followers must have felt the morning they found the empty tomb. Afterwards, enjoy a big family breakfast in celebration of the Risen Lord. (<http://www.catholicmom.com>)

## PRO-LIFE

**EASTER AND THE VICTORY OF LIFE:** Easter celebrates the victory of LIFE. Christians do not come to Church on **Easter** simply to congratulate Jesus for rising from the dead. They come in order to touch their own victory over death.

In rising, Christ destroyed not only His own death, but ours! He overturned the entire kingdom of death. Death has no more power over Him; nor does it have ultimate power over those who live in Him. The influence of the Church on the world, therefore, is the influence of a community which already participates in victory over death. That influence moves the choices of society away from death and destruction, and toward the affirmation, in word and deed, of the precious gift of LIFE.

The victory of LIFE has already been won but has not yet fully unfolded. We therefore rejoice and struggle at the same time. We have unshakeable confidence that the power of LIFE is greater than the forces of death. Yet we must not relax our efforts to protect God's gift of LIFE from the culture of death which surrounds us.

### EASTER PRO-LIFE PRAYER...

Lord Jesus Christ, we praise your Resurrection! We celebrate your triumph over the Kingdom of death! May we, your Church, proclaim, celebrate, and serve the victory of LIFE in our world. May we respond to the needs of those who are tempted to destroy the LIFE within them by abortion, and may we help to build a world which rejects every form of violence and in particular, the violence of abortion. You live and reign forever and ever. Amen. ~ *Pro-Life Articles*

## REQUEST

**SEEKING TESTIMONIES:** - Please write to us and tell us your story. We would especially Love to hear how the Bread of Life Bible Study has helped you in your journey with the Lord. Please limit it to 500 words. Thank you...

**Easter Blessings, St Dismas Guild**

**St. Dismas Guild:** Catholic Evangelization through Scripture and ministry to the prisons.

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