



St. Dismas Guild

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

www.stdismas.org February 2009

TESTIMONY

By

Deacon Ken with inserts of St. Paul

As I was reading the testimony of St. Paul in the readings of the Mass (1-25-09, Acts 22:3-16) I was struck by the impact that Jesus had on his life. He stated that before he knew Christ his life was exciting because of his learning the faith from a well known scholar named Gamaliel. At times violence was the norm when he chased, arrested and had Christians executed because of their belief in Jesus. He thought he was doing the right thing in following his belief and his church. I asked myself if his life before Christ was led by God or himself and obviously it was led by himself.

My life too was exciting as I also learned the faith mostly from my mother and when I got older I became an authority figure on just about everything. I was born and raised in the Catholic faith. I loved to read so I became pretty knowledgeable about everything. Christ was always in my life but before I came into a personal relationship with Jesus I could stand up to just about anyone and anything and liked to do things my way. I was very critical of people and even the church leaders because I didn't agree with the way they operated. Like Paul, I too thought I was righteous following the statutes of the Church.

Christ came into Paul's life while he was on that lonely road to Damascus. He saw a bright light in the sky and was thrown to the ground. He then heard a voice saying, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" The men with Paul saw the light but did not hear the voice. Paul asked who this was speaking to him and he answered, "I am Jesus the Nazorean whom you are persecuting." Paul became instantly blind and was led into the city. He met a man named Ananias who was directed by the Lord to bless Saul and like scales peeled from his eyes he could see. Paul was miraculously healed. This change of heart that came over Paul is called a Metanoia.

The Metanoia, or so I thought, came in my life in 1966 when I survived a life and death lung operation. I was told by the doctor that I was dying and I tried to bargain with God by telling him I would dedicate my life to him if he would let me live. He did let me live as you can see. I tried to keep my end of the bargain for many years doing what I thought God wanted me to do, yet, with an attitude of doing it Ken's way and many times not consulting God as to where he wanted me or what he wanted me to do. Much of the time I would be critical of the establishment. Over the years I would get knocked down by my lung disease and beg God to heal me again and over and over this pattern continued until I made a Life in the Spirit Seminar. I remember at the Life in the Spirit Seminar I experienced God's presence in being baptised in the Holy Spirit. I experienced that salvation was not a doctrine or a dogma, it was a person, and his name was Jesus Christ. As time went by I learned that His Spirit dwelled within me to comfort me when I was sick, to heal me when I felt helpless, to console me, to correct me and to love me when I felt like I could not go on any more. It came to me that He was allowing me to experience his cleansing type of love. It is a love that at times it seems like it is too brutal, and yet I can sense within me the peace that is still new and glorious. I am becoming or I should say I am being guided through the pain and sorrow caused by my own level of selfishness.

I am now learning how to communicate without attacking, and I am even learning how to listen more than speaking. My body is disintegrating before my eyes and my

eyes see a spiritual light that is igniting my spirit within. I, like many inmates, know what it feels like to be in darkness and in pain, and yet I know, that I know, that Our beautiful wonderful Lord Jesus Christ is allowing me to really become a new creation. I was restricted from going into the prisons because of my lung disease and I have been restricted from preaching from the pulpit. These are two very special loves of my ministry and I am now realizing that this is what trusting in God is all about. His ways are not my ways and this has taken me through the emotions of pride all the way to humility. I came to realize that without Christ nothing is meaningful. Christ is now showing me different but meaningful ways to serve him in the kingdom. I am very grateful to be in this spiritual place in my life.

That is what has been happening to me with my illness of body and my sins of pride. I cry out to you in your bedroom or your cell, whether you can walk or not, whether you are confined or not, we all become free when we say "Come Lord Jesus, take up residence in my heart". I pray that you will help me change the world through the power of the Holy Spirit by joining me in proclaiming the word of God in anyway that you can.

Paul then went forth proclaiming that Jesus Christ was God. He gave a perfect testimony that had three parts. First part, before Christ came into his life, the second part, how Christ impacted his life, and the third part how his life has changed by what he is doing now. We get many wonderful testimonies from different kinds of people. We invite you to send us your testimony and help us change the world through the power of the Holy Spirit.

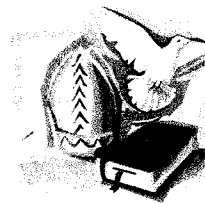
DOING TIME WITH JESUS

Deacon Ken & Sister Marie....Peace & Blessings!
God bless your hearts and continually enrich your spirits & ministry in the New Year and beyond.

I am humbled by and grateful for your gratitude and service in Christ - Know that while I am not Catholic, I find great joy in my daily Bible study from the Bread of Life, Cycle A, that you provided me...and I look forward to and enjoy reading the monthly newsletter. Thanks!

May God's Word ever be proven true and made manifest in our lives - I close with this...."Therefore, my beloved brothers, be firm, steadfast, always fully devoted to the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain." (1 Cor. 15:58, Phil. 2:16, 1 Thess. 2:19) Amen!

Peace and blessings, Michael



Michael, Thank you for your encouraging letter. The Bread of Life Catholic Bible Study has brought many into a personal encounter with Jesus Christ and teaches us how to listen and follow the lead of the Holy Spirit.

Peace and blessings to you also.

Dear Brother & Sister in Christ, Greetings. I would like to thank you for sending me your newsletter. I've been receiving your newsletter since 2006. I really do enjoy reading these testimonies. I am sorry that I haven't written to you all, but I'm still here reading your newsletters...I want you to know I should be getting out later this year, and I would like to ask you if you could send me a book of "Prayers". I would really appreciate it a lot.

Also I would like to confess a sin that I had made back in the "1980's", it's been bothering me a lot, and I have not confessed this sin to anyone else, and I would like your opinion what should I pray for? What should I do? So my

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

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UPDATE

heart will rest. Cause I have been suffering ever since. I think I have bad luck and I haven't been happy either.

Please send me a prayer book. Thank you very much for your time and concern. God bless you all, L.C.

L.C., *Once we confess our sins God forgives us. The prayer our Lord gave us, found in Matthew 6:9-15, the Our Father, tells us that we are to ask the Father to forgive us as we forgive those who have offended us. It also says, "If you forgive others their transgressions your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your transgressions." You might ask, who do I need to forgive in my situation? You need to forgive those you offended or offended you, including yourself, because God has forgiven you. Once confessed God does away with our sins so we need to accept God's forgiveness and forget what is past and look to what is ahead. The Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) is where you do that. You receive the grace needed from this sacrament to help you sin no more. If you are unable to get to confession now ask God to forgive you and go to confession when you get out of prison. When you get a job, take some money and give it to the poor or the church. God forgives you and he loves you and if he does that for you you need to do the same for yourself. You have done enough worrying over this. Philippians 4:6 says, "Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God." God bless you.*

Dearest Deacon Ken & Marie and everyone at St. Dismas, I cried when I read your newsletter about what this President elect is deciding to do. Pro-choice is a horrible thing. At Mass this past week, our Deacon told us in detail of the horrible and dangerous way some abortions are done. Scary is all I can say. So when I returned to the dorm and tried to tell everybody, they could not understand why I was so upset and crying. Some say what about rape - or incest - or disease or deformity? I say "Abortion is killing and killing is a sin." This should not be done. God is Pro-Life, therefore, we as His children should be as God, Pro-Life! Life begins at conception. God knows all. And any child, no matter how the baby was conceived; God was there to protect that baby. I will always believe that, so why should anybody do harm to a baby? Abortion is the worst punishment that humans have come up with. Just like executions to end someone's life, it is just wrong, wrong, wrong! We all need to pray the Mercy Chaplet. People do not know the wrong that they are doing. I pray God forgives them. KDL

K, *It breaks our heart also to know that the signing of the (FOCA) Freedom of Choice Act will open the door for the murder of millions of babies. We think of our Lady of Sorrows, Our Blessed Mother, as she cries for her children. Our Lord wept over Jerusalem and he, too, weeps over his murdered children through abortion and neglect. The innocent who have no say, no freedom. Our freedom is taken away from us as we are forced to pay taxes for abortion. We cry when we think up to nine months a full grown baby almost fully out of the mothers body can have scissors inserted into his or her base of the skull. Yes, the baby feels the excruciating pain as the life is sucked out of him or her. The pain of the mother that follows killing her child is excruciating to some and to some it is buried and life goes on only to erupt in some other way at some other time. Yes, K, it is wrong, wrong, wrong. Tell everyone to join our Bishops, our Church in the fight against abortion. Your suggestion to pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy daily for an end to abortion is excellent. We send the prayer with the pamphlets that we send out and if anyone would like to have it we will be glad to send it. Also, we all need to write to our Senators and Representatives of our states asking them to oppose FOCA or any similar measure and retain laws against federal funding and promotion of Abortion. God bless you and thank you for your passionate letter.*

COLFS - CULTURE OF LIFE FAMILY SERVICES - NEW IN TOWN, A PRO-LIFE CLINIC HEADED BY DR. GEORGE DELGADO, MD. OFFERING FULL FAMILY HEALTH CARE, NAPRO TECHNOLOGY, CRISIS PREGNANCY CARE, NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING CLASSES, SPIRITUAL DIRECTION, ETC. CALL TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT AT 211 S. GRAPE ST ESCONDIDO AT 760-741-1224 AND RECEIVE THE HEALING TOUCH OF JESUS THROUGH THE HANDS OF THOSE AT THE CLINIC. DR. DELGADO IS TAKING NEW APPOINTMENTS.

The Strong Woman of God Seminar was extremely powerful. The Holy Spirit directed and taught many women through simple testimonies of the women that presented them. We are planning another one in September at a bigger facility so no one will be turned away. I apologize to those I turned away.

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT - GROWTH SEMINAR

Experience the power of the Holy Spirit come alive in YOU!

St. Mary's Catholic Church Hall,
1160 S Broadway Escondido CA 92025

Saturday's from 8:30-Noon

January 31, 2009 - More Love

February 28, 2009 - More Power

March 21, 2009 - More Wisdom

Stir into flame the gift of God that you have...a Spirit of.....power and love (2 Tim. 1:6-7).

Fax your name, address, and phone number to (858)673-0230 to register.



We had a visit from Fr. Ray M.C. with the Missionaries of Charity and gave him the book we use on the Growth Seminar. Fr. Ray who was in Tijuana is now going to Africa. We will keep him in our prayers and ask you to do the same. All of Mother Teresa's homes are in poor areas and the work they do is the work of Jesus Himself.



Come join us to pray the Rosary for Life at an abortion center, 120 S. Craven St, San Marcos, Tuesday's 9am-10am and at Planned Parenthood on Mission Avenue between Center City Pkwy and Escondido Blvd in Escondido on Thursday's from 10:30am-11:30am.

We received an e-mail from a brother with the Missionaries of Charity Brothers in Guatemala requesting materials in Spanish for their work there in the prison. We feel blessed that the Lord has allowed us to be able to supply materials all over the world. We get excited knowing our bible study is bringing men and women not only here in this country but in other countries closer to God. We believe God is alive today and as Jesus spent much of his time teaching and proclaiming the word he is still teaching us through the church. This study is touching the hearts of men and women to know, love, and serve God in this life and the life to come. Your generous support physically, emotionally, spiritually and financially has made this possible. Thank you so much to our volunteers and all our benefactors.

Your brother and sister in Christ,



Deacon Ken & Marie

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