



St. Dismas Guild

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

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TESTIMONY

BY
N. C.

I want to start off by saying that I love the newsletters. I also want to share my true story of my life with the Catholic brothers and sisters.

I am a male and I was born in 1988. My Mom left me when I was six months old. I grew up moving from place to place. When I was 2-6 years old I was abused by my uncles friends physically. From 6-7 I was physically abused by my stepmom until I almost killed her. Around the same time I was sexually abused by my babysitter. Seven to ten years old I spent in the mental institution. At ten when I got out I went into a foster care. While I was there I joined a gang, started doing drugs, carrying guns, stalking people, stealing, pulling armed robbery, and taking cars to a chop shop. So far I have been shot 7 times, stabbed 10 times, and that was all before my 15th birthday. From 16-20 years old I've been in state prison and I'll be here for my 21st birthday. I've done just about everything, grand theft auto, assault with a deadly weapon, shooting at a gang war, and fleeing and avoiding the cops. I'm glad they caught me because I have no family, no one to care for me but me. If they didn't take me to jail I would've never found Jesus and I probably would be dead right now. God bless you, PS If you can find a girl my age to write to me so I can have a pen pal I would be very thankful.

Thank you N.C. for writing to us. It sounds like you have had a pretty full life of crime and loneliness. We believe the tremendous importance of a mother in the life of a child. When a child is abandoned by the mother or the father it has life long consequences on them. But that can be healed by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He loves us unconditionally, even if we ignore Him. He is always looking for His lost sheep. As we develop a personal relationship with Jesus through His Word, the bible, asking the Holy Spirit to teach us about Him and His unconditional love, we find healing. In the case of abandonment by a mother you, too, can be healed when you develop a personal relationship with our Blessed Mother. When Jesus died on the cross he told his disciple John, "Behold, your mother." He told His mother, "Behold, your son." This established our Blessed Mother as our mother. All the love that was lacking from your biological mother can be filled by Our Blessed Mother. She loves you whether you say the rosary or just ignore her. She is your mother and will fill you with her love and you too will find healing as you come to her and ask her to love you because you never felt the love of your mother. We do not have female mentors for males. We will send your letter to one of our male mentors. God bless you.

DOING TIME WITH JESUS

Dear Deacon Ken & Marie, When I was doing my prison sentence I joined the Brothers of St. Dismas. I've been a Catholic all of my 52 years on this earth. I have a major problem with alcohol and now I'm back in prison for a parole violation because I couldn't leave the alcohol alone. I'm now at S.C.I. and I intend to max out in November of 09. I need help with my alcohol abuse and I pray to God every night to help me out. I attend 4 AA meetings per week and I hope to continue AA when I max out. Its only God and I this trip for my family has abandoned me, including my children. I fear this next upcoming winter because I will be homeless. Please

pray for me and possibly give me some advice on where I can live temporarily until I start working and can get a place. Please also send me if you can literature about this terrible disease and the Bread of Life Catholic Bible Study. Thank you for your time. God bless you both, D. S.

Dear D.S., We sent you a copy of the Bread of Life Catholic Bible Study. You obviously need inner healing to get to the core of the addiction and the Good News is that God can and will heal you. The answer to any addiction is Jesus Christ. He is the healer. Read and study the Bread of Life to develop a personal relationship with Jesus. By November you will be a new creation, the old will be gone. As you "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides" (Matthew 6:33), your needs as it says will be taken care of. Read Matthew 6:25-34. He has to become your #1 priority and focus. We will be praying for you. May God consecrate you in truth, His Word is truth.

Dear Ken & Marie, I just read the April newsletter. The testimony of the girl (woman) and the abortions really touched me. I am 54 years old and have been in prison for fifteen years. I now have 21 months till I'm free. Thank God!

I can relate to what a lot of your writers say. I also lived an insane life, sex, drugs, R & R. Not a new story, so I won't even bother to go into it. Let's just say I am in the same boat with the worst of the worst. But the good part is while serving this sentence I found Jesus in the Catholic Church. He has made my life worthwhile for once.

I am not really much of a writer or talker, but I use my talents as a musician and play my guitar for Mass. I enjoy it. We have a small but dedicated group here. Also, we have good volunteers and priests that go above and beyond for us. I don't really see that kind of dedication in other denominations. Thank God I'm Catholic. And thank you for your newsletter. L.

Jesus is the one who gives us purpose in our life. There is no other way but through Him that we find peace. God has gifted you as a musician and you have said "Yes, Lord" and used your talent to bring others to Christ. Music at Mass many times brings people into His presence. When you use the gifts God gives you He will gift you with even more. He has gifted us with His greatest gift, the gift of Himself, leaving us with His Holy Spirit to comfort, guide and direct us. Some ignore their talents and gifts and feel empty and unfulfilled. You have found the key to joy. Thank you for sharing.

Dear Brothers, Praise God for He is good. My brothers I have received one of the biggest blessings I have ever gotten. I went to court and had my three life sentences dropped and got charged with only attempted manslaughter and a gun enhancement. God blessed me and my loved ones. I get sentenced in July and I pray I get a little bit of time, my max is 15 years. So if you could pray that God touches the judges heart to have compassion on me and give me a small sentence. Thank you for the newsletters and your prayers. God is so good. You guys are in my prayers. I love you guys, God bless you and your loved ones. Take care, Your brother L. The peace and love of God be with you always.

We pray every day for all of you in prison that you will get a just sentence and that you will come to know the loving God that He is. He is always there to pick you up. We pray for the victims of the crimes committed by those who are in prison. We pray that those who have been victimized can find it in their hearts to forgive. Matthew 6:14-15 says, "If you forgive

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

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others their transgressions, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your transgressions.” We can choose to forgive or love others every day because all those who have accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior and been baptized have the Holy Spirit who is their helper.

Dear St. Dismas (Deacon Ken & Marie)

I've recently sent a letter expressing my thanks for your evangelization to prison inmates. I'm grateful that someone is thinking about souls who are open to receiving life through our Lord and I've been enlightened through reading your newsletter.

I'm writing this time to ask you for your intercession. I'll be leaving Dept. of Corrections in June and it seems that emotionally and mentally I'm drained from this experience. There was never a time when doubt overwhelmed me as it does now. And I'm fighting spiritually to survive. There has been so much hurt that has taken place. And I pray and do all I can to maintain spiritually but at times I feel like I'm just going through the motions. Throughout my three years in prison, this seems like the most doubtful time I have ever had. I ask for your prayers because I have a lot to face and I need your prayers and God's help. Sincerely, C. C.

Dear C.C., You have received many of our books. As you take what you have learned from them and cling to Jesus, he will send his angels to watch over you. Jesus told his disciples over and over, "Do not be afraid". He is telling you not to fear He will be with you. Jesus prayed to Our Father, "I do not ask you to take them out of the world but that you keep them from the Evil One. They do not belong to the world any more than I belong to the world." (John 17:11-19). Read 1 John 4:7-21 on God's love and Christian Life.

UPDATE

BENEDICTUS of San Diego - Saturday, June 13th, 2009 at Lawrence Welk Resort, Escondido CA 7AM-10:30AM. Guest Speaker – Fr. Bob Clark, Retired Marine Chaplain. He will give his personal testimony of how Christ has impacted his life and how Christ has been with him all through his military career.

On June 20th, 2009 at St. Francis of Assisi in La Quinta CA, there will be a follow up of the Life in the Spirit Seminar called **LIFE IN THE SPIRIT – A NEW PENTECOST**. We will be giving talks on the Gifts & Fruit of the Holy Spirit and Operating in the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. This will be right after **PENTECOST**. All are welcome.

I recently attended a Magnificat Conference in New Orleans and received some wonderful teaching and healing. I came into a deeper understanding of our Blessed Mother's love for me and understanding of my role as a mother. I have come to know God's personal love for me over the years since my baptism in the Holy Spirit in 1974. I came to know His love through His Word. As I prayed and studied His Word I have grown in my knowledge of how much He loves me. I am also convinced that he proved His love for me in that while I was still sinning he died for me and took all that anger, bitterness and resentment on the cross. I love Him so much and want to please Him in all I do. What struck me on the conference was Mary's love for me. I was told that no matter what I have done to ignore her she still loves me. Mary's virtues are the virtues I am to follow. Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word." (Luke 1:38) Her yes to God, hearing His voice and doing whatever He tells me is what I want to follow in Mary. I believe in the communion of Saints and that they are not dead but alive interceding for me from heaven. Jesus said we will live forever if we believe in Him. At the conference I received some powerful healing through the Eucharist. After Communion when I sat down at my seat I saw Mary with her

arms open and me sitting in front of her with my back against her body with my arms open and in my arms were our three adopted children, Laura, Dan and Gina as babies wrapped up in blankets and behind them were their biological mothers and behind me was my mother and behind her was her mother, my Nana. Above was the Holy Spirit with His rays permeating all of us. My understanding of this vision is that as I have received the Love of God and my Mother Mary's love this love will heal any open wounds from past generations and the love will continue to heal present generations. This was just one experience I had on the weekend and as I continue to receive God's love and the love of my mother Mary I will be able to give love. Isn't that all that matters?

TEACHING

WE ARE AT WAR

The battle against evil is now breaking out in several major fronts in our society. We see Satan trying to tear our schools apart. We see him working in our government. We also see him working in our church. The result of all this evil is destroying many families in our society. When in battle a warrior needs to put on the full armor of God. We are told in scripture how to do this (Ephesians 6:10-20) We want to be strong in the Lord and we need to be obedient to His Word. – Step 1 – We take and put on **the belt of Truth**. Jesus is our Truth as our strength and protection. His Word is Truth. We need to believe, live, speak and know only the Truth.

Step 2 – Put on **the breastplate of righteousness**. By faith we appropriate the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

Step 3 – We thank the Lord for feet shod in readiness for the gospel of peace, the **shoes of peace**.

Step 4 – We lift up the **shield of faith**. We trust you, Lord, and believe you are the Christ and you love me.

I know that my mind is a target of Satan's deceiving ways so I put on the **helmet of salvation**. I invite His mind to be in my mind.

Step 5 – I take hold of **the sword of the Spirit** which is the Word of God. Lord, please enable me to use your Word in all of its power. O, Lord, help me to keep my armor well oiled with prayer. Help me to see the needs of others and help them, through prayer, as the enemy attacks them.

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I recently read an article that gave the ingredients of **love**. We have gone far away from the true meaning of **love** in today's society. The true description of **love** comes from Galatians 5:22-23. It states that the fruit of the Spirit is **love**. I will list them for you and hope that they will be of help to you. They are as follows:

Joy – is **love** smiling

Peace – is **love** resting

Patience – is **love** waiting

Kindness – is **love** showing itself sensitive to others

Goodness – is **love** making allowances and sacrifices for others.

Faithfulness – is **love** proving constant

Gentleness – is **love** yielding

Self-Control – is **love** triumphing over selfish inclinations

People will know what we believe by the way we act.

We want to thank you for all your support physically, emotionally, spiritually, and financially.



In Jesus love,

Deacon Ken & Marie