

St. Dismas Guild

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

www.stdismas.org September 2009

TESTIMONY

By
Daniel

Dear Deacon Ken & Marie, Hello again. I hope and pray that you are both doing well. I have not written you since March, and I apologize for that. In the meantime, I have been enjoying your St. Dismas Guild Newsletter. Thank you for mailing it to me. I would like to share a story with you. Consider it an elaboration of the last letter I sent you.

A while back there was a woman named Virginia asleep in her bed. In the middle of the night, a voice woke her up and told her, "Get up and pray for the life of your future son!" Although she did not understand (since she was not pregnant). This woman loved and feared the Lord, and she knew his voice when she heard it. She obeyed and prayed fervently until the sun came up that day. On that same night, elsewhere, there was another woman having a different experience. What her name was, I do not know; but for the sake of the story, she will henceforth be identified as Jane.

Jane was 17 years old and pregnant. Her pregnancy was the result of being raped. Who the rapist was, I do not know; nor do I know if she even knew who he was.

On that night Jane was in a state of despair. She was frightened and alone. Nobody knew about Jane's pregnancy but Jane, but that would not last for long. Her tummy was beginning to swell. Soon, people would know that she was pregnant. If people started noticing that she was pregnant, then they would most certainly want to know how she became pregnant. Jane was too young, frightened, and embarrassed to explain this to anyone (this also leads me to believe that the rapist was someone she knew, and perhaps even cared about her at some point, and that she was only trying to protect him.

Since she was not old enough to get an abortion by herself, Jane did the only thing that she could think of to terminate the pregnancy and destroy this secret. That night, she took a wire coat hanger and attempted an abortion on herself. By the Grace of God, she failed.

Having run out of options, Jane decided to carry out the pregnancy and give birth to the child, but she would not keep and raise it. She was too young to be a mother, so she would put the baby up for adoption.

Jane gave birth to a baby boy. He was immediately taken into state custody and put into foster care. For the first six months of his life, the baby boy had no name. Also, this baby boy was born with a defect in his left arm (most likely the result of the abortion attempt). His left arm was underdeveloped, and dramatically shorter than his right. Other than that, the baby was in perfect mental and physical health. Early the next year Virginia was ready for another child. She and her husband were already parents to a son named Michael. Michael was adopted from the state a few years prior. Early in her marriage, Virginia had a miscarriage. The doctor told her that it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, for her to have children. Desiring to be a mother, Virginia pursued adoption. She then went to the adoption agency to find her second child. While the caseworker was showing her the various files, she came across an unusual case that immediately grabbed her attention. The file was on a baby boy that was six months old, had one arm, and no name. After reading the casework and learning about the circumstance of the child's birth, she knew. She knew that this was her future son that the Lord commanded her to pray for nearly a year before. She knew that this baby boy was the answer to those prayers. She knew that this was her son.

Virginia proceeded to adopt the baby boy. Before the adoption was even finalized, she named him Daniel, which

means "God is my Judge". Virginia raised Daniel with love and tenderness (along with his 8 brothers and sisters, most of which were adopted from various parts of the world). To this day, Daniel loves his mother very much, and she loves him.

This story is not about me. True, my name is Daniel. True, I am the same Daniel in the story. But this story is not about me. It is about Virginia, my mother.

I see many of the characteristics of the Blessed Virgin Mary in my mother. Like Mary, she was contacted by God in regards to her future son. Like Mary, she did not fully understand what was occurring. But also like Mary, she understood that Faith comes before understanding. Just as Mary said "yes" to God, so did Virginia say "yes" to God; and that "yes" brought life into the world.

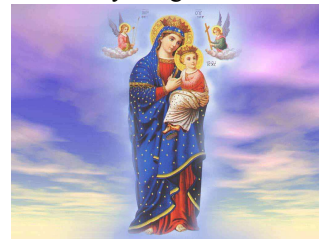
My mother saved my life. True, it was the Grace of God that protected me from the abortion attempt, but it was my mother's obedience that made it happen. Sometimes, God requires us to perform an act of Faith and Prayer in order for things to happen. In this way, God's power is made manifest, and our own Faith is strengthened.

I hope this testimony will help strengthen someone else's Faith. God wills for all persons to have life, and to have it more abundantly. But sometimes, in order for God to do His part, we have to do ours.

Thank you again for your newsletter. I am also really enjoying your Bread of Life Bible Study. It has been very helpful in examining myself, as well as getting more out of the weekly Mass. Thank you so much.

In September the Bishop is coming to the unit to give me Baptism, Confirmation, and First Communion. It is going to be a wonderful day, and I can't wait. It is also just the beginning. After my release, I will be entering a Religious Order. I have been receiving much guidance from several Priest about this, and they have been very helpful. Any guidance or information you could provide regarding this area would be most helpful. I already understand the caution that must be exercised during the "first fervor", but God calls us all. If we run away from it or ignore it, we may never find our purpose in life. But if we answer it, we have the Church to guide us and help us discern our Vocation. Then you become who you are, a Child of God.

Anyways, that's about all I've got. I am keeping you and your ministry in my rosary prayers. God bless you all! I'll write you again.



Daniel, Thank you so much for your powerful testimony. It really hit home with us as we have three adopted children who we love so dearly. As a mother of adopted children it touches my heart to hear your love for your Mom. Your image of her comparing her with Our Lady is so beautiful. I know our children have a strong love for me also. When God is so much a part of your life, not only a part of it, but, is your life, then, love between spouses and children is evident. Oh, how the world needs to understand that. Nothing can separate us from God and each other. Romans 8:35, 37 says, "What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword?... No, in all these things we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us." As adopting parents we pray for the biological parents of our children. You right in saying we have to do our part in the walk with the Lord, that's what we call cooperating with the Holy Spirit. God bless you and thank you for such a powerful testimony on the consequences of abortion and the benefits of adoption.

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

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DOING TIME WITH JESUS

Dear Deacon Ken & Marie, I would like to say God Bless and Thank you and your Ministry for everything I received from you. I was raised Catholic and was even an altar boy when I was young, but I only knew of the Catholic religion only from what I was seeing with my eye's, not with anything that was told or read to me. In reality to me I lacked understading. I turned away from the Church at an early age because of the negativity that was around me 24 hours a day. I started ot get into a lot of trouble and even found myself in a placement because of my choices at the age of 13. I am presently 32 years of age and I find myself making the same choices, and ending up in the same places over and over again. I have almost 12 years of incarceration all together and I'm still adding to that number, but I've been really reading the Bible, my Bible Studies are getting done, and I'm reading everything about the Catholic's and how they live, but most importantly I'm learning how to have faith in God and my Lord Jesus and leaving everything in His hands. I've tried it my way for so many years and it never worked. As I leave it in God's hands, His will be done, and I try to apply everything I learn from the Bible, pamphlets and my bible studies I see that anything can be done with the blessings from God and I'm trying my hardest, with the help of the Holy Spirit to walk in the right path, the righteous path, the way the Lord Jesus did. Thank you for your time and patience and for your ministry. God bless you. M.L. PS If it's possible may I receive part C of the Bread of Life. Thank you.

M.L., Making the same mistakes over and over in our lives is what happens when we don't submit to Jesus and His way of righteousness. He says to those who continue on this path, "Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light. (Matthew 11:28-30) It sounds like you have now chosen to do that. God bless you and we will send C cycle as soon as we receive it.

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Dear Deacon Ken & Marie, I received the Bible & Bible study you sent to me. I was very grateful for this. I have been doing the study everyday. I love it! It just seems to correspond to my need for enlightenment. Thank you very much. Praiseworthy as: John 6:65-66, "And he said, For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by my Father." As a result of this, many of his disciples returned to their former way of life and no longer accompanied him."

This reminded me of both of you. Trying to help me in the following of Christ. What a wonderful feeling it must be to know you are doing as God wanted you to do.

I'm looking forward to my release from prison so I can participate in the first five Saturdays & receive Holy communion, whenever I want to, or at least when I am able. I look forward to confession as often as I need to go, but don't get the opportunity now!

Until then I will pray the rosary & remember to make spiritual communion often. I am praying for reparation of sins, coversion of sinners and blasphemies committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary, St. Dismas, Pray for us. Thank you, Michael

Michael, The Bread of Life Catholic Bible Study has brought many to convesion. Our newsletter is also a means of evangelization. Bringing people to Christ is what St. Dismas Guild is all about. Our joy is hearing people tell us that these have been means of conversion for them. You can only find joy and peace in this world by committing your life to Christ. Making Him your head as 1 Cor. 11:3 says, "But I want you to know that Christ is the head of every man, and a husband the head of his wife, and God the head of Christ." The following is a powerful prayer you can say after communion, be it physical or spiritual reception. Spiritual communion is very effective and God will bless you as you continue to pray as you have been.

STAY WITH ME, LORD Prayer After Communion Written by St. Pio of Pietrelcina

Stay with me, Lord, for it is necessary to have You present so that I do not forget You. You know how easily I abandon You. Stay with me, Lord, because I am weak and I need Your strength, that I may not fall so often. Stay with me, Lord, for You are my life, and without You, I am without fervor. Stay with me, Lord, for You are my light, and without You, I am in darkness. Stay with me, Lord, to show me Your will. Stay with me, Lord, so that I hear Your voice and follow You. Stay with me, Lord, for I desire to love You very much, and always be in Your company. Stay with me, Lord, if you wish me to be faithful to You. Stay with me, Lord for as poor as my soul is, I want it to be a place of consolation for You, a nest of love. Stay with me, Jesus, for it is getting late and the day is coming to a close, and life passes; death, judgement, eternity approaches. It is necessary to renew my strenght, so that I will not stop along the way and for that, I need You. It is getting late and death approaches, I fear the darkenss, the temptations, the dryness, the cross, the sorrows. O how I need You, my Jesus, in this night of exile! Stay with me tonight, Jesus, in life with all it's dangers. I need You. Let me recognize You as Your disciples did at the breaking of the bread, so that the Eucharistic Communion be the Light which disperses the darkenss, the force which sustains me, the unique joy of my heart. Stay with me, Lord, because at the hour of my death, I want to remain united to You, if not by communion, at least by grace and love. Stay with me, Jesus, I do not ask for divine consulation, because I do not merit it, but the gift of Your Presence, oh yes, I ask this of You! Stay with me Lord, for I seek You alone, Your Love, Your Grace, Your Will, Your Heart, Your Spirit because I love You and I ask no other reward but to love You more and more, with a strong and active love. Grant that I may love You with all my heart while on earth, so that I can continue to love You perfectly throughout all eternity, dear Jesus. Amen!

UPCOMING EVENTS

BECOMING A STRONG WOMAN OF GOD

SEPTEMBER 12, 2009 – 10:30AM-3:45PM
ST. MARK CHURCH HALL, 1147 DISCOVERY ST SAN MARCOS CA 92078 - FREE OF CHARGE
Contact St. Dismas to RSVP

BENEDICTUS - A MINISTRY TO CATHOLIC MEN

Saturday, September 19, 2009 (7:00-10:30AM)
Lawrence Welk Resort (next to theater) - Escondido
Guest Speaker – Col. Luciano S. Silva, USMC – Retired
Web Site: www.Benedictus1.com – Pay by PayPal online

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR – September 26, 2009

St. Mary Church Hall, Escondido – 8:30am-5:00pm
Contact St. Dismas to RSVP

40DAYS FOR LIFE – PRAY TO END ABORTION

September 23 – November 1

- 40 DAYS OF PRAYER AND FASTING
- 40 DAYS OF CONTINUOUS PRAYER VIGIL
- 40 DAYS OF EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH IN THE COMMUNITY

Prayer vigils to be held outside abortion clinics

"If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land." (2 Chronicles 7:14)

Learn more at www.40daysforlife.com

North S.D. County – To sign up for specific vigil hours, or to let us know how you feel called to serve God in this effort, please contact the local 40 days for life leadership team: www.40daysforlife.com/sanmarcos/

We are thankful for all your support, spiritual, emotional, and physical. Your financial help has made it possible for us to continue giving all our materials free of charge to those who are in most need. Thank you and my God bless you abundantly. Deacon Ken & Marie