



# St. Dismas Guild

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

[www.stdismas.org](http://www.stdismas.org) July 2009

## TESTIMONY

BY  
E.

Dear Deacon Ken & Marie, I was given one of your newsletters and was very glad I read it. I'm new to the Catholic faith. In going through the Catechumenate, I have not been confirmed yet. I was hoping for some help. I don't have a Catholic bible. So if you could, I could use a Catholic study bible and any study material you have. I would love to get your St. Dismas Guild newsletter. Tomorrow I turn 34 and that marks 5 years of being a Christian. I spent 29 years being a wiccan. I found Jesus in prison. My whole life I was trying to find something to make me a whole person. I always had a hole in my heart and could never fill that hole. So I tried everything but God. Drugs, being drunk all the time, playing with magic and sex. I could never find anything that would fill that hole.

Then when I went to prison I was asked to a bible study. I was like, why? Then something pushed me to go. I can't explain it. I just had this feeling that I was suppose to go. So, yeah, I went and I listened and something touched my heart. Then I was reading the bible and wow. I never knew this was out there. Next thing I knew I was bringing the word to the bible study. I couldn't stop reading and studying. I had to read it. I read and read and studied. I got in all the classes and mail bible courses. I don't have any money so I got all the free studies I could find. I went to church and did classes there, yet, somehow something was still missing.

I went to a Kairos weekend and met a Catholic from the outside. We started talking and wow. He said everything I believe. I was so amazed by what he said about the Catholic church and everything I've read in the bible was right there. So he gave me a book called "Home Sweet Home" and I was like, hey, that's me. I go to weekly Mass and I feel like I'm home. I've found what God has been leading me to. So if you could help me in my journey I would be very thankful. Anything you could send me would be a blessing. I thank you for your time and for listening to my story. God bless you and keep you well.

*E..., we have sent you a Catholic bible, the Bread of Life Catholic Bible study, a catechism and various pamphlets to help you along the way. Many inmates have written to us telling us they found Jesus in prison as you have. Praise God! That hole in your heart has been healed with God's unconditional love and forgiveness. That's what we are all looking for, as Mother Teresa and so many have stated that we are all looking to be loved and to love. Once we experience the healing touch of Jesus we want to eat his word and then have a great desire to obey it. It's one thing to know the Word and another to act on the Word. Jesus is the Word, He became flesh (John 1:1, 14). Your hunger for the Word and finding your home in the church will bring you much peace. Thank you for sharing your story with us.*

## DOING TIME WITH JESUS

St. Dismas Guild, I am responding back to you to say thank you for all the testimonies you have sent me. Reading about other inmates has helped me understand who God is and what he can do for me. God has shown me a lot. He has helped me with problems I faced each day. I came to Christ in "1996" after I committed my crimes. I kneeled down and cried asking God to forgive me and cleanse me from all my

sins that day. I truly believe he was there with me. I felt a comfort as a father comforts a child. That was 13 years ago. I've walked with Christ and I've fallen off. But I've gotten up and continue to walk with him. If anyone say's its easy to walk the Christ-like, well, they are not telling the truth cause it isn't. But life isn't easy either! But we all manage somehow. I use to think I could do it myself but I realize and learned the hard way. I cannot. I need God's help. I need guidance, His eyes, His ears, His love. Now, I can feel His grace taking over the hardened heart I once had. My life is starting to change, my thinking, my actions. It's awesome!

Thank you so much for your ministry and doing what God has called you to do. Thank you for your prayers and love. Everything I'm learning is helping my relationship with the Lord leading me on the path God has for me.

The blessings are flowing in my life and thank you for being a part of my life. Your brother, your friend, God's child, R.L. PS God is Good!

*We are so glad we can be a part of your life. Staying with like minded people and associating with those who love God and are walking in His ways helps you not to fall back into the old person you used to be. Yes, as you said, it is not easy staying on the right path in this world but when we take His yoke upon our shoulders and learn from Him, the burden becomes easy and light (Matthew 11:28-30). Feeling His grace take over your once hardened heart is awesome. We can know it in our head but truly experiencing His love and presense is what changes the heart. Jesus is meek and humble of heart and we all need to become like Him. Thank you for sharing.*

Dear Deacon Ken & Marie, Hello, this is A.V. and I'm not lost so much anymore as I once was, but I'm still struggling daily. The prison that I'm at has certain criteria in order for me to be baptized in the Catholic Church. Here's some history. My Dad was raised Catholic and my mother was LDS and my Mom raised us all LDS. It doesn't fit my life to be Mormon, and I've been practicing Catholicism for three years now, but it seems like its not good enough for the people running the prison over here! Is there anything you could help me with or is there anything I'm not doing? Sometimes I feel like my faith is just not there, but I know in my heart it is. I love your newsletters. Is there any other free books or literature you could send me? Thank you very much! God bless & love you! Sincerely A.V. P.S. Could you pray for my big Sis. She is currently fighting a drug addiction and an abusive ex that still beats her while her husband is in prison with me. Thank you so much.

*A.V., that struggle daily that you have is that of living in a world where Satan is running rampant. As Jesus tells us in John 10:10, "A thief comes only to steal and slaughter and destroy, I came so that you might have life and have it more abundantly." In prison you are faced with Satan's destructive force, but always remember that Jesus' life, death, and resurrection has destroyed the affect of Satan's hand upon you. Believe it for it is true. If there is any anger towards those over you in prison, turn to Jesus away from the anger and he will lift you up. Unresolved anger prevents you from experiencing the abundant life. You and your family are in our prayers.*

Deacon Ken Finn, My name is F. B. and I am currently an inmate. I'm hoping because your ministry is to the prisons that you can assist me. I've written to several other Catholic organizations and have had no response. What I'm basically looking for is answers and maybe some information, or at

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least an idea of where to get some information if you can't provide it.

Through the Grace of our Lord I have been called to serve Him. I was called once before when I was much younger (16) and chose not to respond. I grew up in a good Catholic family with many blessings, but sometimes that's not enough. I became really lost at 17 and allowed myself to be thrown into the abyss of drugs and sin. Over the years (of course) it got worse and worse. Anyway at 35 I finally got arrested and sent to prison. Who would of thought it would become the most important thing to ever happen to me. That was in 05. We can really do all things through Christ Jesus. With his help, love and grace I have truly become a new person in Christ. Through the teachings of St. Therese of Lisieux, St. Paul and St. John of the Cross I am learning about the love of our Saïor Jesus Christ.

I serve the Lord the best I can everyday in here by (hopefully!) showing a good Christian example and by sharing the teachings of our Holy Mother Church with anybody who will listen. I study my Bible and the Catechism in my free time. But I hope to do more upon my release which should be soon (maybe in a few months, I come up for parole this month).

My question is this, will my "circumstances" keep me from being able to pursue a Consecrated Life. I know there are many forms of religious states and I know the obligation of chastity in celibacy, poverty and obedience, these I can follow. But will I be an acceptable candidate? I just want to serve in the best way that I can. I want to follow Christ more nearly and serve the Church. I want to do my part in this fallen world. Please if there is any information or answers you could provide I would be very grateful. Thank you and God bless, F.B.

*F. B., You have come from a good Catholic family and walked away from what you learned to pursue the lure of Satan which is destructive as you found out. You sense a call by God in which time will tell. Jeremiah 29:11 tells us, "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." Your desire to consecrate your life to God's service is commendable We would advise you to make contact with the Vocations Director in your Diocese and explain your circumstance. He will explain what needs to be done. We will be praying for you upon your release.*

## TEACHING

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) #1876 states, "The repetition of sins – even venial ones – engenders vices, among which are the capital sins. The Seven Capital Sins are:

1. Pride
2. Avarice (Greed)
3. Envy
4. Wrath
5. Lust
6. Gluttony
7. Sloth or Acacia

Virtues to combat against these sins are:

1. Humility
2. Charity - Generosity
3. Love of Neighbor - Kindness
4. Patience
5. Chastity
6. Self-Control - Temerance
7. Diligence

Reflect on where you are coming from. Are you living a life of virtue or a life of vices. If you are living a life of pride begin each day submitting your life under the Lord's headship. If you are greedy, begin being generous to those around you. If you envy others and what they have, be kind to your neighbor and loving towards him/her. If you are full of anger and wrath try practicing patience with those around you. If you have lust lurking at your mind become chaste. How do you become chaste. Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or

praiseworthy – think about such things (Philippians 4:8). If you are falling into gluttony try temperance. The dictionary says temperance is, 1. Habitual moderation in the indulgence of the appetites or passions. Moderation in or abstinence from the use of intoxicating drink. Also practice the fruit of the Spirit (Self-Control) by calling on the Holy Spirit to help you when you are tempted to fall into the sin of gluttony. When you decide you want to be lazy and fall into sloth again ask the Holy Spirit to motivate you. Philippians 2:13 says, "For God is the one who, for his good purpose, works in you both to desire and to work."

Many of these sins are habits picked up over the years. Take one vice for three weeks and practice the virtue to combat against it and you will find yourself defeating the enemy who is trying to convince you that you cannot change.

## PRO-LIFE CULTURE OF LIFE FAMILY HEALTH CARE

Culture of Life Family Health Care began as an outreach to women experiencing crisis pregnancies and has grown to provide **Christ-centered family medical care for all ages**. COLFS was an outreach of St. Dismas Guild. Their full spectrum of care includes: Pediatrics, Family Medicine, Geriatrics, Well Baby Check-ups, Immunizations, Pregnancy Testing, STD Testing. They honor all life from conception to natural death. At Culture of Life Family Services, they offer pregnant women in crisis situations the opportunity to talk with board certified physicians and nurse practitioners. They offer ultrasounds, prenatal care and the support of our spiritual counselors. They also offer additional help, as needed, in each unique situation. **Their goal is to bring the light of Christ to those in need.**

The heads of the three departments are George Delgado, M.D., Medical Director, Deacon Ken & Marie Finn, Cofounders, Spiritual Counseling, and Pat Poindexter, RN, CFCP, CFCE, Infertility and Natural Family Planning Services. We offer free spiritual counseling, pregnancy services, and NFP classes to those who cannot afford them.

Why not make Culture of Life Family Health Care your Primary health care provider? By your making COLFS your Primary Provider it makes it possible for us to help those in need who cannot pay. Dr. Delgado is taking new patients. Most Insurances accepted. **Sirach 38:12-15 says, Then give the doctor his place lest he leave; for you need him too. There are times that give him an advantage, and he too beseeches God that his diagnosis may be correct and his treatment bring about a cure. He who is a sinner toward his Maker will be defiant toward the doctor.**"If you would like those who submit to God in prayer as they begin their day to be your health care provider please call us at our San Diego office at 619-692-4401 or 760-741-1224, Escondido office for Primary Care & NFP. Crisis Pregnancy Hotline in San Diego is 619-819-9138 and in Escondido is 760-215-1700.

We are still praying in front of the Abortion Clinic at 120 S Craven St on Tuesday's from 9AM-10AM and at Planned Parenthood, 347 Mission St. Escondido from 10:30AM–11:30AM. Both facilities prevent us from passing out literature because of their locations. We have no contact with the people going in and out of these facilities, consequently, we are unable to refer them to COLFS. Pray that our prayers reach the hearts of these women who are seeking abortions. The affects of abortion can only harm the woman who is seeking it. Some have gone in and have had multiple abortions only to become numb to what is happening, physically, emotionally and spiritually.

Thank you for all your support.  
Your brother and sister in Christ,

Deacon Ken & Marie Finn