



St. Dismas Guild

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

www.stdismas.org December 2011 Merry Christmas

TESTIMONY

By KS



Dear Deacon Ken and Marie, I have served fifty two months out of a 151 month sentence. I was arrested for transport of child pornography via the internet. During my time in county jail, I had spoken to a Priest who also held confession. I told him how can I ask God to forgive me when I cannot forgive myself? He said to me "God has forgiven you already; all you have to do is take it and forgive yourself." I have forgiven myself but I still kick myself for making my family do the time with me. Before I was sentenced, I was facing up to twenty years in prison. I told the Lord that I was leaving it in His hands and asked Him for a lesser time and I would go to church every Sunday and during the week. I would attend all services wherever I was doing my time. I have missed only one service.

I am also a survivor of cancer. I had an aggressive tumor in my arm and it was to the point that when they removed it I could lose my arm. I asked Jesus and God to save my arm. When the tumor was removed, I woke up after surgery and still had my left arm. Each and every day is a beautiful day. I am a blessed man because I have my family with me, my wife of 27 years, a son and a daughter along with my sister and brother. I also have met men that I consider friends. I tell men "Good Morning" and they say what's good about it. I tell them that they are alive to be here another day. The miracle of sunrise and sunset, and now with fall, the changing color of the leaves on the trees, so much to be thankful for. I am blessed and rich for the people in my life. So are you and many people only have to open their eyes to see the joy and miracles of the Day. God bless you and Happy Thanksgiving to you and your family and staff. KS

Thank you so much for your testimony of healing by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Jesus came to not only save us but to teach, preach, deliver and heal us. He taught you through the priest who told you that you were already forgiven all you have to do is take it and forgive yourself. He healed you through the sacrament of reconciliation and through skilled doctors removing the tumor. He delivered you from the loss of an arm. He forgave you of your sins and washed you clean. It certainly is a good morning and we all have so much to be thankful for. God bless you.

DOING TIME WITH JESUS

Dear Deacon Ken and Marie, I am so sorry to inform you that I have been transferred two times since I last wrote to you. I was doing so well in my last facility. I had a job and was pulling in some money. I was out of my cell for 7 ½ hours a day and going to Bible Study and Mass at night. But I was attacked by Cancer again. I was transferred to another facility so I would be closer to the hospital for treatment. I was there for 10 months. I went through a lot of chemo and another surgery. Unfortunately, it stopped working and they said they can do no more for me. But they will keep me comfortable on pain medication until I die. Now that they sent me to a long term care facility, I don't know what to say except that Jesus bore sickness and disease on the cross for us along with sin. I was going to give up and die until I got a letter this week from my oldest daughter. I had not heard from her for 10 years. I needed to hear from her because it reminded me I

have so much to live for. So now I have dug out healing Scriptures and will be busy reading and praying for my healing to manifest. I will be using the Bible Studies you have sent me over the years and I will live and not die. I am so thankful to still have these materials to use. I have been separated from my property for 11 months so you can see why I was dry for the Word and Bible Studies. I'm not going without a fight! I hope this letter reaches out to anyone who has lost their will, have hope. Don't let the evil one trick you. Fight him with the Word and prayer and don't give up. God came to give life. The devil came to steal and kill and destroy (John 10:10). Please pray for us that are sick. Pray we don't lose our hope. We are all brothers and sisters, we need your prayers. I hope you are well, brother Ken and Sister Marie, Can you please send the newsletter to my new address and anything that will help me get through this? Your brother in Christ, B

Dear B, I am sorry that the cancer has returned and is attacking your body. You can do whatever you need to do in your life through Jesus Christ who is your strength (Phil. 4:13)..... I know what suffering is and I can tell you the scripture that I gave you is life saving. Now you can take the time in your life to get your life straight with God and all the people that you may have hurt or disappointed. I would suggest you keep close to the Lord in prayer and in your daily contact with others. Your message is really powerful and the Holy Spirit comes through loud and clear. We are all awaiting the day of redemption. We don't know the day or the hour when He will come for us. He still has work for you to do and he won't take you a minute before it's done. Read Jeremiah 29:11-12. I, too, fight to keep on keeping on and trying to be a witness to others. Your message will be a call to the Lord, not just for your daughter but for many others as well. I write this note to you at 3AM simply because of the pain. I cannot sleep and so when I read your letter I knew the Lord wanted me to praise Him for all of us who are waiting for Him to bring us home to a peace that passes all understanding. Your right, the healing power is in the Word. May the Lord bless you and heal you my brother in Christ.

My name is J and I'm 19. I'm the oldest brother of seven. I have been trying to get out of the house since I was twelve years old and when I was 17, I was in the streets. I used heavy drugs and was a heavy drinker. When I turned 18, I went to jail for drug possession and at the same time, I found out I was going to be a father. My girlfriend was three months at the time. She had my son while I was locked up. I got out after 6 months; he was 2 months old when I first held him. I went right back to jail and was sent to this Restitution place. While I was there, my son got real sick. Then I come to find out my first cousin, the only person that showed me how to survive the streets, hung himself because of all the stress and pain he was going through. I took it hard. So I left to see my son and there I was, on the run with nowhere to go. Two weeks after I left, my son was taken by God in his sleep. The day after his death, he would have been 6 months old. I'm still trying to cope with my son's loss. I pray every night, every day. I hope to find Jesus in my heart; sincerely I want God to forgive me for all my sins that I have done in the past. I feel responsible for his death and the way my life is. I pray to God for Him to open my heart and help me change cause I really want to find God this time and better my life in His way. Amen. Thank you, I needed to really let this off my chest Deacon Ken and Marie. I would love to have a Bible and a rosary. Thank you and please pray for my Mom and my family, especially my son's Mother. Thank you. JG

J.G. You have been through so much for one as young as you are. A scripture that comes to my mind about you and your situation is "We know that all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose" Romans 8:28. Some things need to be sorted out like forgiveness. God has already forgiven you and he wants you to turn to him and he will bring you through all this turmoil. You already have experienced the lie that Satan has put upon you by trying to convince you that drugs and booze would lead you to freedom. Satan and his lies have destroyed many men and women who turn to him. Some wind up in prison like you and many wind up in the morgue. I am sorry for the loss of your son; it must have been a great shock to you losing a loved one like that. You are not responsible for any ones death. Get into God's word and start living what God calls you to do. You still can have a good future if you trust in Jesus Christ and not in yourself. Proverbs 3:5-6 says, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, on your own intelligence rely not. In all your ways be mindful of Him and He will make straight your paths." The blood of Christ has washed you clean in His forgiveness. Humble yourself and you will find a peace that passes all understanding (Philippians 4:7). God bless you.

Dear Deacon Ken and Marie, I received all the materials that you sent me. The booklet "Overcoming Sexual Abuse" has helped a lot as I was sexually abused at the age of 5 until I was 8 years old. I am in prison for sexually abusing a 13 year old girl in a public restroom when I was 28. I received a 40 year sentence even though I had never been in trouble before; I had no record of violence and was a first time offender. I understand that what happened was repressed anger and memories coming out and reliving what happened to me with someone else. I have done much spiritual work and study and through Christ who strengthens me, I am forgiving my offender. My victim and her family didn't wish for me to get that much time, they just wanted me to get help and come to know Christ as my Savior. I have done that while I was waiting my sentence in the county jail. As a baby, I was baptized Catholic but my family was not in the Church and growing up, I mostly learned from Baptist. Recently, God put it on my heart to study the Catholic faith thanks to you because you gave me these tools. I went to one Catholic service which I enjoyed only to come back this week to find there was no one to have the service. I happened to have my Bread of Life study book and God put it on my heart to give that weeks reading. I understand I am not in an authoritative position to lead a service. Our group is small, maybe 10 people. I'm praying for God to lift up shepherds that will help but so far, it looks like if we are going to have Catholic services, it's going to be us to do it. Is there any help you can provide me to make our Mass better? As it is, we don't have confession or the Sacraments. I have plenty of knowledge of the Bible and I'm not unused to preaching, but I understand Catholic service is much different than what I did as a Baptist. I would appreciate any advice or help you could give me on how to hold a proper Mass. I do the Sunday readings and I preach on those scriptures. I pray from a Catholic devotional the prayer for when we can't accept Holy Communion. I don't know all the ins and outs of conducting Mass. If there is anything you can do to help me I would greatly appreciate it. God gave me the tools through you and now I believe He is calling me to use Him for more than just my personal study. He is showing me to teach because this has been what he has been teaching me. I will do whatever He wants me to do. If you love Him, you obey Him. I want to thank you for obeying Him in your ministry and what you do; it is helping me to help others. I feel connection to Marie and admire her courage to publish that booklet. Everything in it was spot-on. Thank you Marie!!! Peace be unto you both. In Christ, D

Praise the Lord my brother in Christ for stepping up to the plate and offering to serve our beloved Christ and your brother inmates. What you will be serving is a liturgy of the

word not a Catholic Mass. A Mass can only be said by a priest. That is because there is no blessing of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. This is called Eucharist or what many call Holy Communion. We need to pray together that the Lord will bring forth more priest to come forth and serve. I would suggest you read in the front of the Bread of Life the page on Guidelines for leading the Bread of Life study and Before you Begin. The Holy Spirit will guide you. On the matter of the sexual abuse done to the 13 year old girl, know it will remain with her all her life. I would suggest you daily pray that God will heal her of the abuse you did to her. You may not even know who the girl is or will ever see her again but say to her as though she were in front of you, forgive me for the terrible thing I did to you and the damage I caused to your mind and body. Then ask God to forgive you for the terrible damage you did to this 13 year old girl. Now say, I forgive myself for all the anger, bitterness and resentment I may be holding toward myself for what I did to this 13 year old girl. You can be a powerful intercessor for this girls healing although you may never know and in your heart you will be set free of this crime. God bless you.

Dear Deacon Ken and Marie, Thank you for sending me the book, The Bread of Life Cycle A. This past year has been blessed because of your book. I and a few others were able to gather and include it in our studies and we use the Gospel teaching as a homily during our liturgy of the Word. This liturgy is done in the Yard because Catholics are not allowed to gather in the Chapel for any services whatsoever. Only Protestants are allowed. We have no volunteers to come into the prison so we may not gather. We are the exception because American Indians and the Jewish faith are allowed to hold services regardless of volunteers. The Catholic Church has crumbled to the point that no lay persons are willing to come into the prison for Evangelization. Except for Jesus, we have few others to turn to except the St. Dismas Guild's letters and books and the Benedictines. If it is possible, could you please send us a copy of the Bread of Life Cycle B. I also ask you and your readers to please pray for us. Yours in Christ, D

D, The Lord will bless you mightily for saying "yes" to becoming a teacher of the word. Before you begin each service I suggest you say this prayer: Father, I can't understand your Word without your grace, I acknowledge my weakness so your power can reach perfection in me. Send your Holy Spirit to remind, teach and guide me to the truth. May I share as soon as possible whatever you teach me. Amen. This prayer will give you the protection of the Holy Spirit and the confidence to preach God's Word. Don't be discouraged by the barriers that are in your way. You will receive power when the Holy Spirit falls upon you (Acts 1:8). Let us pray that the Lord will send you volunteers and a visiting Catholic Priest. Ask the Benedictines if they can give you spiritual direction every week. God is very pleased with you. God bless you.

There has been a

UPDATE

 back order on bibles and as soon as we get them we will get them to you along with whatever else you requested. Sorry for the delay.

Our good friend and author of Gospels and Revelations, Deacon Lawrence Michaels has left us to be with the Lord full time. He was a great Deacon and he donated the books we send you free of charge to us here at St. Dismas Guild. His wife Jean is donating her time and talent so that you can come into a deeper relationship with Jesus. Please offer prayers for Jean and the family and for the repose of the soul of Deacon Larry.



Have a blessed Merry Christmas and New Year full of hope and peace.

Your brother and sister in Christ,
Deacon Ken & Marie