



# 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) September 2011

## TESTIMONY

By  
JB

Dear Deacon Ken and Marie, I have been in prison nearly five years serving an 88 month sentence for receipt of child pornography. I was born and baptized into the Catholic Church, but I was not formed or properly catechized. I will turn 42 this August. At the age of 4, I was sexually molested over a year by a babysitter, whom I have forgiven and pray for. I grew up thereafter with an attachment to sex and by the age of seven, I was involved in pornography and was also drawn to the occult. Growing up, I maintained a façade of a normal boy. However, I had by high school become atheistic in some ways, denying the existence of God. By the time I was sixteen, my father had committed suicide following separation from my Mother. I left home not long after I graduated high school. I went to college for a short time but I had no real ambition; no real sense of purpose. My life became consumed with a growing pursuit of lust. I visited prostitutes, used call girls, purchased porn and frequented strip joints. I began to use drugs. I maintained work but in secret I was being devoured by this chasing of shadows, by immorality of all kinds.

I had rejected God and even went so far as to convince a girlfriend to have an abortion. I was by definition an anti-Christ, an abomination, an affront to the gift that God had given me...life. Nothing satisfied me. I needed more and more and I was frequently depressed and despondent. Even after getting a career underway, I was incapable of managing my compulsions or maintaining a relationship. Following a failed relationship I contemplated committing suicide. Something intervened. I believe it was then that I perceived God. I sought counseling, secular counseling proved to be a failure. I felt something else was calling me. I came home to the Catholic Church. I began attending Mass every day. I went to talk to a Priest explaining to him that I needed help, that I had had an encounter with an evil spirit on two occasions; experiences which I will never forget-God as my witness. I truly believe there are demons and Satan is their prince. My experience with the occult and pornography left me open to them. I'm not sure how seriously he took my admission and I was not able to attend the RCIA classes he suggested. Due to circumstances, I was made homeless three times. I fell into despair and became lost to drugs and porn once more. My obsession grew worse. I eagerly sought out anything to fill the void in me. (Matthew 12:43-45)

In 2006, it all came to an end. I.C.E. visited me and in 2007 I was sentenced to 88 months. After a few transfers, I was put in a facility which is about 55 percent sex offenders. The Lord was delivering me. (Jeremiah 1:5 & 29:11) I found a small Catholic Community here that prayed the rosary led by a Deacon. There was no RCIA program but I was determined to enter the Church. Because I was persistent, the Deacon began an RCIA Program and in 2009 I was confirmed by the auxiliary Bishop.

In 2010, I was brought over to a residential drug abuse program. God answered my prayer. One night while listening to the EWTN program "Crossing the Goal" I heard a challenge to commit myself to the struggle against evil in today's world. I opened my Bible to Luke, Chapter 3 (John the Baptist) "The voice crying out in the wilderness." I closed my bible and opened it randomly. Malachi; Chapter 3 "Lo I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me." A third time I opened it to Luke Chapter 3, (John the Baptist.) I know God wants me to bear His message. God is calling me to speak out against the terrible affliction of pornography and sexual exploitation. God is using the gift He

gave me, my public speaking voice to be a watchman of Israel. I have seen God's providential love active in my life. He is the instrument of my redemption; it is nothing short of a miracle. I encourage my Catholic brothers in prison to read the Catechism and Bible Study daily. Thank you all for letting me share this testimony.

*JB, What a powerful testimony of God working in your life. Thank you for sharing the Good News of Jesus' redemption with us. No matter what we have done in our lives God wishes none to perish and will allow things to happen in order for us to repent and turn to him. He is the source and supply of all our needs as Philippians 4:19 says, "My God will fully supply whatever you need, in accord with his glorious riches in Christ Jesus." You have come to that understanding and it is His grace that has touched your life. Satan has been defeated from the cross of Jesus Christ. What the world had to offer you was destruction and Satan is roaming around trying to devour you. You fell into his trap but now you are free. We sense you are now like Jeremiah. He felt he had to speak out the word of the Lord because it becomes like fire burning in his heart (Jeremiah 20:7-9). God bless you for your powerful witness showing that miracles are still here..*

## DOING TIME WITH JESUS

Dear Deacon Ken and Marie, I am overjoyed to send greetings and to inform you that I am an organist at our Chapel at our Institution which is incidentally called St. Dismas. I am doing personal studies on Padre Pio 'The Stigmatist' and wanted to take time out and touch base with you guys again and let you know how much I am enjoying the 'Bread of Life Catholic Bible Study' you sent me and how blessed I feel when I do the readings for that particular week in Cycle A that we are doing this year. This weekly study keeps us focused the whole week on what the children of Israel had endured and how their spiritual lives had molded us into the children of God now in the New Covenant. I really love the way you get us reading the first reading of the Old Testament, and then correlate it to the second reading, usually an epistle of St. Paul and then blend in a great discussion on the Gospel reading of that week. Finally, you get us analyzing the Psalm and lastly give us a commentary on how all the passages blend together to give us the full flavor of God's own Spirit melting into our hearts. I am seeing a great motivation from reading 'The Bread of Life' study in my life and I wanted to write you back and tell you how much it means to me that you are helping so many inmates all across the United States. I just want to close by telling you I have a whole lot of gratitude and love for you guys and I never even met you. Keep up the fantastic work. May the Peace of the Lord be with you. Sincerely, JB

*JB, Thank you for the encouraging words. Its always amazing to us how God touches those doing the bible study. We believe that when you do the study alone asking the Holy Spirit to teach you it transforms the mind and in turn you develop a personal relationship with God. The bible study goes along with the Liturgical calendar of the church so when you look at the index of the book you will be able to stay with your family or those you know attending the Catholic Church and going to Mass on Sunday. There is healing power that comes through the Word of God. Sharing the Word with one another brings healing and hope.*

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

Board of Directors: Deacon Ken Finn, President; Marie Finn, Vice-President; Jean Michaels, Secretary; Gregory Witz, Accountant  
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Dear Deacon Ken and Marie, Hello and thank you for sending me your newsletter. I did not know that I would be receiving one so it was a pleasant surprise. I am currently incarcerated. I have been down for about 3 years with about 12 to go. I am only 21 though, so I will still be young when I get out. I want to give most thanks for the Bread of Life Bible Study that you sent me. It is a great help for my faith. I grew up in a family of Catholics but never paid much attention. Now that I have realized the great faith I've been missing, I try and put my all into it. I have never been baptized but I have written the Chaplain to get that done. I have a set time every day that I devote to my Bible Study. I do it in the morning because it makes me feel great about the day coming. One thing I would like to say to all my fellow Catholic Faith inmates is that there are a lot of times when incarceration can make you angry or depressed. I have found that when I feel like that, if I pray the rosary with all the love and faith I can present, then afterwards I feel much better no matter how mad or sad I was. I am a great believer in praying the rosary daily. I always pray the rosary before I go to sleep at night no matter if I have done it that day already. I plan on



trying to start a 'rosary circle' here in my prison. I hope at least once a week to gather whoever wants to join, and pray the rosary together. Please add to your prayers that this may be accomplished. I know in my heart that if I ask the Lord to help me do it then it will come to be. One final note, I ask for you to pray for my Mother and her friend. They both have chronic health problems but as the Good Book says 'I will restore you to health and heal your wounds, declares the Lord' (Jeremiah 30:17). Thank you again for the Bread of Life and the newsletter. I hope to hear from you soon. AM

PS Do you have any information on St. Anthony?

*A short Bio on St. Anthony has been sent to you. Thank you for that beautiful scripture you are sharing with us from Jer.. 30:17. The Rosary is a powerful weapon against evil. Our Blessed Mother invites us to come to her and she will go to her Son and intercede for us. She is always telling us to do whatever her Son tells us (John 2:5) Another powerful weapon in our battle against evil is putting on the armor of God found in Ephesians 6:10-17. Take note of verses 16-17, "In all circumstances, hold faith as a shield, to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."*

Dear Deacon Ken & Marie,

I received your newsletter today and just had to say thank you for all your efforts. I have been incarcerated for 5 years with 5 left to go. During my stay, I ran into a man who begged and pleaded for me to turn to Christ. I fought him tooth and nail for the better part of six months, eventually investigating things on my own terms.

Since then, I've reconnected with my ex-fiancé and daughter and have learned how to be thankful for those that the Lord put in my path. My dear friend who brought me to Christ sadly gave up hope and committed suicide.

Many of us, while incarcerated, give up hope because it feels as though others just didn't care. Well, I want them to know, I do care. And I'm sure no matter what race, crime or handicap, the body of our church has not given up hope on you. This is not to say our path will be easy or that we won't stray from time to time. Just keep your eyes forward and wait expectantly and you'll see all He does for us. I know He has changed my life and I hope and pray He finds a way to change yours. (1 Corinthians 15:9-10). In prayers & friendship, MK

*MK, James 5:19-20 says, "Brothers, if any among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death, and will cover a multitude of sins." What a powerful promise. How sad your friend and the*

*one who brought you to Christ lost all hope. Jeremiah 29:11 is such a powerful promise, "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." He is our hope and God goes on to tell us, "When you call me, when you go to pray to me, I will listen to you. When you look for me, you will find me. Yes, when you seek me with all your heart, you will find me with you, says the Lord, and I will change your lot;" You are never alone. If you have lost hope call him, his phone is never busy. If you need someone to talk to, write us. We want you to know you are not alone; you are in our thoughts and prayers. We care about you and we love each and every one of you no matter what you are in prison for. MK, thank you for having a heart for others.*

## UPDATE

**"Rescue those who are being dragged to death, and from those tottering to execution withdraw not." Proverbs 24:11** St. Dismas Guild invites you to come and pray with us for Life. On Tuesday Mornings 9-10AM, 120 S Craven St. San Marcos, Corner of Twin Oaks and Craven across from Cal State University and on Thursday Mornings 10:30-11:30 at Planned Parenthood, 347 West Mission Escondido CA, Corner of Mission and Escondido Blvd – In front of Pay-Less shoes on Mission. **Come and pray the mysteries of the Rosary to End Abortion. "I have come to bring life, life to the full." John 10:10**

If you cannot come and pray with us you can still pray with us at the times above wherever you are. **Our united prayer will end abortion.** We had an opportunity to hear Dr. Alvena King the niece of Dr. Martin Luther King at the Mother of Life Conference in San Diego. What a powerful message given by all the speakers including Fr. Frank Pavone of Priest for Life who exhorted us to take a risk.

This conference made us stop and look around and see the sad state of affairs our country is in. The speakers spoke the truth and made us sit up and take notice. We have aborted more than 53,000,000 babies. The auditorium was 1/3 full. It makes you wonder if we have not just gotten used to the fact that abortion is just another word. Have we forgotten what happens to a baby in the womb who has been burned to death or stabbed in the back of the neck with scissors in order to get the baby out of its mother? A late trimester baby about to be aborted has to under go general anesthesia now because of the pain experienced by the baby. What an incredible hypocrisy this is killing an innocent unborn child and trying to make sure there is no pain involved. **WAKE UP AMERICA!** There is no outcry against the danger of innocent children being murdered for money and getting the protection of the government to pursue this killing. The blood of these children is on the hands of many in our Nation who have watched the killing and done nothing. We on the outside of prison walls are as guilty as those inside. When are we going to say enough is enough and do something about it?

**GROWTH SEMINAR – SATURDAY, SEPT. 10, 2011 AT ST MARY'S CHURCH HALL, 13<sup>TH</sup> & BROADWAY, ESCONDIDO. TALK BY DEACON KEN FINN ON THE SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION AND THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, ALSO YOU CAN TAKE AN INVENTORY TO DETERMINE WHAT GIFTS YOU HAVE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, AND THE LAST TALK WILL BE ON LECTIO DIVINA- DIVINE READINGS. "YOU WILL RECEIVE POWER WHEN THE HOLY SPIRIT COMES UPON YOU AND YOU WILL BE MY WITNESSES." Acts 1:8**

**BENEDICTUS – SEPTEMBER 24, 2011 – 8AM MASS, BREAKFAST AND SPEAKER TO FOLLOW FR. GIL GENTILE – [WWW.BENEDICTUS1.COM](http://WWW.BENEDICTUS1.COM) COME HEAR A POWERFUL TESTIMONY OF FAITH, HOPE AND CHARITY.**

**CATHOLIC RADIO OF SAN DIEGO – MONDAY-FRIDAY 6PM-8PM ON KCEO-AM 1000 IN SAN DIEGO – FRIDAY EVENINGS FROM 6-7PM BEGINNING 9-9-11 DEACON KEN & MARIE WILL BE ON EACH FRIDAY NIGHT FOR 7 WEEKS – SHOW ENTITLED SECRET'S OF A HAPPY FAMILY. TUNE IN. "TO BE CHRISTIANS MEANS TO BE MISSIONARIES, TO BE APOSTLES. IT IS NOT ENOUGH TO DISCOVER CHRIST, YOU MUST BRING HIM TO OTHERS. – POPE JOHN PAUL II**

Your brother and sister in Christ,  
Deacon Ken & Marie