

# THIS DAY

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A Newsletter  
Published by  
DISMAS MINISTRY  
*A National Catholic  
Outreach for Inmates,  
Victims, Their Families,  
Those Released from Prison  
and the Community.*

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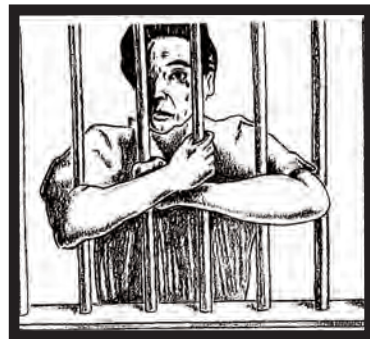
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## Responsibility, Rehabilitation, and Restoration: A Catholic Perspective on Crime and Criminal Justice

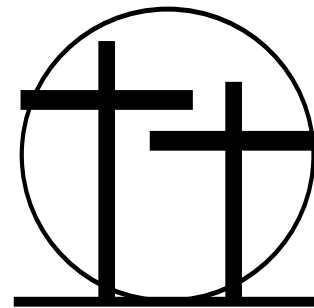
*A Statement of the Catholic Bishops of the United States, November 15, 2000*

### Crime and the Catholic Community (Excerpt)

Many of our parishes dramatically reflect the human and other costs of so much crime. The church doors are locked; the microphones hidden. Parishes spend more on bars for their windows than on flowers for their altars. More tragically, they bury young people caught in gang violence, the drug trade, or the hopelessness that leads children to take their own lives. These parishes reach out to prisoners and their families, offering help and hope to those caught up in crime and the criminal justice system. They also struggle to respond to the needs of crime victims: the parents who lose a child, the elderly woman who is mugged, the shopkeeper who is robbed, the child whose parent is in jail. As bishops, teachers, and pastors, we seek to offer a perspective inspired by our Catholic tradition to the national discussion on crime. For us, crime and the destruction it brings raise fundamental questions about the nature of personal responsibility, community, sin, and redemption. A distinctively Catholic approach to these questions can offer society another way to understand and respond to crime, its victims, and its perpetrators. We approach this topic, however, with caution and modesty. The causes of crime are complex. The ways to overcome violence are not simple. The chances of being misunderstood are many. In developing these reflections, we have consulted with Catholics who are involved in every aspect of the criminal justice system: prison chaplains, police officers, prosecutors, defense attorneys, judges, probation and parole officers, wardens, correctional officers, crime victims, offenders, families of both victims and offenders, and treatment personnel. In our parishes, schools, and Catholic Charities agencies, Catholics see firsthand the crushing poverty and the breakdown of family life that often lead to crime and at the same time care for prisoners, victims, and their families. All of their experience and wisdom has been helpful to us. *(To be continued)*



Artwork by an Inmate



Remember me.  
Luke 23:42

### The Story of St. Dismas

One of the criminals hanging in crucifixion said: *"We are only paying the price for what we have done, but this man has done nothing wrong."*

He then said, *"Jesus, remember me when you enter upon your reign."*

And Jesus replied, *"I assure you: this day you will be with me in paradise."* Luke 23: 39-43

### Saints Who Were in Prison or Headed There

#### St. Landelinus

Landelinus was born in Vaux, France, in 625 A.D. When he was young teenager his parents took him to the saintly bishop Aubert who took him in and helped him study for the priesthood. At the age of eighteen, however, Landelinus refused to stay with the bishop any longer, and decided to join a gang of wild young men. Together they committed robbery and other crimes. His days of crime came to an end when a member of the gang died. This brought him to his senses, and he went back to the bishop who had been praying for his return like the prodigal son. With the bishop's blessing, he went away to a wild and lonely place to atone for his sins. In due time he was joined by other young men who wanted to follow his devout way of life. He made such an impression on others that the first small group of followers eventually grew into a large monastery.

# This Day

Summer

2013

A Newsletter Published by Dismas Ministry

*A National Catholic Outreach for Inmates, Victims, their Families and the Community.*

## New Board Members

We are happy to share that Dismas Ministry's board of directors added three new members as of January 9, 2013.

**Sister Ruth Poochigian, OP**, is a member of the Dominican Sisters of Sinsinawa, Wisconsin. She holds an M.A in Systematic Theology from the Aquinas Institute of Theology in St. Louis, Missouri, and a PhD in Education from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She has had a career in teaching, spiritual direction, chaplaincy and for the past four years has been serving in correctional ministry.



Sister Ruth Poochigian



Schauneille Allen

**Schauneille Allen**, is currently the director of the Outreach Ministries at the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist, Milwaukee. She holds a Masters of Science in Religious Studies from Cardinal Stritch University, Milwaukee, with Certification in Urban Ministry. She has years of involvement in Clinical Pastoral Education, chaplaincy and social ministry including correctional ministry. She is a member of the American Catholic Correctional Chaplains Association.



Rev. George Williams

**Rev. George Williams, SJ**, is currently a candidate at Northeastern University, Boston, MA toward a Ph.D. in Criminal Justice Policy. He holds an MDiv and an MA in Spiritual Direction from Weston Jesuit School of Theology-Cambridge, and dual degree-M.A./MSW in Pastoral Counseling and Clinical Forensic Social Work from Boston College. He is a member of the Order of Malta-American Association and served their prison outreach as spiritual director. He serves as theology instructor and chaplain at San Quentin Prison, California.



# Hearing from Christ's Body behind bars...

## Chaplains and Ministries

"Dear Friends at Dismas Ministry, Can you imagine how happy you made us today? Thank you for the generous gift of 50 New Testaments in Spanish, the pamphlets 'Why Read the Bible' and the 50 prayer books. We feel like we struck a gold mine! Thank you so much for sharing what you have with us. It is good to share our ministries, we certainly appreciate what you do. God bless you in your work." - A Sister Chaplain (Arizona)

"Thank you for the generous donation of Bibles and prayer books that your organization made on behalf of the more than 200 Catholic offenders at Vandalia Correctional Center. I can assure you that these gifts will make a difference for Christ in the lives of many. Blessings - A non-Catholic Chaplain (Illinois)

"I just wanted to send an email for once that did not ask for anything. I want you to know that I appreciate all that you have helped me with, and all the things you and our ministry have provided. In the business of our lives many people forget to stop and be thankful. Well, I am stopping. I have always in the past expressed my gratitude to those who have reached out when they didn't have to. Thanks for being a friend - A non-Catholic Chaplain (Wisconsin)

"Thanks for the prompt response to my request for Bible study materials. What a change we've seen! We went from 1-3 in our weekly Bible study to now 18, and from 4-6 in our weekly Mass or Communion service to now 33-36. Considering that there are about 100 Catholic inmates here this represents about 1 in 3 inmates-a very good number! What big smiles I saw on the faces of several new guys when I was able to give them a book and they immediately felt they were a part of the group." A Catholic Chaplain (Michigan)



## Inmates

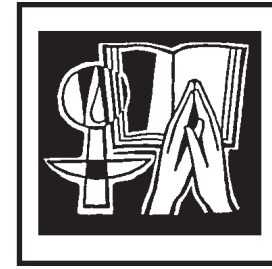
"Thanks so much for the Bible study. I eagerly await the next one! God bless your ministry! It makes the Catholic brothers here at USP Tucson very happy that there are still people out there who are for us lowly inmates. We get together every Sunday to pray and use your Bible studies as a group study. We love them so far and look forward to the next one." -An Inmate (Arizona)

"I would like to thank your entire ministry for sending me the faith study A Reason for Hope. There are so many things that I gathered from the part on the sacraments. Also, thank you for the prayer book that accompanied the beginning of this study. Your ministry's efforts are being greatly received." - An Inmate (Michigan)

"You were so gracious to send me the New American Bible. I just can't thank you enough. My family is of Catholic faith and I am going to be attending the Catholic Bible study here at the jail. I have finally found some peace and comfort and I owe it to our Savior and you also at Dismas Ministry. Could you possibly send me a Catechism of the Catholic Church? I am trying very hard to learn and get a deeper understanding of God's words. I feel myself growing more spiritually every day and I know the Catechism would really benefit me. I have no other way to receive this, nor do I have any way to pay for it, but I would definitely put it to good use. I would be so grateful. Please pray for me as I will pray for you." - An Inmate

"Thank you so much for caring and helping me in my walk with Jesus. I truly want to change and be a true example of Jesus, doing what's right. Please continue to pray for me. God bless you always" An Inmate (Texas)

# Thank you for Your Prayers



Dear Friends,

I am writing this in the month of June, just before the Feast of the Sacred Heart, which falls on the first Friday of June. Traditionally, June is dedicated to honoring and reflecting on the Heart of Jesus, and many spiritual writers have provided books on the love and compassion of this great Heart. I humbly offer a few words...

How are we to know what is in Christ's Heart, especially those of us who never knew him in person or walked beside him on the road as he spoke and healed 2,000 years ago? The gospels as God's inspired message to us are the primary source of getting to know Jesus. They pull back the curtain, so to speak, and give us a view of what was in his Heart, what motivated him, and what kept him going in all that he said and did.

Reading the gospels every day, even just a short passage, introduces us to the depth of his love, his profound wisdom, his patience and courage in the face of opposition and misunderstanding, and the enduring strength during the days of his passion and death. We know that he loved, lived and died for us. As they say "It's in the Bible."

We know also from scripture how much his Heart was focused on the poor, the needy and the outcast. And because we are baptized and profess faith in him, we take on the daily task of modeling ourselves after him. It is a natural step then from reading and reflecting about him, and understanding what is in his Heart, to caring about what He cares about.

The poor and needy, in body, mind and spirit, and those who have been cast out of society and designated as "worthless" become the primary focus of our charity - a love that cares and reaches out. If we can't meet and touch them directly, we offer our support to those who are able to do so. As the beautiful words of the popular song have

## *A Memorial Gift*

Honor the memory of a loved one or honor a special person with a gift in their name to our ministry.

Contact Dismas Ministry and request a *Memorial* folder. Then fill it out and give to whomever you wish. Send your gift to support the work of Dismas Ministry as you honor the person you name.

To request a *Memorial* folder write to:

**Dismas Ministry**  
PO Box 070363  
Milwaukee, WI 53207

or email:  
**dismas@dismasministry.org**

it, we are "the wind beneath their wings."

You, our friends who belong to this special *Union of Prayer*, are the wind beneath our wings in this ministry as we reach out to our brothers and sisters who are incarcerated by our society. You help us remind these women and men who have made mistakes and bad decisions, that they are not junk left and forgotten on the garbage dump of society. In your valuable prayers you are partners with us in this work and we are deeply grateful for your constant spiritual support. We will not know the full power of prayer until we arrive in heaven and are able to comprehend all that has been accomplished in and through prayer. But I believe with all my heart that we would not be able to do this work without the prayers of people like you. *Thank you so much!*

Blessings in and through  
the great Heart of Jesus,

*Ron Zeilinger*

Ron Zeilinger,  
Director

