

# Padre Pio

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Time line, His own words, facts.

The quotes and facts presented in these pages have been carefully screened to be true. There is no intent to convince anybody of anything. The references have not been inserted, and can be easily searched online.

Padre Pio is a unique human being and is presented as such. There is no effort to be politically correct. The comments have been kept to a very minimum. There is no hypocrisy involved; just the plain, simple, powerful, astonishing truth.

*Matthew 11:25 "Father, you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned, and you have revealed them to the childlike."*

July 2012

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## From Francesco Forgione to Padre Pio da Pietrelcina

### Pietrelcina

The future Padre Pio was born on May 25, **1887** by Grazio Mario Forgione (1860–1946) and Maria Giuseppa de Nunzio Forgione (1859–1929), in Pietrelcina. The Forgiones were illiterate farmers, cultivating their own piece of land.

Pietrelcina is a rural village in the province of Benevento, in Southern Italy.

(It reminds of an episode in the Gospel: John 1: 45 "Philip found Nathaniel and said to him, 'We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph, from Nazareth.'<sup>6</sup> Nathanael said to him, 'From Nazareth? **Can anything good come from that place?**' Philip replied, '**Come and see.**' ")

He was baptized in the nearby Santa Anna's Church on May 26, 1887 the day after his birth, and given the name of Francesco.

From that day on he started having the visible companionship of his Guardian Angel. "The Guardian Angel has been my companion since my infancy."

He started seeing the devils too. "When I was in the crib, and my mom extinguished the lamp I saw those horrible monsters and screamed terrified. Than mom turned the lamp back on, and the monsters disappeared, and I stopped screaming."

In a letter to Maria Campanile, in 1922, Padre Pio wrote: "The Lord from my birth showed me signs of a very special predilection."

The Forgiones were very religious. When the church bells rang every morning the family gathered for prayers. They went to church every day and prayed the Rosary together as a family in the evening. Prayer came before all other activities in the household.

He used to say to his mom: "I don't want to play with the other kids because they curse". "Mom, my companions do bad things and offend Jesus".

Still in preschool age had the first apparition of Jesus: "I felt like not playing with the other kids on the parvis, and sat in a pew in the church, and Jesus from the tabernacle called me to the altar and put his hand on my head".

**"I believed that these things happened to everybody".**

At age six he was sent to graze sheep with an older boy Ubaldo Vecchiarino called Baldino.

Baldino reported that Francesco often was kneeling in intense prayer and he had to tell him: "You, when you pray, you seem to be dead, that you are no more on this Earth." (Ma tu, quando preghi, sembra che muori, che non esisti piu' su questa terra." )

They also went to private school together in the evening, to the home of Cosimo Scocca, and Francesco "was the only one to answer the teacher questions".

Another shepherd boy, Luigi Orlando, remembers him as a boy of few words, frequently reciting the rosary.

Fra Modestino's mother Anna Fucci was the same age of Padre Pio and lived few yards away. She reported that he refused to play with other kids, avoided to graze the sheep when she was around, was always with a Rosary in his hands, and everybody called him "lu santariello nostro" 'our little saint'.

Padre Pio, remembering that age: "I was an unsalted piece of macaroni."

Margherita De Cianni was a childhood neighbor. She reported that one day Padre Pio's father Grazio was digging a well. He dug forty feet without finding water. Francesco said that he would never find water there, and then pointed to a precise spot somewhere else on field where he would find water. Grazio: "How do you know?" Francesco: "Jesus told me." Orazio: "I'll dig there, but if there is no water, I'll throw you in the hole." He dug seven feet and a copious spring of water burst out."

To his mom who saw him at age 8 beating himself with a chain "I must do it like they made Jesus shoulders bleed."

The priest of the parish, father Giuseppe Orlando reported that Francesco, despite the objections of his mother, would sleep on the floor using a stone as pillow.

Francesco about his childhood : "In my home you hardly found a penny, but we never missed anything".

Francesco had very limited formal schooling. There were no public schools in his village. His first teacher was Cosimo Scocca, a farmer who had a fifth grade education.

His first grade teacher Mandato Saginato reports that Francesco used to fill the exercise book with drawings of the Cross.

Starting September 1898, age 11, begun private lessons with Domenico Tizzani, "per cinque lire al mese." The tuition of five lire per month was quite a bit in those times.

After few months with don Tizzani, he changed teacher and went to study with another teacher, Angelo Caccavo. With him Francesco got the elementary diploma.

A notebook with 30 themes developed by Padre Pio when he studied with Caccavo is still preserved to these days.

To make money to pay for Francesco's studies Grazio Forgione went to work in Brazil in 1897, but came back without money. In 1899 he went to work in Mahoningtown, near New Castle, in Pennsylvania, as a farm laborer. He stayed with a cousin and was able to send money home every week. Padre Pio later recalled: "My father crossed the ocean twice to give me the possibility to become a friar."

Padre Pio received the First Communion on 27 September 1899, at age 12, and was confirmed the same day by the Archbishop of Benevento Mons. Donato Maria Dell'Olio in the church of St. Mary of the Angels, in Pietrelcina.

On October 5, 1901, at age 14, he stated in writing for the first time, his desire to become a Capuchin priest in a letter to his father in USA.

#### Pompeii

In 1902 Padre Pio made a pilgrimage to Pompeii with his teacher Angelo Caccavo and six schoolmates "soon I will enter the novitiate and there will be no more parties." He also visited Pompeii when he was military in Naples. He encouraged people to be "devout of the Virgin of Pompeii."

#### Capuchin brother and friar

Right after Christmas in December 1902, he had a vision. "A great multitude divided in two camps, one shining, and the other dark. A gigantic monster headed the dark. A majestic man of rare beauty heading the other ordered Francesco to fight the monster. He did and won. The majestic man said: "The monster you have defeated is the devil and you will fight this enemy for the rest of your life."

On January 1, 1903, after receiving the Communion he was suddenly enveloped by an interior light and he understood that by entering the service of the Lord he was exposing himself to the unending fight with the devil.

On January 5, 1903, during the night, Francesco had a vision of Jesus and Mary encouraging him to go on with his plan to enter religious life. "My last night at home Jesus and his Mother came to assure me of their predilection".

On January 6, 1903, Francesco left home for Morcone, to begin the novitiate in the Capuchin's Order. His mom gave him a Rosary (still preserved) and said: "My son, Saint Francis has called you, and you must go".

On January 22, 1903, at age 15, he took the Capuchin habit, received the tonsure, and changed his name from Francesco Forgione to Brother **Pio** da Pietrelcina. "Where better I could serve you, o Lord, if not under the banner of the poverello di Assisi."

On January 2, 1904 he pronounced the vows of chastity, poverty and obedience. His mom was there: "My son, now you really are a son of Saint Francis. May he bless you".

The life in the convent was not for everyone.

12:30 AM: Prayers in the choir, Divine Office Matins and Lauds, than back to bed.

5:00 AM: Arise, make the bed, go to choir for: Angelus, Litany of the Saints, meditation, personal prayers. Then there was Mass, Divine Office Prime and Terce, and a second Community Mass "Messa Conventuale." After choir there was breakfast, than back in the choir for the Office of Our Lady.

At noon there was lunch followed by a siesta.

2:30 Pm Vespers in the choir, than chores and manual labor.

7 PM: Rosary in choir, than 30 minutes of meditation, the Compline (final hour of the Divine Office), supper followed by a brief period of recreation.

9 PM: 30 minutes visit to the Blessed Sacrament, examination of conscience, and bedtime.

### **The gift of Tears**

Padre Pio cried frequently and abundantly. There are many testimonies. One example:

Brother Leo (Fra' Leone) classmate of Padre Pio 1903-8, testified: "While praying, Padre Pio was always crying, silently, and so abundantly that his tears were leaving traces on the stone pavement of the choir. We youngsters made fun of him. So he took the habit of lying on the floor hi large handkerchief in front of him.

After praying he would take the handkerchief that was all wet. You could have squeezed it!"

He used to say: "Good works are the fruit of many tears and of a lot of suffering."

### **Ordination to Priesthood**

On December 19, 1908 he received the 'minor orders'.

On December 21, 1908 he was 'sub deacon', and on July 18, 1909 he became 'deacon'.

The minimal canonical age to be ordained priest is to have completed 24 years.

Padre Pio was in poor health and fearful he could die soon. So he asked for dispensation to be ordained at 23. On January 22, 1910, he wrote a letter to Padre Benedetto, provincial minister, begging him to petition the Holy See and recommend favorably for the dispensation: "...explaining the current status of my health ... so that if God has decided to abbreviate my exile on earth, I will die very happy."

On July 6, 1910 Padre Benedetto informed Padre Pio that the Holy See had granted the dispensation.

On August 10, 1910, at age 23, he was ordained priest in the Cathedral of Benevento.

Padre Pio wrote in the souvenir card for the event: "Jesus, my sigh and my life, today that with trepidation I raise You in a mystery of love, may I be for the world Way, Truth and Life, and for You holy priest **perfect victim**. P.Pio, Cap."

On August 14, 1910 he celebrated his 'First Solemn Mass in Pietrelcina'. Padre Agostino said in the sermon: "You are in poor health so you can't be a preacher. I wish you to be a great confessor."

These were Padre Pio's resolutions: "4 hours of meditation, no less than five complete rosaries, and novenas to Madonna di Pompei, St. Joseph, St. Michael, St. Anthony, St. Francis, Sacred Heart, St. Rita, and St. Theresa".

### Invisible stigmata wounds

On September 7, 1910, few weeks after being ordained priest, while he was praying in Piana Romana, Jesus and Mary appeared to him and gave him the wounds.

Piana Romana is a hill 3 miles North-East of Pietrelcina where Padre Pio used to pray in the shade of a straw hut, built under an elm tree. The straw hut has become a church, and the stump of the elm is preserved inside the church.

Salvatore Pannullo, pastor of the Parish in Pietrelcina testified that in that afternoon of September 7, 1910 Padre Pio showed him the wounds and told him: "Father, do me a favor. Ask Jesus to take them away. I want to suffer, to die from suffering, but in secret." They prayed together, and God answered their prayer. The wounds disappeared and the suffering continued. When Pannullo was told in 1918 that the wounds had appeared on Padre Pio, he replied: You see them now. I saw them in 1910."

On October 1911, because Padre Pio's health was not good, after a physical examination by famed Dr. Antonio Cardarelli in Naples, Padre Pio was sent by his Superiors to **Venafro** for convalescence.

According to the diagnosis of the celebrated physician, **the young friar's days were numbered**, and he couldn't travel long distances, which is why he was sent to **Venafro**, location of the closest convent.

During the month and a half stay in that convent, the community noticed the first supernatural phenomena: divine ecstasies lasting up to one hour, and diabolic apparitions lasting a few minutes.

In Venafro, from Fr. Agostino's diary:



“Starting in November 1911, I was present with Fr. Evangelista, the superior of the monastery, for a considerable number of ecstasies, and many instances of demonic oppression.”

"Satan would appear as a nude woman dancing lewdly, as is spiritual father, as his superior, pope Pius X, his guardian angel, St. Francis, the Virgin Mary, and also as the horrible self, with an army of demonic spirits. At times there were no apparitions but he was beaten until he bled, tormented with deafening noises, covered with spit. He was able to free himself from the torments by calling on the name of Jesus."

In a letter to Padre Agostino on December 3, 1912, Padre Pio wrote:

"I'm giving you the good news that the 27th of last month my father and my brother came back from America. They are in good health."

### **Military service**

On November 6, 1915 Padre Pio was drafted, at age 28

On December 6, 1915 he was matriculated #12094, and assigned to the 10th company 'Sanita' (health) in Naples.

On December 17, 1915 a medical consultation diagnoses 'pulmonary infiltration', and grants 1 year of convalescent leave. He spent most of the convalescence in the convent of Foggia.

On December 18, 1916 he returned to the Military hospital. He was granted another sick leave, and on March 16, 1918 he was granted discharge for medical reason for "double broncho-alveolitis."

### **San Giovanni Rotondo**

On February 17, 1916 Padre Pio left Pietrelcina for **Foggia**, to the convent of St. Anna. There he assisted a gravely ill Raffaelina Cerase until her death on March 25.

The friars heard frequently terrible crashes coming from Padre Pio's room. They would find him in great distress and drenched in perspiration. That was until the Superior ordered Padre Pio to ask the Lord to stop those noises that disturbed the peace and scared the friars. Padre Pio obediently asked, and the noises coming from the devils stopped.

In Late July 1916 went from Foggia to **San Giovanni Rotondo**, 25 miles away, to visit Padre Paolino, the superior at the convent, for few days. When he returned to Foggia the Provincial gave him permission to transfer to San Giovanni Rotondo.

On September 4, 1916, Padre Pio arrived at his new home, where he would stay until his death.

The convent of San Giovanni Rotondo included a seminary called "Seraphic College". Padre Pio's assignment was to teach the students. Padre Aurelio studied under Padre Pio from 1916 to 1918. Padre Aurelio reported: "He had a superficial

way of teaching. He taught history and grammar., but he knew little of the former and none of the latter. Nonetheless we boys were attracted to him. The key to his charm was his humanity. His sanctity was his humanity.”  
Within weeks of his arrival to the convent he started a group of spiritual daughters. They met and prayed together twice weekly.

In May 1917 Padre Pio took the longest trip of his life when he accompanied his sister Graziella to Rome, where she took the veil in the Order of St. Bridget.

Padre Pio had a wayward sister, Pellegrina. She utterly rejected the religion and morality of her family. Padre Pio was indulgent. “It was foreordained that her life was to go this way. It’s her destiny. I can do nothing. It’s God’s will.”

### Transverberation

On August 5, 1918 Padre Pio had transverberation of the Heart.

Transverberation is a spiritual wounding of the heart, as a reward by God for loving Him. Several saints experienced it. Some few names: Theresa of Avila, Therese of Lisieux, Veronica Giuliani, Marguerite Marie Alacoque, Gerardo Majella, Joseph of Cupertino, Francis de Sales, Philip Neri, Jane Francis de Chantal, Lutgarde, Charles of Sezze

He wrote to his spiritual father about it: "I was hearing the confessions of the boys, when a Celestial Being holding a steel sword with a sharp flaming point, hurled it into my soul with all its might. All done in a split of a second everything in my inside was lashed by fire and steel. From that moment on I feel an open wound which causes me to suffer continual agony."

### Permanent stigmata wounds

On Friday September 20, 1918 Padre Pio received the permanent visible stigmata / wound while praying in the choir.

The stigmata are the bodily wounds on the hands, feet and side corresponding to those inflicted on Jesus at the Crucifixion. Notable stigmatics were Francis of Assisi, Rita of Cascia, John of God, Gemma Galgani, Veronica Giuliani, Catherine of Siena.

He reported under obedience: "Suddenly I was wrapped in a sea of blazing light. In that light I saw Jesus. He was very beautiful. From his wounds came rays of very bright white light that penetrated my hands, my feet, and my side. They were like blades of fire that penetrated my skin piercing, cutting, and breaking. I felt that I would die. The pain was immense."

Saint Francis of Assisi received the stigmata on Saturday September 14, 1224, feast of the triumph of the Cross, on Mount Verna, town of Chiusi della Verna, in Tuscany, Italy.

## Examinations

### Merla

On May 1, 1919 the wounds were examined by Dr. Angelo Maria Merla, by disposition of Padre Pietro da Ischitella, Father Guardian Superior of the convent of San Giovanni Rotondo. He declared that the lesions were not the result of tuberculosis, but that he could not say with any certainty what caused them without extensive tests”.

### Romanelli

From May 15th to the end of July 1919, there were 5 evaluations of the wounds by Prof. Luigi Romanelli, head physician of the Hospital in Barletta, by disposition of Padre Benedetto di San Marco in Lamis, Provincial Superior of the Capuchins.

He wrote in his report: "The lesions on the hands are covered by a red brown membrane, without bleeding, no edema and no inflammation of the surrounding tissues. I am certain that these wounds are not superficial because, putting my thumb in the palm of the hand, and the index finger on the back, and applying pressure, I have the exact perception of a void existing."

"The etiology of the lesions of Padre Pio is not natural. The agent producing those lesions needs to be searched, make no mistakes, in the supernatural. The fact in itself it's a phenomenon that cannot be explained with the sole human science."

### Bignami

July 1919: Prof. Amico Bignami, Prof. of medical pathology of the University of Rome, an atheist, examined Padre Pio by disposition of Padre Giuseppe da Persiceto, General Procurator of the Capuchin Order. "The lesions on the hands, feet and side can be explained as unconsciously self-produced by autosuggestion, and kept artificially with repeated applications of tincture of iodine." He also stated: "I do not understand how these wounds have persisted for nearly a year now without getting better or worse." Bignami also commented: "The expression of his face is full of goodness and sincerity". Bignami also ordered the wounds bandaged and sealed for eight days. When the bandages were unsealed and removed "the wounds remained the same."

### Festa

On October 28, 1919, Prof. Giorgio Festa, a surgeon in private practice in Rome examined the wounds by disposition of Padre Venanzio da Lysle, Superior General of the Capuchin Order. He made there examinations. The last was in 1925.

On July 1920 the professors Giorgio Festa and Luigi Romanelli did follow up examinations of the wounds.

Reported by Dr. Festa: A colleague of mine asks Padre Pio: "Why the lesions are here and not in other parts of the body?" Answer: "Why they should have been in other parts of the body and not here?"

### **Kenealy**

On March 24-27, 1920, Archbishop Anselm Edward Kenealy, of Simla, India, who was himself a Capuchin and a prelate, examined Padre Pio by request of Pope Benedict XV.

He reported: 'I am deeply convinced that we have a true saint here. The Lord has given him great gifts, and he is completely at ease. If he knows how to suffer, he also "knows how to laugh.'

### **Cerretti**

Not completely satisfied, the pope sent archbishop Bonaventura Cerretti, secretary of the Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs, whose Prefect was Cardinal Pietro Gasparri, to examine Padre Pio. Padre Onorato wrote that Cerretti came dressed as a simple priest, showed the letter of the Holy Office and his episcopal cross, and asked to examine Padre Pio.

He was deeply impressed, and gave the pope a very positive evaluation.

### **Costa**

In 1919, Mons. Alberto Costa, bishop of Melfi and Rapolla was sent by the Holy See to evaluate Padre Pio. After examining Padre Pio he wrote: "I am convinced of the holiness of Padre Pio. My impression can be boiled down to one: to that of having talked to a saint."

### **Police**

Mos. Angelo Police, bishop of Allahabad, India, after visiting Padre Pio with the encouragement of the pope Benedict XV, wrote: "I came, I saw, and I was conquered. Not the slightest doubt remains in me: the finger of God is here."

### **Gemelli**

On April 18, 1920. Padre Agostino Gemelli, Franciscan friar, physician and psychologist, went to the Convent. He said: "Padre Pio I came for a clinical exam of your lesions." Padre Pio asked: "Do you have a written authorization?" "No" replied padre Gemelli. "Then I'm not authorized to show them to you" concluded Padre Pio. Gemelli stated in a written report that he had examined Padre Pio, but it is certain that no such examination took place. Gemelli in his writings called Padre Pio "an ignorant and self-mutilating psychopath who exploited people's credulity with his stigmata." Gemelli's criticism was instrumental for the measures taken by the Vatican against Padre Pio.

In later years Gemelli had "somewhat" changes his position about Padre Pio.

Gemelli died July 15, 1959. It is reported that Padre Pio told another friar that he assisted and confessed Padre Gemelli in bilocation in his final moments.

### **Bastianelli**

On July 20, 1920 prof. Giuseppe Bastianelli, the physician of pope Benedict XV was sent personally by him to examine the wounds of Padre Pio. He gave a favorable report on the supernaturalism of the case.

### **Valbonesi**

In 1920 Alberto Valbonesi, titular bishop of Memphis, Egypt, a Vatican employee, visited Padre Pio and was very favorably impressed. He said that the interview with Padre Pio had 'compensated me for years of pain.'

### **Rossi**

In 1921, the bishop of Volterra Raffaello Carlo Rossi, future cardinal, was sent as secret investigator by the Holy Office. He started on June 14, 1921, and left after eight days. Padre Pio was 34 years old.

From his written report: "Padre Pio is a good religious, exemplary, accomplished in the practice of the virtues." "In conversation, Padre Pio is very pleasant; with his brothers, he is serene, jovial, and even humorous."

"The religious Community in which Padre Pio lives is a good Community and one that can be trusted." "The very intense and pleasant fragrance, similar to the scent of the violet, I have smelled it."

"I have examined the monk's cell and could find nothing that would cause such a scent. There was only plain soap."

Padre Pio told Mons. Rossi under oath: "On September 20, 1918 I saw the Lord. I heard this voice: 'I unite you with my Passion.' Once the vision disappeared, I came to my senses, and I saw these signs here, which were dripping blood. I didn't have anything before."

Mons Rossi: "The stigmata are there: We are before a real fact -- it is impossible to deny." "I am fully in favor of their authenticity, and, in fact, of their Divine origin."

"The future will reveal what today cannot be read in the life of Padre Pio of Pietrelcina."

### **Silj**

In 1919-1921, Cardinal Augusto Silj, Prefect of Apostolic Signature, the Supreme Tribunal of the Holy See, visited Padre Pio several times, each time expressing a very positive opinion.

### Donatus

On August 7, 1938, the new superior general of Capuchins Father Donatus of Welle, Belgium, visited Padre Pio. "I examined the stigmata and observed Padre Pio, and asked any kind of questions. I can and must affirm that I consider Padre Pio a great saint!"

### Everybody:

Everybody who had seen the wounds agreed on the following details:

The marks appear both in the palm and back of the hands. They are circular and a little more than two centimeters in diameter.

They are reddish brown in color and sharply marked off from the surrounding skin which is perfectly normal and without any sign of inflammation.

A dark looking scab covers the wounds, which detaches itself from time to time.

Exactly similar lesions appear in the instep and sole of each foot. The wound in the breast is cruciform, and on the left side.

The bleeding is not periodic, but seems to be a continuous exudation of a blood-serum fluid from all the wounds especially from the breast.

### In the newspapers

On May 9, 1919 the "Il Giornale d'Italia" was the first newspaper to report about Padre Pio.

On June 1, 1919 "Il Tempo" run a title "Il miracolo di un Santo" describing the instantaneous healing of a soldier by Padre Pio.

On June 3, 1919 the same paper "Il Tempo" titles "I miracoli di Padre Pio a San Giovanni Rotondo", reports some prodigies attributed to the friar. Also reports that "at times his body reaches temperatures of 50 C (F 122) as it has been observed with bath thermometers)".

On June 20 and 21, 1919 "Il Mattino" in full page describes "The man who makes miracles."

On June 19, 1920 the "Daily Mail" reports "extraordinary events happening daily in San Giovanni Rotondo", and describes how the wounds had been investigated by the doctors and prelates".

On October 27, 1923 the Belgian newspaper "Le Soir" describes the wounds, the examinations, the prodigies and the "very high fevers of 48-50C "(118-122 F).

Since 1919 innumerable articles about Padre Pio have been written in most every language in the papers around the world.

### Fevers:

Padre Pio had long bouts of high fevers, followed by normal temperatures.

Padre Pio himself described the experience as a "moral, rather than a physical, illness" and said it was like he was "in a furnace, still always conscious".

A friar attested that "even under the strain of this fever, Padre Pio is not knocked down, but gets up, moves about, and can do everything."

The body temperature was taken by mercury thermometer, today no longer in common use. Normal body temperature is 98.2°F (or 36.8°C). A temperature at or above about 104 °F (40 °C) requires treatment.

On December 1915 at the Trinity Military Hospital in Naples, during a routine physical, Padre Pio's temperature was taken by dr. Giuseppe Grieco, lieutenant medical doctor in the Italian Army, with an armpit mercury thermometer. In less than one minute the thermometer cracked, having gone over the maximum temperature of 42C (107.6). Three other thermometers cracked the same way. Dr. Grieco called in a colleague dr. Francesco Melle.

They decided to try with a bath thermometer, removed from the casing that could read up to 80C (176F). The thermometer read 48C (118.4).

They couldn't believe it, so they tried with a laboratory precision thermometer. This time the temperature was 49C (120.2).

They decided to inform the captain prof. Dr. Felice D'Onofrio, chief of medical services. He came in, measured again, and the reading was 49C. "This is a mystery. This is impossible. I can't believe my eyes. He should be in agony. This man is either a saint or a devil." He prescribed quinine and went to see him in the morning. He took again the temperature and was 36.7C (98.06). "I don't understand anything. Let's send him home to die in peace." He gave him a year of medical leave.

Dr. Giorgio Festa in 1920 took Padre Pio's temperature as part of his investigation. The reading was 48.5C In 1921 Father Lorenzo, superior of the convent, testified under oath to Mons. Rossi that he was skeptical, and had personally witnessed and recorded Padre Pio with fevers of 43C (109.4F) degrees Fahrenheit, then 45C (113F) degrees, and finally 48C (118.4F) degrees.

Padre Dominic Meyer, from Belleville, Illinois was sent in 1947 to the Convent to take care of the more than 250 letters Padre Pio received daily in English and German. He did it for the next thirteen years. He described in September 1949 a bout with "sister fever" in which Padre Pio's temperature was measured by dr. Sanguinetti with a special thermometer as 114 degrees.

### First restrictions

on June 22, 1922 Padre Antonio da San Giovanni in Persiceto, General Superior of the Capuchin Order, received a document signed by the Secretary of the Supreme Congregation of the Holy Office: "The most Eminent General Inquisitors Cardinals deliberated on May 10, 1922, regarding Padre Pio da Pietrelcina... He will celebrate Mass in private. He will not bless the people. He will not show to anybody the so called stigmata. He will stop immediately any communication with Padre Benedetto, his spiritual director. To best execute the above orders Padre Pio will be

immediately transferred to a convent preferably in Northern Italy. Padre Pio will no more answer letters. Whishing all the best, Cardinal Rafael Merry Del Val."

On May 31, 1923 the Holy Office (formerly Tribunal of Inquisition) declares: "The Supreme Congregation of the Holy Office, responsible for upholding the faith and defending morals, held an inquiry on the phenomena attributed to Padre Pio of Pietrelcina, a member Friar Minor of the Capuchins at the Monastery of San Giovanni Rotondo in the Diocese of Foggia, and declares that: it cannot confirm from this inquiry any basis for the supernatural character for this phenomena ("...*non constare de eorum factorum supernaturalitate...*") and exhorts the faithful to confirm their practices to this declaration."

On June 8, 1923. Sant'Uffizio asks again the Capuchin Order, for Padre Pio to be transferred to another convent.

On June 17, 1923 The Holy Office orders that Padre Pio's Mass be celebrated in private and nobody can assist to it. Also prohibits that he respond to letters addressed to him.

On August 8, 1923 Padre Pio is notified of the order to be transferred to Ancona, in another convent. Padre Pio at the news: "As a devout son of the holy obedience, and for what depends on me, I will obey without opening mouth." ("Come figlio devoto della santa ubbidienza, e per quanto dipende da me, ubbidiro' senza aprire bocca.")

On August 12, 1923 in a letter to the mayor of San Giovanni Rotondo Francesco Morcaldi, Padre Pio wrote: "The will of my superiors is the will of God. I only wish that my bones will rest in a quiet corner of this land." (La volonta' dei miei superiori e' la volonta' di Dio. Solo esprimo il desiderio che le mie ossa riposino in un angolo tranquillo di questa terra".)

On August 17, 1923, a popular revolt ensued, by the peasants of San Giovanni Rotondo. Police states that the order cannot be implemented without "spilling of blood" (spargimento di sangue).

On September 2, 1923 the order of transfer is revoked 'donec aliter' (until new disposition is given).

On July 24 1924 Sant'Uffizio promulgates a monitum (warning) to avoid any contact with Padre Pio.

#### Mamma Peppa dies

On December 5, 1928 Mary Pile took Padre Pio's mom from Pietrelcina to her house in San Giovanni Rotondo.



On January 3, 1929 the mother of Padre Pio died. Padre Pio, who was at her bedside, In Mary Pile's home, fainted just before her last breath, and was in a state of prostration for several days.

On May 13, 1931 another decree of Sant'Uffizio prohibits Padre Pio from celebrating Mass in public.

On Sunday, July 16 1933, the restrictions were lifted, and Padre Pio resumed the celebration of Mass in public. The removal came in the form of an Indult (special concession) from Cardinal Donato Sbarretti, secretary of the Holy Office, "in consideration that in this year 1933 there is the celebration of the extraordinary Holy Year of the Redemption".

In 1938 "Zi' Orazio", the elderly father of Padre Pio moved to San Giovanni Rotondo, in the house of Mary Pile. He insisted that the household eat on their knees during Lent. When people complimented him, he would say: "I didn't make him. Jesus Christ did." Padre Pio never let his father kiss his hand. But one day Orazio seized his hand, kissed it, and said: "I'm not kissing your hand. I am kissing the wound of Jesus Christ."

"Zi' Orazio died on October 7, 1946. Padre Pio assisted his father, and when he died "he cried out his very heart."

On January 4, 1940 a committee started the planning of the hospital wanted by Padre Pio. He made the first offering; a gold coin he had just received that very day for that purpose.

On January 14, 1940 Padre Pio decided that the hospital would be called 'Casa Sollievo della Sofferenza "The home for the Relief of Suffering".

On April 18, 1948 went at the polls to vote. Every time that Padre Pio went to vote "there was always a tumultuous scene", "a pandemonium", with crowds lining the streets; a thicker parade rivaling the classical ones.

### Prayer groups

On March 13 1943, Pius XII said : "In the fight between good and evil we suggest forming groups of faithful who will fully and openly live Christian lives. Groups of people who pray together. No particular rules or new prayers; just a reunion at least once a month in a church, with the approval of the local bishop and the assistance of a priest." Padre Pio replied: "Let's roll up our sleeves and immediately answer this appeal sent out by the Roman Pontiff." The Prayer Groups were born.

### Hospital "Home for the Relief of suffering"

May 19, 1947: Laying of the first stone and steady work begins for the construction of the Casa Sollievo della Sofferenza "Home for the Relief of suffering".

May 5, 1956 grand opening of the Casa Sollievo della Sofferenza Home for the relief of Suffering.

### St. Mary of Graces

July 1, 1959 Consecration of the new church Santa Maria delle Grazie.

On August 6, 1959 Padre Pio was miraculously healed by the Madonna of Fatima.

On July 30, 1960 Mons. Maccari came to San Giovanni Rotondo as Apostolic Visitor (inspector sent by the Holy See) sent by Pope John XXIII who had been elected on October 28, 1958, to conduct investigation of Padre Pio and his ministry.

On August 10, 1960 Padre Pio celebrated 50 years of priesthood. Mons. Montini, Archbishop of Milan and future Paul VI, congratulated Padre Pio for being "Gratified by so many gifts and so much fruitfulness." To people congratulating him for the 50th anniversary, Padre Pio said: "Fifty years of unworthiness."

On October 4, 1960 Padre Pio signed a will declaring his heir a juridical entity that the Holy See was to constitute after his death.

### Second restrictions

On January 31, 1961, Card. Alfredo Ottaviani, secretary of the Holy Office sent a disposition to the Superior General of the Capuchin friars: "Padre Pio needs to return to the regular capitulary observance. Priests and Bishops are prohibited to serving Mass to Padre Pio. The time of the Mass needs to be changed daily. People in line to confess to Padre Pio need to be distant from the confessional. Women need to be seen only outside the seclusion area. Gradual replacement of all the friars at the convent, except for the current Superior Padre Rosario."

On April 24, 1961, a letter from Monsignor Parente, member of Sant'Ufficio orders: "Padre Pio has to celebrate Mass in half hour or at most in 40 minutes, and he can't say Mass every day at the same time". Padre Pio: Ubbidire ai superiori e' ubbidire a Dio. "To obey to the superiors is obeying to God."

On November 19, 1961, Padre Pio signs a letter upon request by Cardinal Cicognani Secretary of State in which he transfers the property of the House for the Relief of Suffering (Casa Sollievo della Sofferenza) to the Holy See.

On November 7, 1962 Mons. Karol Wojtyla (future John Paul II) sends a handwritten letter to Padre Pio asking to pray for Wanda Poltawska from Cracovia, having throat cancer. Angelo Battisti, administrator of Casa Sollievo, reports that Padre Pio told Him: "Angelino, conserva questa lettera, perche' un giorno diventera' importante". "Angelino, keep this letter, because one day it will become important."

On 28 November 1962, In a letter to Padre Pio Mons. Karol Wojtyla writes: "Wanda was completely healed from cancer on November 21, and surgical intervention was canceled. Deo gratias. Thank you Venerable Father."

End of 1962. Padre Pio was authorized to substitute the reading of the Breviary with the praying of the Rosary.

On June 3, 1963 Pope John XXIII died. The friars kept pestering Padre Pio about the Conclave, until he said: "It's going to be Montini. Now will you be quiet?" On June 23, 1963 Montini was elected Pope Paul VI.

On September 8, 1963 sent Padre Torquato as new superior of the province of Padre Pio with the mission to "Liberate Padre Pio from those restrictions."

February 19, 1964 Padre Clemente da Milwaukee's, Superior General of the Capuchin Order, implements an order by Cardinal Ottaviani, Prefect of the Holy Office, that: "Padre Pio exercise his priestly ministry in full freedom." The pope was Paulus VI, elected in 1963.

### **The last years**

On May 11, 1964 Padre Pio signed a document nominating the Holy See legatee and devisee of all his remaining belongings.

On December 14, 1964 Padre Pio signed a statement prepared by Cardinal Ottaviani at the Sant'Ufficio: "... I declare that I have full freedom in my ministry, and that I have neither enemies nor persecutors." "I find in the superior of my Order and in the authority of the Church comprehension, comfort, and protection."

On March 9 1965 Cardinal Bacci was sent by Pope Paul VI to present the Indult (special permission given personally by the Pope) that Padre Pio could continue to say the Mass the old way. Padre Pio thanked Cardinal Bacci, and then said: "The Council. For pity's sake, end it in a hurry." ("Il Concilio, per pietà finitelo in fretta.")

In 1966 the father general of the Franciscan order came to Padre Pio to get his blessing "for the special chapter for a new constitution." Padre Pio: "This is all destructive nonsense. We must not denaturize ourselves. At the Lord's judgment St. Francis will not recognize us as his sons."

In 1967 the same thing with the Capuchins: "What in the world are you up to in Rome? You even want to change the Rule of St. Francis."

On September 12, 1968 in a letter sent by Padre Pio to the Pope Paul VI: "I offer to you my prayers and my daily suffering, so that the Lord comfort you with his grace, to continue defending the eternal truth that never changes with the times change. I thank you for the clear words in the "Humanae Vitae" (The encyclical letter 'Of human life') and confirm my faiths and my unconditional obedience."

To the very end of his life, he never felt that his salvation was entirely secure.

Few days before, Padre Pio asked his friend Pietro Cugino (Pietruccio the blind):  
"Tell me seriously. Do you think I will be saved?"

On September 23, 1968, at 2:30 AM, Padre Pio died. The last words: "Jesus, Mary.  
Jesus, Mary."

# PADRE PIO IN HIS OWN WORDS

## **1 Padre Pio in his own words about: Himself, spiritual children, suffering, the wounds.**

Everyone who met Padre Pio was struck by his "beautiful" "luminous" "bright" eyes which seemed to penetrate the very depth of the soul.

### **Himself:**

"I'm a mystery to myself."

"My true mission will begin after my death."

"When I am in heaven I will be able to do more".

"Among you I am your brother, on the Altar I am your victim, in the confessional I am your judge."

"My suffering gives glory to God, saves my brothers in exile, and frees the souls from Purgatory."

### **Victim:**

"I offer myself as a victim for everyone."

"I am all aflame although there is no fire."

"A thousands flames consume me."

"I feel I am constantly dying, yet I'm still alive."

### **Perfect victim:**

Padre Pio wrote on the prayer card for his ordination to priesthood: "May I be a perfect victim."

Padre Pio reached the highest possible fusion for a human being with the God Man Jesus, from the Garden to the Cross. No other human being, besides Padre Pio, has had such complete uncompromising unwavering unconditional unrestricted unlimited unselfishness from the cradle to the grave.

### **Belonging:**

"I belong entirely to everyone."

"Everyone can say: Padre Pio is mine."

### **Spiritual children:**

*When Padre Pio was asked by a person to become his spiritual child, he would say yes, or not, or remain silent. He usually gave an explanation. The request could be repeated at next opportunity. In some cases he would say to a person spontaneously, looking straight in the eyes, and smiling: "I take you as my spiritual child."*

***There is no other case in the history of the Church of such a bold commitment to an insurance policy for the eternal salvation.***

"I have made a pact with the Lord: I will take my place at the gate to Paradise, but **I shall not enter until I have seen the last of my spiritual children enter.**"

"When the Lord entrusts a soul to me, I place it on my shoulder and never let it go."

**"I accept you as spiritual child; and don't make me lose face."**

"I see all my children who come to the altar, as if in a mirror."

"I love my Spiritual Children as much as my own soul and even more."

**"Once I take a soul on, I also take on their entire family** as my spiritual children."

"I tell Mary: Here are the children of your Son."

"Woe to those who lay a hand on my spiritual children."

"To my Spiritual Children: my prayers for you will never be lacking"

"If one of my spiritual children ever goes astray, I shall leave my flock and seek him out."

How do you remember everybody? **"I remember them and I call them one by one, and count their hairs, and then some."**

When you leave us what are we going to do without you? "I will be here in your midst, more than before. Come visit my tomb. Before, in order to speak to me, you had to wait. Then, it is I who will be waiting there. Come to my tomb and you will receive more than you did before!"

**"Could I ever forget those whom I have regenerated to grace like a bad mother who bears a child and then deserts it?"**

#### Revenge:

"The thought of revenge has never crossed my mind."

#### Devil:

"The devil is trying to snatch me from the arms of Jesus".

"The devil wants me for him at all costs".

#### Suffering:

"My sufferings are pleasing."

"I suffer only when I don't suffer."

"I want to suffer, but in secret."

"I desire nothing else than to love and suffer"

"Jesus, let me suffer, and let me die from suffering."

"I suffer because I cannot win all my brothers to God."

"I suffer everything that Jesus suffered in the Passion."

"Suffering is expiation."

"Suffering is necessary for our souls."

"In suffering we give something to God, which we cannot do in Paradise."

"He who begins to love must be ready to suffer."  
"Suffering is a most powerful lever to raise man up again."  
"Glory will be ours on condition that we endure suffering."  
"The Angels are jealous of us because they can't suffer."  
"Bearing physical and spiritual ailments is the worthiest gift we can offer to Jesus."  
"Suffering is a sure sign that God loves us."  
"Accepting the sufferings we will perfect and sanctify us."

### Suffering for humanity

"I suffer as much as anyone who has the whole of humanity on his back."  
"Like St. Christopher carried the child Jesus on his shoulders across a river, on my shoulders is the whole world."

### Stigmata wounds:

Responding to a person who asked him if his stigmata hurt. Padre Pio replied: "Do you think that the Lord gave them to me for a decoration?"  
"I have asked Jesus to take away this signs that cause me so much embarrassment. His answer has been: you will bear them for fifty years."  
Mons. George Pogany testified that a man told Padre Pio: "Who knows if the stigmata are a fake?" Padre Pio replied: "If it is not real, I am the first one who was deceived."

### Shoulder wound:

"The wound that causes me the greatest pain is the shoulder wound. It is painful and sweet at the same time."

Padre Pio confided to brother Modestino Fucci, that his greatest pains occurred when he changed his undershirt. Brother Modestino was the doorkeeper at Padre Pio's friary. On February 4, 1971 Modestino was assigned the task of taking an inventory of all the items in the deceased Padre's cell. The same day he discovered that one of Padre Pio's undershirts bore a circle of bloodstains in the area of the right shoulder. On that evening asked Padre Pio in prayer to enlighten him about the meaning of the bloodstained undershirt. He awakened at 1:00 AM with a terrible, excruciating pain in his shoulder, as if he had "been sliced with a knife up to the shoulder bone". He felt that he would die from the pain if it continued, but it lasted only a short time. Then the room became filled with perfume of flowers – the sign of Padre Pio's presence – and he heard a voice saying "Cosi' ho sofferto io!" – "This is what I have suffered!"

### Invisible crown of thorns:

"The crown of thorns is never taken away."  
"The thorns are around the whole head."

"I can never take off that diadem which is the crown of thorns that God has put on me. I wear it day and night."

"The head and the heart are the wound that hurt the most."

### **Crown of thorns during Mass:**

"I suffer the crowning of thorns during the Holy Mass and also before and after it."

"Without the crown of thorns the immolation would not be complete. The thorns are around the whole head." "The crown of thorns is never taken away. "The head and the heart are the wound that hurt the most."

A girl told her fiancé' that she wouldn't marry him if he didn't restart practicing the faith. He reluctantly agreed to go to Padre Pio with her. During the Mass the girl was amazed to see her fiancé' staring at the altar, pale, and shocked. At the end of the Mass he asked her: "Does this happen every day?" Yes, she said. Outside the church she asked him what he meant. He told her that he saw a mass of thorns on Padre Pio's head, and blood running down his face. He thought that everyone was seeing what he saw.

## **2 Padre Pio in his own words about: Jesus, The Eucharist, the Mass**

### **Baby Jesus:**

"In the end, the gamble of our life is all in this Child."

### **Jesus:**

"Jesus told Padre Pio in a vision: "I associate you to my Passion."

"Without Jesus you can do nothing."

"I live for Jesus Christ, I live for his glory, I live to serve him, I live to love him."

"In Jesus everything has an answer. Without him, there is only a big void."

### **Cross:**

"Bearing physical and spiritual ailments is the worthiest gift we can offer to Jesus."

"The foot of the Cross is the gate to Heaven."

"Everybody has his own Cross. We must be like the good thief and not like the bad one."

"As the body needs nourishment, the soul needs the Cross to purify and detach."

Padre Pio was asked what special sacrifices he made. "None. I take what the Lord sends me."

### **Simon of Cyrene:**

*Padre Pio was convinced that he had been chosen to carry the cross to the Calvary.*



"If He asks us to carry the Cross, the Lord will help and give strength."  
"Jesus doesn't ask you to carry the heavy Cross with Him; just a small piece."

### **Calvary:**

"Life is a Calvary, but we must climb it cheerfully."  
"From the Calvary we go to the Tabor."  
"On the Calvary Jesus redeemed us, and salvation must be accomplished there."

### **Eucharist:**

"The Eucharist gives an idea of the union we will have in heaven."  
"Communion is a fusion. Like two candles that melt together and are no longer distinguishable."  
"How could I live failing even for a single morning to receive Jesus in the Communion?"

Padre Alessio and another priest were distributing the Communion to a very large number of faithful. Padre Alessio's pixis emptied sooner and he went back to the altar for the purification of the pixis. He had just completed the rite when, looking at his immediate right he saw a host standing in midair. The Host moved towards the pixis and fell into the pixis with an audible click sound. Padre Alessio was devastated by what he had seen. He hadn't seen anybody holding the Host. Later in the day Padre Pio reported his experience to Padre Pio. Padre Pio: "Boy, be more careful and do not distribute the communion too fast. Thank your guardian Angel for not letting the Host fall to the ground."

Padre Onorato to Padre Pio: "It is hard for us to collect properly all the little fragments of the Hosts after distributing the Communion."

Padre Pio: "What do you think the angels are doing around the altar?"

### **Tabernacle:**

"Only the Catholic Church possesses Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament."  
"When I am no longer here, go before the tabernacle. In Jesus you will find me, also".  
"Just staying humbly in His presence is an excellent sign of perfection."  
"When we are in the presence of God, let's just be happy to stay there, not being concerned about anything else."

### **Mass:**

*Being at five in the morning near the altar of Padre Pio was really a close encounter of the special kind with the supernatural. The Mass of Padre Pio was a spectacular mystical event, mixing the height of the human complete immolation to God, that we could see, with a mystical and physical renewal of the Passion of Christ from the Garden to the Golgotha, which we couldn't see, but were able to feel.*

*From his own handwriting to his spiritual directors and the spiritual daughter Cleonice Morcaldi, we know that Padre Pio experienced during Mass the Passion of Jesus, including the Agony in the Garden with the sweat of blood, the scourging, the crowning of thorns, the hostile crowds, the Via Crucis, Veronica, Simon of Cyrene, the Crucifixion, the seven words, the sipping of the gall, the death and deposition.*

#### Importance of the Mass:

"If people knew the value of the Mass, there would be policemen at the door, to regulate the access to the church, every time that a Mass is celebrated".

"It is easier for the earth to be without the sun than without the Mass."

"If we only knew how God regards it, we would risk our lives to be present at a single Mass."

"The mass gives to God an infinite glory"

"Mass is redemption of your soul and reconciliation with God."

"Listen to the Mass the way the Virgin Mary stood at the Calvary"

"The holy Mass regenerates the world."

"The fruits that we receive at Mass cannot be enumerated. We will know it only in Paradise."

#### The altar:

"All of Paradise is close to the altar when I say Mass."

"The angels around the altar adore and love."

"I see all my children who come to the altar, as if in a mirror. I tell Mary: Here are the children of your Son."

#### The Mass of Padre Pio as the Passion of Christ:

"The Mass is the complete union between Jesus and me."

"Mass is a sacred participation in the passion of Jesus. All that the Lord suffered in His passion, I suffer, to the extent that it is possible to a human being. And that is apart from any merit of mine, but entirely due to His goodness."

"In knowing the Passion of Jesus, you will also know my Passion."

"The angels attend my Mass In legions."

"The Holy Virgin assists me."

"I suffer all what Jesus suffered, from the Garden to the Cross."

"I suffer the agony of death like Jesus in the Garden Gethsemane."

"The sufferings are so acute that they can neither be described nor imagined."

"I suffer the bitterness of gall very often during the Mass."

"I suffer the most from the Consecration to the Communion."

"My suffering is insignificant compared to the suffering Jesus experienced."

"I don't want my Calvary to be alleviated; rather to make it harder. We must suffer."

"The offertory is the moment when the soul becomes detached from all that is profane."

"I suffer the scourging from the beginning to the end of the Mass, but more intensely after the Consecration."

"I also speak the "seven words" that Jesus stated on the Cross."

"During the Way of the Cross I am Jesus Himself. Jesus himself helps me like Simon of Cyrene and Veronica"

"At the Calvary, there where screams, blasphemies, loud clamor, and threats... that was really uproar."

"I find my rest on the Cross."

"In His last gaze the dying Jesus looked towards His Holy Mother."

"I put last gaze on my brothers in exile."

#### Communion:

"In the Communion I ask the Lord to let me be another Jesus, all Jesus, always Jesus."

"My Communion is a fusion. Like two candles that fuse together and cannot be distinguished one from the other. "

"I die mystically, at the Holy Communion. The Communion is the culminating point of my suffering."

"In the communion Jesus put his delight in his creature."

#### How to attend Mass:

*From a letter to Annita Rodote on July 25, 1915:*

"The Divine Master calls the church the house of prayer. In order to avoid irreverence and imperfections I exhort you in the Lord to:

Enter the church in silence and with great respect. Take the holy water and make the sign of the cross carefully and slowly.

Before God in the Blessed Sacrament genuflect devoutly. At your pace, kneel down and render to Jesus the tribute of you presence.

Confide to him all your needs, and those of others. Speak to him with filial abandonment. Be very composed when standing up, kneeling down, and sitting.

Carry out every religious act with the greatest devotion. Be modest in your glance.

Don't turn you head here and there to see who enters and leaves.

Don't laugh. Don't speak to anybody, except when requested for charity or other strict necessity.

Say the words distinctly, observe the pauses, and never hurry. Behave in such a way that all the presents are edified by you.

Don't leave without asking Jesus for his blessing, and forgiveness for your shortcomings. Leave the church recollected and calm."

### **3 Padre Pio in his own words about: Heaven, God, The Holy Spirit, the Church, the universe.**

#### **Heaven:**

"Heaven is total joy, continuous joy. "

"It is useless to try to figure out exactly what Heaven is like, because we can't understand it. But when the veil of this life is taken off, we will understand things in a different way."

"...at night when I close my eyes the veil is lifted and I see paradise open up before me: and gladdened by this vision I sleep with a smile of sweet beatitude on my lips and a perfectly tranquil countenance..."

From a letter to Padre Agostino on 10-21-12; "At night, when I close my eyes the veil is removed and the Paradise opens in front of me, and I feel a perfect calm, and wait that the little companion of my infancy wakes me up."

"Father, going to Heaven there is immediate joy, or one has to wait for the end of the world?" Padre Pio's answer: "If there was no joy it wouldn't be Paradise. At the end of the world will rejoice the resurrected body too."

Anna Tortora, the day of the Confirmation asked Padre Pio for a present: "I want that when you go to Heaven, you prepare a spot for me too." "Are you so sure I will go there?" "If you don't go there who else goes there?" "All right I promise you that if I go there I will pull you too by the neck."

"The immensity of the eternal heritage was seen by the Apostle Paul who, was caught up into Paradise and heard ineffable things, which no one may utter." (2 Cor. 12, 4)

"What kind of heaven would be if we didn't have with us those whom we love?"

To a woman about her deceased dad: "Comfort yourself. He is not dead. He lives a life of joy that will have no end. He lives in heaven. He lives in the midst of his dearest ones."

To a woman about her deceased two years old child: "Your child is in Paradise, watching over you, assisting you, smiling on you, and preparing a place for you."

#### **God:**

"God is always fixed in my mind and imprinted in my heart."

"Father, I don't believe in God." "Why are you telling me? Tell Him!"

Father, I don't believe in God. "But God, my son, believes in you."

"God enriches a humble heart with his gifts."

"Time spent for the glory of God is never wasted."

"Life without the love of God is worse than death."  
"As long as one has God as a foundation everything else falls into place."  
"Let's look beyond the hand of men, to find the hand of God."  
"Honor and praise the Creator and not the creature."  
"Endure tribulation, sickness and pain for the love of God."  
"Don't wait for Tabor to see God: you already see Him on the Sinai and on the Calvary."  
"God always gives us more than we deserve."  
"In all the human events we need to recognize and adore God's will."

#### Timor Domini: Love and fear of God:

"Implore the Lord to increase two things in us: love and fear." "As long as you are afraid to fall, you will not sin. You should be afraid when you are not afraid anymore."  
"Confidence and fear of God go together like two sisters."  
Our sweet Lord is deprived of giving us many graces, solely because the door of our heart is not open to Him in holy confidence."

#### A prayer to God:

"My past, O Lord, to your mercy; my present, to your love; my future, to your providence!"

#### God and us:

"God loves man with an infinite love"  
"God tolerates us, even when we offend him."  
"The Lord allows us to discover who we are a little at a time."  
"Always remember that God sees everything."  
"Before going to sleep examine your conscience and turn your thoughts to God."  
"If God would take back what he gave us, we would be left with our rags."  
"God will always give us more than we deserve."

#### God and us sinners:

"God goes in search of obstinate souls."  
"God is terrible justice and infinite mercy."  
"The sinner who is ashamed of his bad deeds is closer to God than the just ashamed of acting well."  
"One day the slightest transgression of God's law will be considered."  
"When God punishes He does so with reverence, almost fearing to hurt."

### God eternal:

“For God the past doesn’t exist, the future doesn’t exist. Everything is an eternal present.”

### Justification:

“Our justification is such an enormous miracle that the sacred scripture compares it to the Resurrection.”

“Oh, if we could perceive even of a single instant the state to which God’s grace has raised us, to be nothing less than his own children, destined to reign with his son for all eternity.

“God revealed his power more fully in our justification than in creating heaven and earth.”

### The Universe

Padre Pio was told by Mons. Fanton: "They say that on other planets there are more creatures of God."

Padre Pio’s answer: "And you wanted that the Omnipotence of God was limited to the little planet Earth? And you wanted that there weren't other creatures loving the Lord?"

Still Mons. Fanton said: "Padre, I have been thinking that the Earth is nothing, compared to all the other stars and planets." Padre Pio replied: "Yes, we born on the Earth are nothing. The Lord has certainly not restricted his glory to this little planet. On other planets there might be beings that have not sinned like we did."

### Holy Spirit:

“Let’s be vigilant and don’t let the enemy get in our heath and contaminate the temple of the Holy Spirit.” (Epist. II, 418).

"Let's pray the Paraclete Spirit that he enlightens us about three things:

Understanding the importance of being Christians,

Understanding the immensity of the eternal heritage to which we are destined,

Understanding the extreme greatness of the miracle of 'justification.'

### Confirmation:

: “I will never forget the day of my Confirmation, when the Holy Spirit gave me extremely sweet consolations. My heart still burns with a vivid flame thinking of that day.” (Epist. I, 471).

### Catholic Church:

"Only the Catholic Church possesses Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament."

"I want to live and die in the (Roman Catholic) Church."

In October 1967 a Jewish convert asked Padre Pio is his father, who died as practicing Jews, was saved. "Julius Fine is saved, but is necessary to pray much for him."

"Other Christian religions were founded by different men, but the Catholic religion was founded directly by Jesus Christ."

Padre Pio, Letter, January 27, 1918: "...the Church; this dear and sweet dove, which alone can lay the eggs, giving birth to the little doves of the Bridegroom. Continually thank God that you are a daughter of the Church. . ."

"The Church is always a mother even when it strikes."

"The Church is our most tender mother."

"Thank God for being a child of the Church."

"The first person I remember in prayer is the Pope, Christ's Vicar."

Giancarlo Menotti, the Italian-American composer, attended Padre Pio's Mass in 1957. Afterwards Padre Pio asked him: "Do you believe in the Church?" "No. I believe in God, but I don't believe in the Church." Padre Pio: "Why do you come to see me then? I believe in the Church." Menotti later declared: "Still it was quite an experience. One I shall never forget. I did have the feeling I had met a saint." Some of Menotti's friends believe that Menotti's encounter with Padre Pio inspired him to write the opera "The Saint of Bleaker Street."

#### **4 Padre Pio in his own words about: Mary, the Rosary.**

##### **Mary**

He would call her in many different ways. Some of them: Maria, Madonna, Mamma, Mamma, Mamma, Madre, Madonnina, Madonnella, Signora, Vergine Maria, Madre Maria, Diletta Madre, Tenera Madre, Madre mia cara, Celeste Madre, Madre di Misericordia, Bianca Signora, Maria Santissima, Mamma mia, Madre Immacolata, Santissima Vergine, Cara Madre, Mamma dolcissima, Madonna Mia, Mamma nostra, Dolce Signora, Vergine Santa, Madonna delle Grazie

"The Madonna is the shortcut to get to God."

"Love the Madonna, and make people to love her."

"Abandon yourself in the hands of Mary. She will take care of you."

"Let's pray the Madonna of Graces. She will heal you." After: "Mary healed you, not me."

Father Tarcisio Zullo asked Padre Pio: 'Father, is the Madonna at this moment in this room?'

Padre Pio's answer: "Wrong formulation. You should have asked 'Did the Madonna ever leave this room?' "

One evening Dr. Kisvarday was talking with Padre Pio in his cell when the light went off. He got up to get a candle. "Where are you going? There is so much light. We

don't need a candle. Don't you see the Madonna lighting up the cell?" Dr. Kisvarday: I didn't see the Madonna, I saw only pitch dark.

To Padre Onorato who was going to Lourdes: "I have been to Lourdes many times. You don't need a car or a train, there are other means too."

Padre Pio used to tell a story: "One day Our Lord making rounds of Paradise saw some strange faces. He asked Peter: Who let these people in? Peter: 'There is nothing I can do.' The Lord: 'But you have the key.' Peter: 'There is nothing I can do, and you can't do either.' The Lord: 'What do you mean?' 'It's your mother. She has another key. She lets them in.'

On April 24, 1959, the Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of Fatima visited Italy, starting from Naples. The same day Padre Pio became very ill. He had broncho pneumonia and couldn't celebrate Mass.

On August 1st Padre Pio was recovered inpatient at Casa Sollievo. The illness continued. On August 5 the Statue of Fatima came to the Convent. On August 6 the Statue was just leaving in helicopter. Padre Pio from the hospital: "Madonna, my Mother, I have been sick since you came to Italy; and now you are leaving, and leaving me sick." Padre Pio reported: "I felt a chill in the bones." Then: "I'm feeling well." "I am healed! Our Lady has healed me!" Later he said: "The Madonna came here, to heal Padre Pio." On August 10 Padre Pio resumed celebrating Mass, and the 21th he resumed the confessions.

### Rosary:

"Pray the rosary frequently. It costs so little, and it's worth so much!"

"We can't live without the Rosary."

"Say the rosary, and pray it every day."

'Mary has recommended the Rosary at Lourdes and Fatima because of its exceptional value for us in our times."

"Always recite the rosary and recite it as often as possible."

"Mary is present in every mystery of the rosary."

"Mary has taught us the rosary just as Jesus taught us the Our Father".

"I always pray for the sick. Every day I say a holy Rosary for them."

Padre Pio used to carry permanently a Rosary in his hands and would pray it many times a day.

Father Marcellino testified that he had to help Padre Pio wash his hands one at a time "because he didn't want to leave the rosary beads, and passed the Rosary from one hand to the other."

To Lucia Merlinda: "After the Glory, say: Jesus, I love you, and I repent for offending You."

About the repetitiveness of the Rosary: "Pay attention to the mysteries. They change at every decade."



To Enedina Mori: "When you get tired reciting the Rosary, rest a bit, and then restart again."

### The Rosary as a weapon against the enemy:

"The Rosary is the weapon of defense and salvation."

"The Rosary is the weapon given us by Mary to use against the tricks of the infernal enemy."

"Satan always tries to destroy the rosary, but he will never succeed."

To father Onorato Marcucci, grabbing the Rosary that he had put few seconds on the nightstand: "With this, one wins the battles."

"The rosary is the prayer of the Madonna, the one that triumphs on everything and everybody."

### How many Rosaries

February 6, 1954 9:00 PM, to father Carmelo: "I still have 2 rosaries to pray today. I said only 34 so far. Then I will go to bed."

Answering to father Michelangelo: "Today I said 32 or 33 rosaries. Maybe 1 or 2 more."

Answering to father Mariano: "About 30. Maybe some more, but not less."

'How do you do it? "What is the night for?"

Answering a question: "Some days I say 40 Rosaries, some other days 50."

How do I do it? "How do you manage not to say any?"

To Lucia Pennelli one morning around 7:00 AM after Mass: "How many rosaries did you say so far today?" "Two". "I already said seven."

To Lucietta Pennelli, one day at about noon: "Today I have already said 16 complete Rosaries."

## 5 Padre Pio in his own words about: Prayer, Prayer Groups, Meditation.

### Prayer:

"I pray constantly".

"I'm only a poor friar who prays"

"I want to save souls by continuous prayer."

"I will never tire of praying to Jesus."

"My past, O Lord, to your mercy; my present, to your love; my future, to your providence!"

"We seek God in books, but it is in prayer that we find Him. Prayer is the key that opens the heart of God."

"What mankind lacks today is prayer."

"Prayer is the best weapon we possess."

"Prayers will never be wasted."

"Prayer must be persistent. Persistence denotes faith."

"The only way to gain salvation is through prayer."

"Pray, pray a great deal. Always pray, without tiring."

"Prayer is the effusion of our heart in the heart of God."

"In praying, our heart needs to stay open towards heaven, and wait for the heavenly dew to come."

"When it is done well, prayer moves the divine heart, and solicits answers more and more"

"Never grow weary of praying. This is essential.

Prayer penetrates the heart of God and obtains the graces needed...

"Prayer is the key that opens the heart of God."

"Our Lord wishes that we ask, in order to obtain graces."

"Seek, ask, and knock, in order to find, receive, and to be opened to you."

"Even though the Lord is in us, He still wants us to ask for what we desire."

"All that you ask in prayer with faith, you will receive."

### **"Pray, hope, don't worry**

"Pray, hope, don't get agitated. Agitation doesn't help at all. God is merciful and will listen to your prayer."

("Prega, spera, non agitarti. L'agitazione non giova a nulla. Dio e' misericordioso ed ascoltera' la tua preghiera.")

"The more you get agitate, the sooner the Providence will withdraw its arms from you." "Anxiety makes us run only to make us trip." "Agitation never comes from God."

Nothing impedes more our progress than agitation, restlessness and an anxious conscience."

### **Prayer groups:**

"Let us pray together"

"Community prayer is a powerful weapon in the hands of the Church and the faithful."

"If more souls unite together in prayer, they form a formidable power."

"In the Groups, when my children unite together in prayer, Jesus will be in the midst of them; There will also be the Mother of Jesus;

I will also be present in spirit and united in prayer."

"Pray every evening with you family; recite the rosary; once a week or a month gather together to recite the rosary, assist at Mass, listen to a sermon, receive the Communion, keep Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament company for an hour."

### **Meditation:**

"To imitate Jesus we must meditate daily on our model."

"Meditation is like a mirror: it helps us discover and correct our defects."

"Meditation, like a tireless bee, transforms the pollen of flowers into nectar of life."

"Never let a day go by without meditating on the Passion of Christ."

In a letter to Annita Rodote, about meditation: "Put yourself in the presence of God. Remember that God is really present with the celestial court, inside your soul.

Then you start your prayers and meditations, holding the palm of the hand to the front, or both hands to the front. All that must be done without affectation."

"Topics of your meditation should be the life, passion and death of Jesus. His, birth, life in Egypt and Nazareth up to his thirties. The humility of the baptism by John, his public life, his extremely painful passion and death, the institution of the Eucharist the night when men were preparing for him the most atrocious torments. You can meditate Jesus in the garden, sweating blood seeing the torments that men were preparing for him, and the ingratitude of men who would not take advantage of his merits, Jesus dragged and beaten in the tribunals, scourged and crowned with thorns, the trip to the Calvary carrying the cross, his crucifixion, and finally his death on the cross in a sea of anguishes at the sight of his sorrowful Mother."

In a letter to Maria Gargani, also about meditation: "First prepare the topic of your meditation. You don't need a book for that. Every truth in our religion can be topic for meditation. Usually the life, passion and death of Jesus should be meditated. Ask God for the grace to meditate well, so that it can be fruitful, than recommend yourself to the Holy Virgin and all the celestial court that may help you meditate well and keep away every distraction or temptation. Done that, start the meditation going over the subject in every detail. After that one needs to make resolutions. Consider defects that are the cause of many ore defects and sins. Resolve to work on a virtue, and only stop when you have conquered it. Finally ask God for the graces and helps that you feel the need for. Recommend to God all the human beings in general and in particular. Pray for the reestablishment of the kingdom of God, the propagation of faith, the exaltation and triumph of our holy mother the Church. "Pray for the living and the dead, the infidels e the heretics, and for the conversion of sinners. After all that offer your meditation and prayer, with the offering of all of yourself, and of all the persons you care for, through the hands of the holy Mary, the Guardian Angel, St. Joseph, etc. " "Lastly, examine briefly how you did your meditation, and ask for forgiveness if it has been defective. Meditate at least twice a day. No less than half hour each time. Possibly in the morning, to prepare for the fight, and at night to purify the soul from any earthly attachment that happened during the day."

## 6 Padre Pio in his own words about: every day's life

### Life:

"Love doesn't tolerate delay."

"Life is a continual struggle against oneself."

"Life is a struggle, which we cannot avoid. We must triumph."

"Planting is less important than sowing, to have a good harvest."

"Drowning on high seas or choking on a glass of water has death as the same outcome."

"Repair the past and prepare for the future making good decisions."

"Sadness is of no use to anyone."

"Don't philosophize on your defects."

"Fear is an evil worse than evil itself."

"Let us be honest always."

"Even when reprimanding, one must be courteous and gentle."

"Gentleness doesn't mean permissiveness."

"Vainglory is the woodworm of holiness."

Do not be restless, upset, and anxious in times of darkness."

"Let your whole exterior be a vivid image of the composure of your soul."

"Let us be moved by the presence of God, who is also our judge."

"It is easier to cure a tumor than to change the heart of a person".

Giving a medal with a sacred image he would say: "This is the weapon which will preserve you from your enemies."

### Media:

Padre Pio almost never read the papers. In the mid 50's television was introduced in the convent. No friars remember him watching television, To Joe Peterson: "The man who invented refrigeration went to heaven, but the man who invented television..." concluded pointing downward.

It is not known his opinion about internet, web, email, google, twitter, facebook, iPhone, iPod, iPad, text messaging, and similar.

Padre Pio had committed himself 24/7 to serve God and help others. He renounced to any other possible use of his time, and kept his promise until death.

### Nosiness (curiosity)

"Nosiness is a defect that destroys charity, makes us lose peace, and has sad consequences. As the Apostle Paul said: "I resolve to know nothing except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified." (cfr. 1 Cor. 2:2)

### Coincidences:

"Yes, the coincidences are coincidences. But there is Somebody up there who arranges those coincidences."

### **Hypocrisy:**

"Hypocrisy is the greatest evil of our time. It exists in all levels of our society, in high places and in low places."

### **Doubt:**

"To doubt is the greatest insult to the Divinity."

### **Conversion and Creation**

God uses more power in our conversion than he used in creating heaven and earth. There is more opposition between sin and grace than between nothing and creation."

### **Beauty**

"Don't concern yourself with physical beauty or ugliness. Let the beauty of the soul be enough for you."

### **Pride**

Pride can be rightly called the moth of the soul who aims at perfection. The saints have also called it the wood-worm of godliness."

### **Saints:**

"It is easy and difficult to become a saint."

Saints are not the less defective, but the more courageous. Sanctity doesn't consist in not having defects, but in fighting them patiently and constantly. Saints are always right. You can't argue with them.

### **Priests:**

"The Lord elects a priest for the altar and the confessional."

"It is a tremendous responsibility to sit in the tribunal of the confessional."

A priest preparing to confess, was thinking: This spiritual life at times it's like to clutch at straws. After the confession, Padre Pio said smiling: "So you think that this spiritual life at times it's like to clutch at straws."

A Dominican friar came in casual dress, with pants and pullover, not wanting to be recognized. Padre Pio passing by told him: "Go home, and come back in your Dominican habit."

A priest went to visit Padre Pio, wearing dress and necktie, not wanting to be recognized. Padre Pio passing by: "Reverend, You should not be ashamed of visiting me. Next time come dressed as a priest."

"Our Lord on the Cross complains about his unrequited love, especially from the men consecrated to Him and more favored by Him."

From a letter of Padre Pio: "Let's keep always in our mind that we are priests. Let's improve until we can say with Saint Paul, without lying, "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ" (1 Cor:11-1)

Padre Pio once told a priest during confession: "If you knew fully what a fearful thing it is to sit in the tribunal of the confessional! We are administering the Blood of Christ. We must be careful that we do not fling it about by being too easy-going or negligent."

Padre Pio in a letter to Padre Agostino, reporting what Jesus told him in a vision: "Jesus showed me a multitude of priests, regular and secular, with some ecclesiastical dignitaries: "Butchers... they leave me alone under the veil of indifference... They add scorn and unbelief to their indifference They speak of this Sacrament of love with great indifference and coldness.... "

#### **Patience:**

"Wait, your turn will come."

#### **Time:**

"One day we will have to give strict account on how we spend our time."

"Everybody should understand the preciousness of time. Let's treasure every instant. Only the passing instant is in our power. One day we will have to give strict account of every minute.

"Do not delay for tomorrow what we can do today. How do we know that tomorrow we will still be alive?"

#### **Purity:**

"Guard jealously the purity of your heart and your body."

#### **Obedience:**

"The more ridiculous the order, the more willingly I obey it."

"Ask for nothing and refuse nothing. One must always obey."

#### **Blasphemy:**

"Blasphemy calls down malediction on your home; and it destroys even the ashes in the fireplace."

"Blasphemy is the surest way to go to hell."

### **Walk of life:**

"The mom teaches the child walking by supporting him. But later he has to walk by himself."

"The road to perfection is as long as a lifetime."

"In the spiritual life, the faster we run, the less tired we feel."

"Unable to take big steps be content with little steps, until you have the legs to run; or wings to fly."

"Keep going forward. If you stop, the wind will blow you back."

"Ahead! Courage! In the spiritual life he who does not advance goes backward."

### **Years passing:**

"Every year should be more fruitful than the previous one."

"The years pass by, and eternity becomes closer."

### **World:**

"Detach yourself from the world."

"Being attached to the things of the world brings sadness."

### **Duty:**

"Duty comes before everything else, even something holy."

"It is necessary to be strong, in order to become great: that is our duty."

### **Resentment:**

"Don't judge by appearances. A certain inconsistency between acts and words doesn't always indicate duplicity, but mere human fragility."

### **Gossiping:**

Gossiping nauseates me. We have so many defects ourselves; why do we want criticize our brothers?

### **Procrastination:**

"Make hay while the sun shines."

"Do not put off until tomorrow what you can do today."

### **Catechism:**

"I wholeheartedly bless the work of catechizing children, the little flowers of Jesus." Padre Pio used to say to newlywed couples: "May you have eight children."

## **7 Padre Pio about: The Guardian Angel, the Angels, Purgatory, hell, devils**

### **Guardian Angel:**

#### **Send me your Guardian Angel:**

"If you need me and cannot come to visit me, enter in a church, kneel at the Blessed Sacrament, and send me your Guardian Angel."

"Send the guardian angel. He doesn't pay a train ticket and doesn't consume shoes."

#### **Guardian Angel lifetime companion:**

"My guardian Angel has been my faithful companion since my infancy."

"When we die, our Guardian Angel will take our soul to heaven."

"From cradle to grave our Guardian Angel never leaves us alone; not even when we sin."

"Our Guardian Angel never leaves us, even when we are disgusting God with our behavior."

"Oh if all men could understand this great gift that God assigned to us; this celestial spirit. "

"For whoever is alone there is his Guardian Angel."

"What consolation when, at the moment of death, you will see this Angel, who accompanied you through life and was so liberal in maternal care. "

#### **Guardian Angel on duty:**

"Our Guardian Angel is a great gift from the Providence to us."

"The duty of the Guardian Angel is not only of spiritual guidance. He also prevents bodily harm for us."

"Our Guardian Angel prays constantly for us."

"Let's confide to Our Guardian Angel our pains and sorrows. He is like a friend, like a brother."

"The angels envy us for one thing only: they cannot suffer for God."

"Your Guardian Angel prays for you; offers to God all the good works you accomplish; your holy and pure desires."

"When you seem to be alone here a friendly soul to whom you can unburden yourself and in whom you can confide your sorrows."

"Do not forget this invisible companion, always present to listen to you; always ready to console you."

"Invoke often this Guardian Angel, and repeat the beautiful prayer: 'Oh Angel of God...!'"

"May the desire to see this inseparable companion incite you to leave this body quickly."

"Often remember his presence; thank him; pray to him; Respect him; be in constant fear of offending the purity of his gaze."



"The mission of my Guardian Angel Includes explaining me other languages."

### Padre Pio and the souls in Purgatory:

"Most of the saved pass through Purgatory before arriving at the fullness of beatitude."

"More souls of the dead from Purgatory than of the living climb this mountain to attend my Masses and seek my prayers."

"The souls in Purgatory pray for us, and their prayers are even more effective than ours, because they are accompanied by their suffering. So, let's pray for them, and let's pray them to pray for us."

"The souls in Purgatory repay the prayers that we say for them."

"When we pray for the souls in Purgatory we will always get something back."

### Temptation

"If you win a temptation, it has the same effect as in washing dirty laundry."

"The more a soul is liked by God, the more He will be proved."

"Temptations belong to devil and hell; sufferings belong to God and Paradise."

"The temptations come from the devil, the sufferings come from God."

"Despise the temptation and embrace the tribulation."

"Do not dwell on your temptations."

"The thought doesn't make the sin, but consenting to the thoughts does it."

"Only the free will is capable of good or evil."

"Temptations against faith and purity are the merchandise offered by the enemy."

"Don't voluntarily dwell on what the devil presents to you."

"When tempted, say to God: "Have mercy on your poor weakling."

"When the assault of the enemy increases, you are closer to God."

"When the enemy roars around you, it shows that he is not in you."

"The more a soul is pleasing to God, the more it must be tried."

"Temptation is like the soap. It seems to soil but in reality cleans."

"There is joy in the spiritual battles. Learn how to fight and you will be certain of victory."

"If God lets you fall is to make you humble and more careful in the future."

"The devil enters a soul only through one door: the will."

"We must prepare for temptation if we want to approach God."

"If you are tempted, that means that God loves you."

### Hell:

During the confession: Father I don't believe in hell. "You will believe in it when you get there."

### About hell:

"I believe that not a great number of souls go to hell. God loves us so much. He formed us at his image. God loves us beyond understanding. And it is my belief that when we have passed from the consciousness of the world, when we appear to be dead, God, before He judges us, will give us a chance to see and understand what sin really is. And if we understand it properly, how could we fail to repent?"

### devil:

"The number of devils active in the world is greater than all the people who have been alive since Adam."

"If all the devils would take bodily form they would blot out the light of the sun."

"I don't have a minute of free time; it is all spent releasing my brothers from the grip of satan."

"If the Devil is making uproar, it is an excellent sign: what is terrifying is his peace and concord with a man's soul."

"What comes from Satan begins with calmness and ends in storm, indifference and apathy."

"Do not let the infernal beast frighten you. God will fight it with you and for you."

"The devil is like a rabid dog tied to a chain; beyond the length of the chain he cannot seize anyone."

And you: keep at a distance. If you approach too near, you let yourself be caught."

"The human soul is the battlefield between God and Satan."

## 8 Padre Pio in his own words about virtues, confession.

### Humility

"You have respect for me because you don't know me. I am the greatest sinner on this heart."

"Abjection is called humility, and humility abjection."

"God speaks to those who truly have a humble heart."

"Never be pleased with yourself."

"The tall ears of grain are vain and empty; the ones bent to the ground are humble and laden with grain."

"When you fall, humble yourself but without degrading yourself."

"Abjection means to be humble and powerless."

"Be humble, tranquil, sweet, and confident in times of darkness."

"Humility is truth. Everything good in me is of God."

"False humility brings discouragement."

"When Jesus sees you prostrated in humility, he will extend his hand and draw you to him."

"Humility is the recognition of one's abjection."

"To meet God, we must ascend and he must descend."  
"Happiness can be found only in Heaven."  
"Everything comes from God. I possess only infinite misery."  
"Self-esteem is more malicious than pride."  
"Mary, the more she was filled with heavenly gifts, the more she humbled."  
"Consider yourself what you really are: a nothing."  
"If I was reborn, I would become a Capuchin again, but not a priest.  
I am unworthy to represent Jesus on earth, to be Christ on the altar."

### Charity

"Charity is the queen of virtues."  
"As the pearls are held together by the thread, thus the virtues by charity"  
"The pearls fall when the thread breaks, thus the virtues are lost if charity diminishes."  
"The pivot of perfection is charity; He who lives in charity lives in God, because God is charity, as the Apostle says."  
"Excuse everyone with Christian charity."  
"Seek solitude but do not lack charity with your neighbor."

### Humility and charity

Humility and charity go hand in hand. The one glorifies, the other sanctifies.  
"There are two fundamental virtues of holiness: humility and charity."  
"We must always have kindness with the neighbor and humility with God."  
"Charity knows how to mix sweet with bitter, and convert transitory suffering in eternal reward."  
"Charity is the yardstick by which the Lord will judge us."  
"Charity is the cornerstone of perfection."  
"Charity is the daughter of Providence."

### Patience

Let's keep well etched in our mind what the Divine Teacher says: "In our patience we will possess our soul."

### Peace

"Tranquility is the daughter of the love for God."  
"God is our peace, our consolation, and our glory."

### Sin:

"The sight of so many souls who wish to justify their evil ways pains me, exhausts my brain, and tears at my heart."

"God runs after the most stubborn souls. They cost him too much to abandon them."  
"Sin without repentance is a deception of conscience; in essence a sacrilege."

#### Padre Pio and the sin:

Mons. George Pogany lived near the convent from 1940 until 1957. He helped Padre Pio and the friars, confessing, saying Mass, bringing Communion to bedridden people, and translating. He reported years later: "Sometimes I was Padre Pio's confessor. I don't believe that he ever committed sin, not even a venial one. No, I don't think so. I heard his confession." (He moved to the USA in 1957, and was a pastor in Irvington, New Jersey, for decades.)

Padre Agostino stayed in touch with Padre Pio from 1907 until 1967. He was his spiritual director, and wrote in his "Diary": 'I could swear that Padre Pio has kept his virginity, and never committed a venial sin against the angelic virtue.'

#### Confession:

After a day of confessions: "Oh the souls! If you knew how much they cost!"

"Before reproaching a soul, I suffer it first. But it is not I who act, but He who is in me and above me."

"Confession is the purification of the soul."

"Confession should be made no later than every eight days."

"Do not dwell on sins that have been already confessed. Jesus has forgiven them."

"Place a tombstone on the confessed sins, just as the Lord has done."

"I want to help Jesus in the tremendous task of man's salvation".

"The mercy of God, my son, is infinitely greater than your malice."

"If we put in the confession all our good will the mercy of God is so great that he will forgive and erase even what we cannot remember or know."

#### Repentance:

A man, had to confess that he was unfaithful to his wife. He started saying: Father I have a spiritual crisis." Padre Pio stopped him: "What spiritual crisis? You are a vile pig, and God is angry with you. Go away."

#### Roughness:

Padre Pio wanted to bring lost souls back to God as soon as possible: "I can hit my children. I want to bring them up fast, even with blows".

Brusque manners were used at times by Padre Pio to shake up and bring repentance, to keep away the curious and the fanatics. There was always a reason for his roughness.

People actually snipped bits off his habit with nail scissors when they knelt in the corridor as he was passing. "Go away. What are you here for? What do you want from me? They cut my cord and habit with scissors. This is paganism. This is fanaticism."

"I'm forced to be rude. I am sorry, but if I don't act this way, they will kill me."

"I'm only superficially upset. But my heart is always calm and serene".

"Do as I do. If I have an outburst, internally I am always serene."

"Sometimes words must be a little angry externally, however, serenity never leaves me."

July 14, 1920 "I sometimes raise my voice when correcting people. I realize that this is a shameful weakness. I regret it."

One man who was thrown out of the confessional by Padre Pio stated: "What kind of blackguardly monk is that? He did not give me time to say a word, but straightway called me an old pig and told me to get out!"

Another person said to this man that Padre Pio probably had good reasons for calling him an old pig and treating him in this way. "I can't think why," said the man who had been thrown out of the confessional; and then, after a pause, the man said: "unless it is because I happen to be living with a woman who is not my wife."

#### Padre Pio in the confessional:

*Padre Pio spent most of his day hearing confessions.*

*From 1918 to 1923 he heard confessions fifteen to nineteen hours a day.*

*During the 40's and 50's about eight hours a day.*

*In 1962, 83.035 women and 19.837 men registered for confession with Padre Pio: an average of about 273 per day.*

*In 1967 Padre Pio confessed about 15.000 women and 10.000 men. An average of 70 people per day.*

*For the women there was a confessional. The men confessed in the old sacristy.*

*The average confession made to Padre Pio lasted only three minutes. Padre Pio heard a total of about five million confessions. Padre Pio demanded that each confession be a true conversion. No excuses, no insincerity, but frankness, honesty, firm resolution. It was like being before the judgment of God.*

*Padre Pio had strong views on female fashions in dress. A sign read: "By Padre Pio's explicit wish, women must enter his confessional wearing skirts at least eight inches below the knees. It is forbidden to borrow longer dresses in church and to wear them for the confessional."*

*Shorts, and short sleeves, even on children, were not accepted.*

*To a man going to confession in short sleeves he said: "Either you lengthen the sleeves or shorten your arms."*

## Padre Pio and the Americans

### Longo and Miniscalchi:

Umberto (Bert Longo) in 1951, at 20, moved with his mother to Leominster, MA, from San Giovanni Rotondo, to stay with his father Matteo. He Married Clara di Nardo. When Matteo migrated, Bert's uncle Gerardo Miniscalchi became very close to him. Gerardo had a barber shop in town, and for many years was Padre Pio's barber and cut his hair. He always wore a suit and tie when he went to the convent, as a sign of respect. In 1939 Gerardo started taking Bert with him when he was 8, and Padre Pio was always kind to him. One day he said: "Just like my own father your father emigrated to the United States in order to make a living. Many people believe that the United States is so rich that the tiles on the roofs of the homes are made of pure gold. That is why so many people want to leave Italy and move there."

### Joe Peluso:

Joe Peluso, from a very small town in Pennsylvania, was stationed in Foggia, Italy during WWII and met Padre Pio on October 6, 1944. He visited with him several times for the next ten months, until his Army unit was transferred to France on July 15, 1945. He met also Padre Pio's father Grazio, his brother Michael, and Michael's daughter Pia, and her fiancé Mario. He returned to Italy in 1988 as member of the Padre Pio Foundation of America in Cromwell, CT, for a documentary on Padre Pio's birthplace.

Joe testified that Padre Pio told him: "Joe, when the war is over and you return to the United States, tell the American people, that for those who would like me to be their spiritual father, my answer is yes. I accept all Americans as my spiritual children. I only have two requirements - that they lead very good Catholic lives and that they regularly receive the sacraments. And please, tell them never to embarrass me in front of Jesus and Mary. You must tell them, Joe." Another day he told him: "Joe, pick a name for your guardian angel and call him by the name always. When you send him to me, he will come instantly."

Joe made a slide show presentation of Padre Pio's life and over the years he showed it to thousands of people. Joe died in 1996 after having spent 50 years sharing the message of Padre Pio with more people than he could have imagined.

### Mario Avignone:

"I was stationed in Italy at Cerignola with the 304th Bomb Wing of the 15th Air Force under commanding general Nathan F. Twining. We were told about Padre Pio. We had never heard about him. Four of us went to see him. My buddy Joe served at the Mass. They say that when he said Mass he was with Christ being crucified. You could see the tears going down his face. After padre Pio' birthday party, just before we left in '45, Leo, Joe and I were at the monastery, and we asked Father Ignatius if we could

have a piece of one of his bandages that he'd worn over his stigmata. "Oh, no!" he said. What you're asking me to do is forbidden, and I could get into a lot of trouble. We finally convinced him to get one of those bandages if we promised not to tell anybody — including Padre Pio. He got us one small bandage and divided it in three. We came back to the monastery not so long after, and Padre Pio stopped us in the hallway. "You naughty boys," he said, really stern. "You caused one of my brothers to commit sin!" "Come on, Padre Pio," says Joe, "what did we do?" "You know what you did," he said. "You had Father Ignatius sneak into my room and take one of the bandages and give it to you." Nobody told him, but you couldn't fool Padre Pio. He just knew things, which is why he was such a popular confessor. He was serious. But then he shook his head and his face sort of softened. He said to Father Ignatius, "I forgive you, Father. And I forgive you boys, too, but don't go telling anybody. I wore those bandages over my heart. Go in peace." And we did. "I told Padre Pio that it'd be great to come back and bring along my wife and kid. "Don't waste your money," he said. "Every time you receive Communion at church, I'll be at your side." But a year or so after he died, in 1968, my wife and I went to pay our respects. When we went to visit his tomb at the church, my wife said I was in ecstasy, tears streaming down my face while I was there at his tomb, kneeling down and praying. She said I was talking out loud, carrying on a conversation with Padre Pio, but she couldn't hear his voice, just mine. But I could hear his voice. He said he was happy I came to see him. Heck, who'd have thought a kid from the South Side of Chicago would end up back in Italy — you know, where my family came from, in the Piedmont — get wounded when a German plane bombed our Liberty ship in the bay in Naples, and end up having a saint as my friend and spiritual father. No, nothing surprises me. " Back in Chicago he expresses his devotion to the saint by sharing his experiences with others, visiting the sick, and praying with the aid of relics. " For example, well, there was the undertaker. I still see him around the neighborhood. His wife called me up one day, and she was crying. She said, "My husband's been diagnosed with cancer, and we wonder if you could have him come over and say some prayers to Padre Pio and bless him with the things you've got." So he came over to my house. We went down to the basement with my little altar there. And we prayed together to Padre Pio to ask him to help cure my friend's cancer. About 10 days or so later, his wife called me up. She was crying and laughing and told me, "My husband just got home from the doctor and told us the cancer is gone." And then she asked me, "How can I thank Padre Pio?" "Don't thank him, thank God," I tell her. "He's his boss." In San Giovanni Rotondo the three buddies Mario Avignone, Leo Fanning (later Fr. Fanning), and Joe Astarita met also Padre Pio's father, affectionately called "Zi' Orazio" and Padre Pio's American benefactor Maria McAlpin Pyle who helped Padre Pio's Casa di Solievo della Sofferenza hospital "dream" come true. They continued to correspond with Maria Pyle until her death in 1968.

#### Joe Asterita:

Joe, of the same Neapolitan origin as Padre Pio, was fluent in Italian and often translated for the other GI's. One day Padre Pio told Joe that five people needed a



ride back to Foggia. Joe refused because it was prohibited to transport civilians in military vehicles. Padre Pio said; "Remember this. Anytime I ask you to do something form me, it will work out. You need have no fear." Joe was convinced, and allowed the two men, two women, and a little child in his military jeep. On the road Joe saw two Military Police Officers. They looked into the jeep and passes right on. At that moment the air become filled with the perfume of Padre Pio. As they continued, they encountered many MP's but Joe was never pulled over. The perfume was smelled until the five Italians were dropped off safely. Before leaving Joe told Padre Pio he was thinking of entering the trappist order. "Joe, you talk all the time. You cannot keep silent even for a minute. You could never be a Trappist. Your vocation is to the married life." When the war was coming to an end, Joe, Mario and Leo got word that their new assignment. Leo to Japan, Mario in other part of Europe, and Joe back to New York. This was on a new military point system. They told Padre Pio before leaving. Padre Pio replied: "Points or no points I tell you that you will go home together." When they returned to the Base, their transfer orders had been changed. They were all to go back to the United States.

#### Leo Fanning:

Assigned to the 304th Bomb Wing with Mario and Joe. "Joe told Padre Pio I want to introduce you to my friend, Corporal Leo Fanning." Padre Pio replied: "But that is not correct. It is Father Leo Fanning." Padre Pio told him: You are to go to the altar of God. I do not want you to go anywhere else." Back home Leo entered the seminary and was ordained in Paterson, New Jersey, on May 30, 1954. Ten minutes before the ordination Leo received a Western Union telegram: "Congratulations on the day of your ordination. Padre Pio". Leo couldn't believe it. He had not told him. One day Leo, Joe, and Padre Paolino made a surprise visit to Padre Pio. Padre Pio went in the convent to see weather Padre Pio was available. When Padre Pio saw him said: "Oh, you have finally arrived. I have been expecting you and the two American soldiers all morning." Padre Pio invited Mario, Leo, and Joe for his 58th birthday on May 25, 1945. They brought a sheet cake with the words "Happy birthday, Padre Pio" on it. They sang "Happy Birthday" and at the end, all the friars, including Padre Pio, broke into applause.

#### Jim Cunningham

Jim Cunningham, from Coral Springs, Florida, stationed in Foggia, was assigned to a photo reconnaissance squadron. Visited Padre Pio in 1945 for 3 times. He was 21. "Meeting Padre Pio and attending his Mass truly changed my life."



### Dan Steele

Dan Steele from Long Beach NY, as military police officer was stationed in Trieste in 1947. After he met his future wife Clara, she went to Padre Pio for advice. He was Protestant and felt a very strong desire to become Catholic. He was baptized by Padre Pio in 1948.

### Bill Corrigan

William Carrigan, of the 15th Air Force, assigned at Christmas time 1943 to the American Red Cross Field Office in Foggia. He was told about Padre Pio nearby by two soldiers, and they went to meet him. His testimony: "There is always a crowd at his Mass. The men are allowed in the Sanctuary, and crowd even to the Altar steps. Our soldiers are always accorded the favor of the Sanctuary, that they may see Padre Pio better. His Mass is often two hours long, but no one minds the time. As he began the consecration he seemed to be in great pain, shifting his weight from side to side, hesitating to begin the words of consecration which he would start and repeat-biting them off with a clicking of his teeth as if in great pain. His cheek muscles twitched and tears were visible on his cheeks. He reached for the chalice and jerked back his hand because of the pain in the wound which was fully visible to me. After the Elevation he seems to be lost to the world and pleads with Christ for the needs of his vast spiritual family. It is well known that once he accepts a person into his family of spiritual children, he never forgets them.

After his communion he leaned over the altar for sometimes as if he was in communion with Jesus.

It is easy to understand why he is long with Christ during the Consecration and at his Communion.

A peace and calm seem to settle over his pain wracked countenance immediately after he receives the Sacred Body of Our Lord. There are always many Communicants, and while distributing the Sacred Host he is most watchful of every particle. Many times he will take the paten and examine it closely, picking off or shaking a particle into the Ciborium. Often one that he alone can see. When I asked him to remember the father of one of our soldiers, he said to me, "I will pursue him with constant diligence and love."

He is most patient and kind to all who come to him at this time, especially this is true for our soldiers who often get a word and a gentle pat on the cheek from him. All want to return again, most everyone has a buddy who wants to go, too. So the word spreads and more and more soldiers are turning to a new and better interest here. From careless, carefree soldiers they turn to sober thought of their future, their family, and their relationship to God. Back in Camp the soldiers think and talk about this wonderful Priest and what he must be. Padre Pio is a designer of souls. Great artists are rare in this field. Would not you like to have your soul designed by so great a spiritual artist? Think about it. No spiritual experience quite equaled Holy Week with Padre Pio. His Masses convinced the most incredulous of the truth and meaning, of the Last Supper. For many he became the answer to the crises of faith. Padre Pio told Mr. Carrigan in 1945: "HYPOCRISY IS THE GREATEST EVIL OF OUR

TIME. It exists in all levels of our society, in high places and in low places." To convince the gullible, nearly everything from cosmetics to religion, in medicine, commerce, politics, education, on TV, the press, and any possible electronic means, is presented as seeming different than what it really is."

Mr. Carrigan visited with Padre Pio many times, and back in America he spread the experience, knowledge and devotion, for many years until his death in 2000. He distributed over a million of Padre Pio prayer cards.

### Gerald Adamic

Gerald. J. Adamic's testimony: "I was an S/Sgt. in the Photo section of the 463rd Bomb Group. I was also a member of a choir organized by Father George Rice of the 463rd Bomb Group at the Celone airfield outside of Foggia, Italy. Twice we went in 1945 to San Giovanni Rotondo to see Padre Pio. We sang the Mass of the Angels in Latin for Padre Pio as he celebrated Mass. After Mass we went into the sacristy where we were allowed to kiss Padre Pio's hands and receive his special blessing. He took us into the Monastery and showed us his cell and gave us medals of the Holy Mother. "Enclosed are most of the pictures I have of our visits to San Giovanni Rotondo. I regret that I didn't take more."

### Adelia Mary Pyle

Mary Pyle was born in 1888 in Morristown, NJ, and died April 26, 1968 in San Giovanni Rotondo. From a very wealthy family, traveled extensively. While in Europe she met Maria Montessori, the educator who developed the Montessori Method. She became her assistant and interpreter. Mary Pyle met Padre Pio on October 4, 1923. Mary herself said later: "We looked at one another only. Then, I fell on my knees and said: 'Padre'. He put his wounded hands on my head and said to me: 'My daughter, do not travel anymore. Stay here.'" She built a house near the convent, and went daily to Padre Pio's Mass, received daily Communion, and confessed weekly with Padre Pio. In the mornings she helped with the correspondence coming to Padre Pio: 'He knew the contents of each letter before it was opened.' Generous with the pilgrims, the poor, and the friars, became a member of the Third Order of Saint Francis. In Pietrelcina a young Padre Pio had prophesized that one day a convent and a church would be built, for the sons of St. Francis. Years later he told Mary to build it. "...and dedicate it to the Sacred Family". So she financed the church of the Holy Family, a convent and a seminary for the Capuchin students in Pietrelcina. During the building Mary stayed in Pietrelcina in the same house in Via Santa Maria degli Angeli where Padre Pio had lived from 1910 to 1916. In December 1929, Mary took Mamma Peppa and "zi" Grazio to San Giovanni Rotondo so that they could be closer to their son, and cared for them, in her home, until they died.

Adelaide Pyle, mother of Adelia Maria

Adelaide made frequent trips to San Giovanni Rotondo to visit her daughter and Padre Pio. She did not want to convert to Roman Catholicism. One day in 1936 she

saluted Padre Pio before leaving. Padre Pio told her: "I hope we will see each other again soon, but if we don't see each other here, we will see each other up there." When she died a year later Mary Pyle told Padre Pio that she had dreamed of her mom standing at the door of St. Peter's. Padre Pio replied: "Who told you that your mother could not be saved?"

### Frank Tenaglia

Frank Tenaglia of Philadelphia was born in 1965 with severe neurological brain malformations. His parent went to Padre Pio asking for his help: "Don't worry about little Francis. He will be fine and I will always look after him". Frank became an opera tenor, performing with mayor orchestras.

### Angelina Serritelli

Angelina Serritelli from USA was brought by her family to Padre Pio for First Communion knowing only English. But she had also to make the first confession. Everybody was hesitant to let her in. She decided to go to Padre Pio's confessional. Afterwards she said: "I confessed and we understood each other. He spoke in English."

### American spiritual child:

Father would you take me for spiritual child? Yes. But next week I will be living for America. "And you think that I can't reach you there and slap you if you don't behave?"

### Paul Walsh

Paul Walsh, a 17 y.o. HS senior in Ridley Park, Pennsylvania, on December 2, 1983 lost control of his car on an icy road. He sustained multiple facial bones fractures, with deep lacerations. The skull was shattered and spinal fluid was leaking, with hydrocephalus and spinal meningitis. He was in a coma for several months. The doctors said that if he survived, he would have permanent irreversible brain damage. The parents prayed Padre Pio.

On Easter Sunday April 22, 1984, Paul saw "a man with a beard who stood at the foot of the bed, smiling and saying "You're looking well." Later he recognized Padre Pio in a picture showed to him.

He recovered fast, "without logical medical explanation" as one of the doctors said. On May 2, 1984 he was discharged from the hospital. He went on to finish high school, graduated from a community college, and completed university education, becoming a teacher.

Padre Pio had died on September 23, 1968.

### Alix Brown

Alexandra (Alix) Brown from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in her second year at Briarcliff College moved to Florence, Italy to study at the Simi art studio. There she met a fellow student Antonio Ciccone,. He told her about Padre Pio. Alix went to San Giovanni Rotondo in 1959 to meet Padre Pio. She went to visit him many times afterword. She felt the vocation to a religious life, and Padre Pio told her frequently "You must pray." Alix entered a cloistered Carmelite convent on the East Coast in June 1964 and assumed the name of sister Pia of Jesus Crucified.

### Antonio Ciccone

Antonio Ciccone worked on the family farm adjoining the back side of the convent in San Giovanni Rotondo. He received the first communion from Padre Pio. At seven he started drawing and painting. Under the patronage of Albert and Rike Fancelli and with Padre Pio's blessing, he moved to Florence in 1954, to study art with Nerina Simi and Pietro Annigoni. He painted a portrait of Alix Brown when they were students at the art studio. In 1959 he painted the fresco of Saint Francis in the friary. From 1963 to 1980 he worked frequently in several cities in the US such as Southampton NY, Hartford Conn., Washington DC, and Palm Beach. He saw Padre Pio daily when he was in San Giovanni Rotondo. Padre Pio told him before leaving to study art "You see that the Divine Providence has helped you? Always behave yourself well."

# The Holy Spirit in action through Padre Pio.

Padre Pio used to say: "If you think you have received a grace, go to Our Lord and thank Him, not me."

"Many people followed Jesus, and he cured them all." (Matthew 12:15).

"Jesus cured many who were sick with various diseases, and he drove out many demons, not permitting them to speak because they knew him." (Marc 1:34).

## Gifts of Padre Pio by the Holy Spirit:

Bilocation, healing, levitation, prophecy, stigmata wounds, reading the hearts, speaking in tongues, reading unknown languages, permanent visible presence of the Guardian Angel, frequent visitations with heavenly Beings, seeing the souls from Purgatory, knowing the status of the deceased, multiply food in time of need, preventing bodily harm in bilocation, preventing car accidents in bilocation, preventing destruction of things in bilocation, assisting dying people in bilocation for a peaceful trespassing, healing in bilocation, perfume, minimal food, minimal sleep, constant headache, chronic bronchitis, bouts of extremely high fevers, profuse nightly sweating. He knew if a person was in state of grace, a person's sins and how and when they were committed, how long that person would live, and what had to do to improve the standing with God. He knew if a soul was in Paradise or Purgatory, or was condemned, and if in Purgatory, the length of stay and why. He knew if a person was repented or revolving door unmotivated to change. All was expressed in few seconds, as he always went straight to the point, expressing, clarifying, detailing, admonishing, exposing, and all ended with a rejection and an invitation to return better prepared, or with a smile and a raised blessing hand.

### 3 things:

Conversing with Dr. Delfino: "What do you doctors think. Can a person do two thing at once?" "I think two is possible." "Well, a can do three."

To father Mariano and to father Tarcisio: "I can do three things at once: pray, confess, and go around the world."

Once he said: "They say that Napoleon could do four things at once. I'm not Napoleon, but three I can pull off!"

### Levitation:

#### The flying monk:

During WWII many Allied Aviation Pilots of different nationalities and religions were based in Puglia. General Bernardo Rosini of the United Air Command reported that "Each time that the pilots returned from their missions, they spoke of this Friar that appeared in the sky and in stretching out his wounded hands, prevented them from dropping their bombs, and diverted their airplanes, making them turn back.

Everyone was talking about these incredible stories. But since the episodes kept recurring, the Commanding General of USAF general Nathan F. Twining who happened to be in Bari, and decided to pilot himself a squadron of bombers to destroy a target near San Giovanni Rotondo.

When he and his pilots were in the vicinity of the target they saw the figure of a monk with upraised hands appear in the sky. The bombs got loose from the plains falling in open areas, and the planes made a sharp turn to return to base without the pilots intervening.

Back on the ground everybody asked everybody else about the happening and wanted to know who that friar was. The General was told about Padre Pio and decided to visit him with the pilots in that squadron. The pilots immediately recognized Padre Pio.

When Padre Pio saw the general he told him: "So you are the one that wanted to destroy everything." The general become a friend of Padre Pio.

#### Levitation to reach the confessional:

Padre Andrea D'Ascanio testified: "The sacristy was full of people and they were looking at the door from where Padre Pio had to go to the confessional. There was no way that Padre Pio could reach the confessional walking through such a large crowd. The door didn't open, and I saw Padre Pio walking over the heads of those people and go to the confessional. Later I asked him about it. ""I assure you, my son, it was like walking over bricks" (sopra un mattonato).

#### Levitation to reach the altar:

Father Joseph Pius Martin reported: "It was near the end of Padre Pio's life. Another brother and I were helping him to the altar. He was going to say Mass. I remember thinking 'Why his weight on my arm feels like nothing at all.' That's when I looked at the floor. Padre Pio's feet were six inches off the ground. He was just gliding. He was levitating on his way to say Mass. I exchanged a glance with the other monk. We had come to the same realization at about the same time. We never spoke about it. We just knew."

### **Bilocation:**

Bilocation is the simultaneous presence of same person in two different places. Padre Pio describes the bilocating person, under obedience: "He knows what he wants, knows where he goes, but he doesn't know if it's the body or the mind that goes." "There is urgency, a grave danger, a soul or a body to save".

#### **First known bilocation of Padre Pio:**

Marchioness Giovanna Rizzani Boschi. She is one of 6 witnesses who testified at the Process of beatification. Her life was full of coincidences that don't have a rational explanation.

She was born January 18, 1905. Padre Pio was 18 at that time, and studying philosophy in Sant'Elia a Pianisi. Padre Pio noted in a letter on February 1905: "I found myself in Udine, where a father was dying and a child was being born." The Virgin Mary told me: 'I'm entrusting this child to you.'

Now Giovanna living in Rome and in the summer 1922 in St. Peter's basilica she asked a friar to confess her, and he did. In 1923 she heard about Padre Pio and went to see him. He told her: "Giovanna I have been waiting for you. The Virgin Mary took me to Udine when you were born to be present at your father's death. Also last year in St. Peter's I was the capuchin priest who confessed you." And: "One day you will be present at my death." Later she described the vision she had of Padre Pio's cell the night he died. She reported every detail of what happened, and described every person that was in the room.

#### **Bilocation to honor 2 fellow saints:**

Saint Luigi Orione made this statement: "I saw Padre Pio in St. Peter's Basilica the day that Saint Therese of the Child Jesus was declared blessed. He came smiling towards me, walking through the crowds. He disappeared when we were few feet away from each other." That happened on April 29, 1923.

#### **Bilocation to assist a dying Franciscan tertiary:**

In the early days, Padre Nazareno went to town with Padre Pio to visit a Franciscan tertiary gravely ill. The day after he reported to Padre Pio that she had died during the night. Padre Pio said: "I know. I assisted her. She went straight to Paradise."

#### **Bilocation to the Holy Office of Inquisition:**

In 1970 Madre Speranza di Collevaleza (now Venerable) told journalist Renzo Allegri: "At the Holy Office I saw Padre Pio every day for a whole year. He used some half gloves on his hands to hide the wounds. I would greet him, kiss his hand, and sometimes we exchanged some words. This took place between 1937 and 1939 when I was working at Sant'Uffizio (Holy Office)."



### Bilocation at a papal meeting:

Countess Virginia Silj-Salviucci, a relative of the cardinal Silj, reported that the cardinal had told her of an episode happened while he was in a meeting of the Pope Pius XI with several cardinal, debating about suspending Padre Pio a divinis (meaning from all priestly functions).

While the pope was speaking, a Capuchin friar appeared, knelt, and kissed his feet saying "Your Holiness, for the good of the Church, do not take this course of action." He then asked for the Pope's blessing, kissed his feet again, rose, and left.

The pope asked: "Who let that friar in?" The prelates run outside to upbraid the guards for letting the friar in. All of them strongly denied having seen any friar. The Pope grew silent.

He ordered Cardinal Silj to ascertain where Padre Pio was that day and hour. Silj investigated, and reported to the Pope that Padre Pio was in the choir of his friary, saying the Office.

Pope Pius XI never mentioned again of suspending Padre Pio from his priestly faculties.

### Bilocation to speak Italian:

The Italian actor Carlo Campanini was on a tour in Brazil and went to Sao Paolo Cathedral for confession and communion. There was a very long line for confession in Portuguese. Campanini prayed Padre Pio for help. The door from a nearby confessional opened and a priest called him in Italian: "Vieni (come in)." He confessed and towards the end he "could smell the typical fragrance of Padre Pio".

### Bilocation near the convent:

Padre Carmelo, superior of the convent, decided to have meetings with the group of early spiritual daughters, at the Ventrella's house, to gather firsthand information about the beginning of Padre Pio's ministry in San Giovanni Rotondo. The first meeting was held on December 14, 1954, on January 10 and 25, 1955, and at later dates. Ten spiritual daughter were present: the Ventrella sisters, the Pompilio sisters, Filomena Fini, Rosinella Gisolfi in Placentino,

Rachele Russo, Rachelina Gisolfi and Nina Campanile. Padre Carmelo testified: 'During the first meeting Rachelina Gisolfi told everybody that Padre Pio was present. Back to the convent I didn't have the courage to ask Padre Pio about it. During the second meeting Rachelina said again that Padre Pio was there. Back to the convent I took the courage and asked him.

The answer: "Why? You don't want me there? You don't want that I come to those meetings?"

After the third meeting, back to the convent: "Yes I was there." After another meeting: "How come you don't ask me anymore if I came to the meeting?"



#### Bilocation in town:

In 1953 Padre Pio was sitting with other monks for a play in the hall of the friary. Padre Carmelo, the Superior, was sitting by him. He reported that Padre Pio during the intermission "placed his arms on the back of the chair in front of him and rested his head on them, remaining silent and motionless for few minutes".

The next day, Padre Carmelo went to visit an invalid sick man in town and was amazed when the man and his family expressed his appreciation for permitting Padre Pio to go visit him the previous evening. Padre Carmelo asked about the time and the duration of the visit. They matched perfectly with the intermission.

#### Bilocation to Heaven:

Ettore Masone, Padre Pio's only nephew. Was not yet thirty when he became gravely ill, fell into a coma, and appeared dead. The family made arrangements for the funeral next day. But all of a sudden he woke up and shouted: "I'm not dying anymore." He recovered completely and instantly. He recalled: I was at the gates of heaven and saw my sister Giuseppina who died many years ago standing there at the door. Then I also saw Padre Pio. Both wouldn't let me in." That's when he woke up.

#### Bilocation during a delivery:

In 1952 a woman was about to die during delivery because of an erroneous blood transfusion. She received the Last Rites. When the priest left she saw a monk. "I am Padre Pio and you will not die. Say an 'Our Father' and one day you will come to see me." About a year later she went to see Padre Pio. He told her: "You got the miracle because the Sacred Heart sent me to save you, since you are devout to him and did the First Fridays of each month."

#### Bilocation to save a General:

General Luigi Cadorna, Supreme Commander of Italian Army, after the defeat of Caporetto, on November 12, 1917 was about to pull the trigger to shoot himself. A friar appeared in front of him. "General, you will not do this stupidity!" He didn't. After the war he recognized Padre Pio in a picture, and went to visit unannounced. Padre Pio from afar: "Yeah, general, we had a narrow escape that night!" (In 1917 Padre Pio was an Active Duty in the Italian Army, on sick leave).

#### Bilocation during a bombardment:

Francesco Cavicchi and his wife visited Padre Pio in June 1967. He had confessed three days before, but wanted to confess to Padre Pio anyway. The rule was at least seven days. He stood in line and when his turn was approaching he got agitated. But Padre Pio calling him from the line said: "Come forward, my son, I have been waiting for you for a long time." He started the confession asking: "How many days has it been since last confession?" Francesco said that he couldn't remember. Padre Pio:

"You have a short memory, don't you. But let me ask you this. Do you remember the bombardment in Rimini many years back? Do you remember the air raid shelter? Do you remember the trolley bus? But why I'm asking you to go back in time? You cannot even remember what you did less than a week ago!"

At that point Francesco started recollecting that in November 1943, when he was 28 years old, he was riding the trolley bus with about ten other people, including a middle aged monk. Then the bombs started falling, Francesco had difficulty getting off the bombed bus to reach the air-raid shelter and thought he was about to die. The monk helped him. The capuchin monk once in the shelter began to recite the rosary and inspired calm and confidence in everyone. After the sirens gave the 'all clear' signal, the capuchin monk was the first to leave. Suddenly Francesco: "Were you the monk?" "Well, who do you think it was?"

#### Andrea Bacile

Andrea Bacile from San Martino in Pensilis was frequently rude with his wife and children. One day that he was particularly misbehaved, he saw Padre Pio in front of him. He had seen in him in pictures, but never in person. He was shocked. He asked to confess. Padre Pio said "No"; and then disappeared. Andrea apologized to his wife and children and started a pilgrimage on foot to San Giovanni Rotondo. For three days he walked without resting or eating. When he reached the convent he confessed to Padre Pio. After the absolution Padre Pio said: "Now go eat something."

#### A man from Maglie

The father of a capuchin friar from Maglie (Lecce) lay in bed, paralyzed with a spinal disorder. The friar asked Padre Pio to pray for him. One afternoon the sick man saw a bearded friar at his bedside. The friar gently told him: "Suffer, suffer with patience". The following day the same thing happened, and the man was not improving. The afternoon visits continued. On the tenth day the visiting friar said: "Enough is enough." From then on the man started rapidly improving, and after few days he was able to go back to farming. The farmer explained to his capuchin son what had happened, and he recognized Padre Pio in a picture shown to him.

#### Monsignor D'Indico

The sister of Mons. Luigi D'Indico, the pastor of St. Joseph in the Santa Croce neighborhood of Florence, Italy, was in a comatose state, suffering from paratyphoid A and B. The family prayed Padre Pio. On July 20, 1921 at 2:30 PM, Mons. D'Indico was working in his office. He felt that somebody was behind him. He turned and saw a friar walking and leaving the room. He asked his secretary who was that friar. The secretary thought that he was under stress because his sister was close to death, and was having hallucinations. At the same hour Mons. D'Indico's sister saw Padre Pio at her bedside. He told her: "Do not worry, tomorrow the fever will disappear, and in few days there will be no trace of the illness in your body." She got rapidly better, and in few days was completely healed.

On August 10, 1935 (the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Padre Pio's ordination to priesthood), Mons. D'Indico donated to the convent the lunetta majolica that was placed on top of the door to the church of Saint Mary of Graces. The majolica had been commissioned to the Florentine studio Fratelli Testi. Mons. D'Indico wanted to thank Padre Pio for the recovery of his sister.

#### Slapping in bilocation:

Maria Pompilio, a spiritual daughter living near the convent, testified that her brother was praying when he began to doze off. Someone slapped him on the cheek and the hand seemed the one of Padre Pio. The day after, he asked Padre Pio if he had slapped him. "That's what happens when you doze off while you are praying."

#### Saving a life in bilocation:

Maria Pompilio testified that a man approaching Padre Pio said: 'Yes, he is the one. I'm not mistaken.' Then, kneeling and in tears said over and over: 'Father thank you for saving my life.' Outside the church he told Pompilio. 'I was captain in the infantry in the battlefield under heavy fire. I saw a monk a short distance away who called me.' "Captain come here by immediately." 'I did, and even before I reached him a grenade exploded where I had been, leaving a hole in the ground. When I turned back the monk was not there anymore.'

#### Extending length of life in bilocation:

Padre Michelangelo Bellini reported that his grandma was over eighty years old and in a coma, when he prayed Padre Pio that she could live long enough to see him celebrate his first Mass. By the morning she had made an extraordinary recovery and told him that she had dreamed that a monk had brought her ten more years of life. She lived exactly for ten more years.

#### Bilocation in the USA (Wisconsin):

On June 25, 1950 Padre Pio was seen attending to the death of a fellow monk in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, without leaving the convent. When asked about it he said: **"If Christ multiplied the loaves and fishes, why cannot He multiply me?"**

#### Bilocation in the USA (Connecticut), perfume, handkerchief:

Joe Spada was hospitalized with terminal cancer in 1975. He, his wife, the nurses and other people at the hospital were frequently overcome by the beautiful aroma of fresh flowers.

One night he was alone and saw Padre Pio sitting beside him. When Margie returned her eyes fell on a handkerchief that she did not recognize. As she reached for it, Joe said, "That's Padre Pio's handkerchief. He put it there on the stand just

before he left." Still today on several occasions, Padre Pio's handkerchief has given off the aroma of fresh flowers.

#### Bilocation in Hungary:

In 1956 Padre Pio served the Mass of Cardinal Mindszenty while he was incarcerated in Budapest. The news spread. Padre Pio was asked: "Did you really talk to him, did you really see him? "Certainly, if I have talked to him, I must have seen him."

In another occasion: 'Did you visit Cardinal Mindszenty while he was prisoner in Budapest in 1956?' "Yes. I have seen him and spoken to him."

#### Bilocation in France:

On January 29, 1957 in Alençon (France) Daniel Batonnier was about to die of cerebrosppinal meningitis. The mother at 13:30 sent a telegram to Padre Pio. At 16:00 the child was fully recovered. The doctors were puzzled. The child, seeing a picture of Padre Pio: 'Mom, I know that friar. He came to see me twice today. He was humming so as not to scare me, and then he left. Mom when I grow up I want to be a friar like him'.

#### Bilocation in Italy:

A woman went stay with the daughter and son in law in Bologna, while waiting to have surgery for a malignant tumor in her arm. She was sitting alone in the living room when a capuchin friar came through the door. "I am Padre Pio da Pietralcina". He exhorted her to have faith in the Madonna and blessed her arm. Then he said good bye and left. The day after she met the doctor to go over the details of the surgical intervention. The surgeon examined the arm. There was no trace of the tumor.

In 1926 Concetta Bellarmini, while in critical condition, was suggested to pray Padre Pio. She did.

Later, a capuchin friar standing and smiling at her bedside said: "Sunday morning you will be healed."

She did recover. Weeks later she went to thank Padre Pio. From afar she exclaimed: "That's him. That's exactly him."

#### Bilocation in Poland:

On November 17, 1962 Padre Pio received a handwritten letter from Monsignor Karol Woityla asking to pray for Wanda Poltawska form Cracow, having terminal throat cancer. Angelo Battisti, administrator of Casa Sollievo, reports that Padre Pio told him: "Angelino, conserva questa lettera, perche' un giorno diventera' importante". "Angelino, keep this letter, because one day it will become important." Few days later, in a letter to Padre Pio on November 28, 1962, Monsignor Karol Woityla wrote: "Wanda was completely healed from cancer on November 21, and surgical intervention was canceled. Deo gratias. Thank you Venerable Father."

### Bilocation in England:

The evening of January 20th, 1936, Dr. Guglielmo Sanguinetti, was talking to Padre Pio in his cell.

Suddenly Padre Pio took to his knees and urged them to pray "for a soul that is soon to appear before the tribunal of God." Afterwards Padre Pio said: "Do you know for whom you prayed? It was for the King of England." Around midnight padre Pio went to the room of Padre Aurelio: "Let's pray for a soul which at this moment is about to appear at the tribunal of God."

The next day the newspapers announced the death of King George V.

### Bilocation in Uruguay:

Mons. Fernando Damiani of Salto, Uruguay, visiting Padre Pio in San Giovanni Rotondo, he asked Padre Pio to be helped in his final moments.

In 1941 Archbishop Barbieri of Montevideo was at the residence of Mons. Barbieri during a congress on vocations... It was night time, and he heard a knock at this door. It was a monk who told him to go to Mons. Barbieri's room, because he was dying. He called all the clergy in the residence, and administered the last rites. Four bishops and six priests assisted Mons. Damiani.

### Bilocation at the Judgment:

Maria Pompilio, when her brother died, asked Padre Pio to intercede so that he could come in her dreams. Her brother came in a dream and said: "Padre Pio assisted me in my agony. He stayed until the Judge judged me. I was given eleven years of Purgatory, but for intercession of Padre Pio the pain was reduced to one year. Many mysteries in the life of Padre Pio will be known only in the other world." The morning after Maria went to see Padre Pio. From afar he said: "Are you glad now?" "Yes, it seems that you are everywhere." Padre Pio replied: "What sense has for me being on Earth if I can't go up and down. I know. Your brother told you that the mystery of my life will be known only in Paradise."

### Bilocation last day of life:

Padre Domenico da Cese Manoppello reported that early in the morning of September 22, 1968 he went to open the church at Manoppello, located more than 200 kilometers away to the north of San Giovanni Rotondo, in the province of Abruzzi. Inside the church he found Padre Pio on his knees, his head in his hands, before the image known as the Holy Face. Padre Pio said to him: "I do not trust myself any more. Pray for me. Goodbye until we meet again in Paradise." Padre Pio died few hours later.

### Last known bilocation when Padre Pio was alive:

Padre Umile, friend of Padre Pio was bedridden in Genova because of a fall. On September 22, 1968 at 4:30 PM Sister Ludovica brought to Padre Umile a cup of tea.

In entering the room she felt an intense perfume of flowers. Padre Umile said to her: "Padre Pio went to say me the last goodbye." Few hours later Padre Pio died.

#### Perfume:

Perfume from a cloth covering the side wound:

One of the doctors who examined Padre Pio decided to take with him a cloth that had been covering the side wound, for laboratory analysis in Rome. Nobody knew about it. During the trip several people told him they were smelling the perfume of Padre Pio. And the patients smelled the same perfume during the doctor's visits.

#### Perfume during Mass:

Fra Modestino, the doorkeeper of the convent, reported: "I was serving Padre Pio's Mass when I started smelling his perfume. It was so intense that I was about to faint, and mentally asked him to stop.

The perfume stopped. Later I asked Padre Pio about it. "My son it's not me. It's the Lord. He decides who smells it, and when. Everything happens if and when He wants."

#### Perfume at home:

A woman involved in an accident broke arm and shoulder, and after 3 years of surgeries the doctors said that she would never be able to use her arm. She wanted to see Padre Pio. He said: "Don't despair. The arm will recover." She went back home. No improvement. 3 months later, on September 17, 1930, feast day of the wounds of St. Francis, she and all in the family, and the neighbors smelled a strong perfume of daffodils and roses. It lasted about 15 minutes. The arm returned normal. The radiographs showed no abnormality in the bones and cartilages

#### Perfume after a car accident:

A woman testified: "My husband was taken to the hospital in Taranto with life threatening injuries after a car accident. After several days of no improvement I prayed Padre Pio. I smelled a marvelous perfume of lily. From then on my husband made a fast recovery."

#### Perfume after a telegram:

On October 1949 Maria Galiano was about to die from uterine adenocarcinoma. The daughter sent a telegram and 2 letters to Padre Pio. On April 29 1950 Maria smelled an intense perfume. It lasted for 2 days. The third day she felt healed. The doctors run tests and found that 'the tumor has completely disappeared.'"

### Perfume for the bishop

The Bishop Carlo Rossi was sent to investigate Padre Pio in 1921. He was particularly impressed by the perfume, and examined the cell and found only plain soap. "This very intense and pleasant fragrance, similar to the scent of violet, I have smelled it. It is sensed in waves, when he walks by, in his spot in the choir, even from a distance. The scent remained with hair of Padre Pio's that had been cut two years before, as it also attached itself to the stigmatic blood and bandages."

### Perfume in Pennsylvania:

Robert Hopcke, a Lutheran seminarian, was attending a Catholic Mass with his friend Vincenzo Mandato. "I remember smelling very distinctly a strong odor of roses just before the homily, it went away, then it came back during the Creed. It faded and came back during the Consecration of the Host." Robert looked around but there was no woman nearby, and no flowers, and the candles were far away. After Mass Vincenzo asked Robert: "Did you smell anything during Mass?" They had had the same experience. Later Robert wanted to report the episode to Vincenzo's father, Mr. Mandato, who had known Padre Pio well. Mr. Mandato explained in detail about the perfume of Padre Pio that Robert had smelled. Robert concluded: "I cannot deny that before I even spoke of what I smelled, Mr. Mandato had described it perfectly."

### Perfume and dr. Festa:

Dr. Festa was one of the early examiners of Padre Pio's wounds. He testified: "On my first visit I took from Padre Pio a small cloth stained with blood, do do a microscopic examination back in Rome. I am entirely deprived of the sense of smell, but the persons that were with me in the car smelled a fragrance very distinctly, and said that it corresponded to the perfume emanating from Padre Pio. They didn't know that I had the cloth, enclosed in a case." "In Rome, I conserved the cloth in a cabinet in my study. The room was frequently filled with perfume, and many patients spontaneously asked me what was the origin of the perfume."

## Prophecy:

### Knowing future events:

#### The policeman:

A policeman was on duty near Padre Pio during an official function. Padre Pio took him apart and told him: "Go home to your parents. In a week you are going to die." "But I'm perfectly healthy" the man replied. "You will be even better in a week" Padre Pio insisted. The man listened to the advice, went on leave, and once at home



he told his parents what Padre Pio had said. A week later he suddenly had a heart attack and died.

#### Modesto Vinelli:

Photographer Modesto Vinelli testifies that he used to see Padre Pio almost daily and take pictures of him. One day at the end of 1918 Padre Pio told him: "Modesto, we have fifty years ahead of us." He was also taking pictures on the day of the 25th anniversary, in 1943. Padre Pio told him: "Modesto remember that we still have 25 years to go." On September 20, 1968, Padre Pio told him: "Modesto, the fifty years are over." Padre Pio died few days later, Modesto lived until 1983.

#### Call him Pio:

Kneeling while Padre Pio was passing in the hallway, a man told him: "Father, My wife is expecting. What name should we give to the boy?" "Call him Pio". The man replied: "And if it is a girl?" "Call him Pio", insisted Padre Pio. It was a boy.

#### The Manellis:

Settimio and Licia Manelli, now Servants of God, went to visit Padre Pio after the wedding in 1926 and became his spiritual children. "Father, will you protect this new family? "Certainly! This is my family. I take it as a duty to guide and protect this family. You will have more than 20 children. They went to Mass every day. They had 21 children. One of them, Stefano Maria, founded the religious family Franciscans of the Immaculate.

#### Pio Francesco:

Paris De Nunzio's daughter Graziella in 1955 asked Padre Pio if she should marry Andre Mandato. Padre Pio: "Do it with the blessing of God." Graziella Mandato told Padre Pio that she was expecting. Padre Pio: "You will have a son, Name him Pio Francesco." Pio Francesco Mandato was born on July 6, 1956.

#### Joseph:

Joseph from San Giovanni Rotondo decided to get married on September 12 and went to Padre Pio to tell him the news.

Padre Pio: "No, you will get married on September 8." Back at home the mom told him:

Son, you can't marry the 12th because your cousin has chosen that date for her wedding. We might have to choose the 8th."

Joseph then told his mom of the conversation with Padre Pio.



During the WWII, a mother of a soldier asked about her son, who was missing in action. "Padre Pio prayed for the boy and then told the mother: "He must be alive, for I cannot find him in the other world." Eventually the son returned.

Giuseppina Gagliardi asked Padre Pio about her missing soldier son. Padre Pio; "Poor son. He suffered so much. He suffers no longer." Later, through the Red Cross Giuseppina learned that her son Italo had indeed died."

#### Mary Pyle:

Mary told Padre Pio: "What I am going to do when God calls you?" He replied: "What are you going to do when God calls me?" Mary Pyle died few month before Padre Pio.

#### The three priests:

Mary Pile was present when, conversing with Padre Pio three priests asked the order in which they would die. Padre Pio obliged, and time proved correct.

#### Padre Romolo:

One of the three priests was Padre Romolo. In a separate occasion he told Padre Pio: "We are almost the same age; who will die first?" Padre Pio: "We will both live a long time, but I will die first. It has been determined that you will die very old." Padre Romolo survived Padre Pio, and died at the age of ninety five."

#### Padre Teofilo

Padre Teofilo di Pozzo visited Padre Pio in the midst of a grueling preaching schedule. Padre Pio told him to slow down his activity. "Don't you know that your life is hanging by a tread of parsley?" He died four months later at fifty-two.

#### Padre Dionisio

Padre Dionisio da Cervinara told Padre Pio that he was going to Venezia for further studies. Padre Pio cired: "Studies, studies! Think of death." Padre Dionisio felt offended and went away. Padre Pio, shrugging his shouders: "There is nothing I can do." Less than three weeks later Padre Dionisio died suddenly. He was twenty four.

## Knowing facts:

### The letter:

Maria De Nunzio was a spiritual daughter of Padre Pio living in Pietrelcina. Once, she was preparing a cup of coffee for a friend, and knowing that he was going to visit Padre Pio asked him if he could deliver a letter to him. He visited with Padre Pio but forgot to give him the letter. Padre Pio: "Aren't you forgetting something? You enjoined a cup of coffee with Maria and you promised her to give me the letter that is now in your pocket."

### Cardone:

Alberto Cardone told Padre Pio: "It's a long time since I have heard from my father." He was in America, but Cardone had not mentioned it to Padre Pio." "Oh!, your father is in America. He's better than you or I."

### A coward man:

One young man in Rome was ashamed of his normal custom of tipping his hat when passing in front of a Catholic church. He was scared that his friends would make fun of him. But one time he heard Padre Pio's voice in his ear saying: "Coward." Later on, he met Padre Pio in person and without saying anything Padre Pio said, "Next time it will be a sound box on the ear!"

### Helenio Herrera

Helenio Herrera, the coach manager of the famous Italian soccer club Inter of Milan, was a devout Spanish gentleman. The Inter club went to nearby Foggia to play an important soccer game on January 31, 1965. On the eve of the match he visited Padre Pio with a group of players, and towards the end of the conversation said jokingly: "Let us win tomorrow's game, and also the Championship! (Scudetto)." Padre Pio smiling: "You will not win in our home, but you will win the Scudetto." Foggia won the game 3-2, and Inter won the championship 1964/65.

### Blessing the bottle of "wine" of Fra' Modestino:

Fra Modestino, the doorkeeper at the convent, showed Padre Pio a bottle of local wine that he had just bought in town, and asked him to bless it. Padre Pio did the blessing, and that with a broad smile said: "Well, this is my first miracle for the day!" Fra Modestino did not understand why Padre Pio had said that. He shared the wine with others. It was excellent. Not long after Fra Modestino learned that the wine maker had been jailed for making fake wine from powders, not grapes.

On February 1958 Laurino Costa sent a telegram to Padre Pio: "Pray for me to find a job." He received a telegram back "Come to San Giovanni Rotondo at once."

On the 4th he met Padre Pio for the first time: "Laurino, I see you have arrived. You will feed my sick." "But Padre, Laurino protested, I've never cooked an egg in my life." Padre Pio insisted: "Go and feed my sick. I'll always be near you."

Laurino went to Casa Sollievo and was told: "You must be the experienced cook we've been waiting for." The same day he was preparing meals for 450 people. Laurino admitted to Fr. John Schug, capuchin (A Padre Pio Profile):

"To this day (14 years later) I still don't know what happened.

All day long I found myself calmly working and telling others what to do, as though I was carrying out a routine I had been used to."

### Reading the soul:

#### Reading the mind of a pilgrim:

Padre Pio, going from his cell to the confessional, had to pass through a narrow hallway. The hallway was always jammed with people when Padre Pio passed. A woman was on her knees hoping to kiss Padre Pio's hand when he passed. He passed but didn't stop and went on. She felt bad, and in her heart complained that her wish had not been fulfilled. Padre Pio was already several yards away. All of a sudden he stopped, turned around, and came straight to her, and said: "Ok. Here is my hand."

#### Reading the mind of John McCaffery:

John McCaffery went to confession to Padre Pio, and he writes of his extraordinary experience.

McCaffery wanted Padre Pio to pray for some of his friends. McCaffery recalls: "So, during a pause, I began to say 'And then, Padre. . .', but he interrupted me smilingly and said: 'Yes, I shall remember your friends too!'"

#### Reading the heart of a faithful:

A man was told that he could ask Padre Pio for something by thinking about it during Mass. He did. Later, in the hallway, among the crowd of faithful he told Padre Pio aloud from afar: "Father, pray for my sister." Padre Pio turning in his direction said: "You already told me."

#### Reading the soul of Francesco Messina:

Dr. Ezio Saltamerenda convinced famed sculptor Francesco Messina in 1949 to visit Padre Pio with him. Padre Pio asked Messina if he wanted to confess. He said 'maybe but I'm not prepared.' Padre Pio said: "Don't say anything to me. Just answer." "Then he began to list my sins with incredible precision. It was as though he could read my soul'.

### Reading the soul of Luisa Vario:

Luisa Vario at the confession told Padre Pio: 'I don't know what to say'. Padre Pio replied: "Than I will speak". 'He proceeded to tell me my whole life's story. 'Than he said: "Do you have something to add?" 'I mentioned a sin that he had not told me.' "That's the one I was waiting for."

### Dino Segre "Pitigrilli"

Pitigrilli was a well-known materialist atheist writer from Argentina. Solicited by playwright Antonelli, he visited unannounced, and sat in the dark in the back of the church during Mass. Before leaving the altar Padre Pio told the assembly: "Let's pray fervently for someone who is in great need of prayer. One day he will approach the Eucharistic table and will bring many with him who have been in error like himself." Pitigrilli took it personal and dissolved in tears. Later Padre Pio told him: "What profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his soul Truly, God is good to you." Pitigrilli underwent a deep and lasting conversion. For more than thirty years he wrote plays, articles, and books with a Christian message.

### Driving:

#### Driving for Paris De Nunzio:

Paris De Nunzio from Pietrelcina went to visit Padre Pio by car with a friend who fell asleep at the wheel. While the car was swerving uncontrolled, Paris cried: "Padre Pio help us." The friend woke up and regained control of the car. At the convent, Padre Pio: "Well you all arrived safe. I was driving the car."

#### Angel driving for Attilio De Sanctis:

A lawyer named Attilio De Sanctis was driving his car to see Padre Pio. He fell asleep at the wheel. He was completely amazed by the fact that he had driven his car for twenty-seven miles while asleep without an accident. Padre Pio told De Sanctis: "You fell asleep and your guardian angel drove your car."

#### Driving for Enrico Medi:

Professor Enrico Medi reports that he was driving the narrow road to San Giovanni, thinking that it was his daughter's birthday and she was blowing the candles at that time.

He missed a narrow bend of the road, and was about to crash in an incoming car. But the cars stopped few inches from each other.

That afternoon Padre Pio seeing him said: "You blow the candles, and I drive the car."

## The Guardian Angel in action, directed by Padre Pio:

### Sends his guardian angel to prevent a car crash:

An attorney from Fano was driving back home to Bologna with wife and children. During the trip he fell asleep at the wheel. He woke up few miles from home. He said "Who drove my car". The wife said: "You were still, and didn't answer to us, and you avoided several collisions at last second. Your driving was different from usual." Two months later he visited Padre Pio, who told him from afar: "you were asleep and the Guardian Angel drove your car." The mystery was solved.

### Piergiorgio Biavati driving asleep

Piergiorgio Biavati was driving from Florence to San Giovanni Rotondo in 1960. When he reached Napoli he felt very tired and sleepy. He stopped at a rest area for coffee. There were three more hours of driving. He testified: "I remember only that I started the engine and put my hands on the wheel. I don't remember any second of the drive. When I reached the square in front of the friary someone shook me by the shoulders and said: "Come on now, take over." When Biavati told Padre Pio of the episode, Padre Pio said: "You were right. You were sleeping all the way and my guardian angel was driving for you."

### Sees the guardian angels of his spiritual children:

Padre Alessio approached Padre Pio to ask some question". "Boy, live me alone, don't you see that I am busy?" Later Padre Pio apologized and explained: "didn't you see all those Angels who were with me? They are the Guardian Angels of my spiritual children, who brought me their messages. I had to give them answers to refer."

### Helped by the angels:

In 1912 Padre Agostino on a trip passed by Pio's house in Pietrelcina at three in the morning. At that time Padre Pio was living there. Padre Agostino marveled that the door was open. So he decided to get in. Padre Pio was in bed but not asleep. "Why do you leave the door unlocked?"

"I have the guardian angels keeping watch through the night."

### Lourdes:

Padre Mariano Paladino stayed many years at the convent. From 1950 to 1960, and from 1965 to 1969. He was the first chaplain of the Home for the Relief of Suffering. He wrote an unpublished manuscript of Memories, recalling his years with Padre Pio. One day while he was in Lourdes he prayed his guardian angel to go to Padre Pio and ask him to pray for a special grace. After a little while he smelled the intense perfume of Padre Pio. Back in the convent, Padre Pio told him: "The angel came right away. He is not disobedient like me and you. And the perfume meant that I love you."

### Telegram:

Cecil Humphrey-Smith reported major lesions in a car accident in 1955. His friend Marquis Sacchetti after visiting him in the hospital decided to go to the post office to send a telegram to Padre Pio asking for prayers. Both of them were spiritual children. At the post office Marquis Sacchetti filled the form for the telegram and gave it to the postal employee. The postman read the names of the sender and of the addressed, then gave him a telegram that had just arrived. It was from Padre Pio, promising prayers for a prompt and complete recovery. Sometime later, they went to Padre Pio to thank him for his prayers. They did, and when they told him of the coincidence of the telegrams Padre Pio said: "Do you think that the angels are slow as the airplanes?"

### Letters:

"How do you take care of the so many letters you receive?" "The Angel does his job."

### Many angels:

"All those Angels around you, don't they bother You?" "No. They are so obedient."

### Hearing the Guardian Angel:

A man from California used to pray his Guardian Angel to tell his needs to Padre Pio. One day, after the confession he asked Padre Pio if he really heard his Guardian Angel. "Do you think I am deaf?" And he repeated what he had told recently his Guardian Angel to tell Padre Pio.

### Obedient angel:

Padre Lino Barbati sent his Guardian Angel to ask Padre Pio for the healing of a person. That person was not getting better. He asked Padre Pio: Could it be that at times the Guardian Angel doesn't do what we ask him to do? Padre Pio: "What? Are you thinking that he is disobedient like me and you?"

### Tell the Guardian Angel:

"Father, my income doesn't allow me to come to see you as often as I'd like." "Who told you to come here? Don't you have your Guardian Angel? Tell him what you want, send him here, and you will have an answer right away."

### Protecting six soldiers:

Luigi Pulcinelli in September 1943 was a student officer at the XII regiment near Foggia. The Germans attacked and took over the headquarters. He barely escaped

towards the mountains with five other soldiers. They were suggested to ask help at the convent.

"We reached the convent, and a friar was celebrating Mass, and we stayed in the darkest part of the rear of the church as not to attract attention. At the end of the Mass the friar turned for the blessing, and before he did it, he invited those present to procure civilian clothes for the disbanded soldiers who had just arrived. How did he know? We went out of the church and asked who that friar was. They said he was Padre Pio. We were petrified. We were asked to go in the sacristy. There was Padre Pio. He embraced us and talked to us. Then we were served a meal fit for a king by Mary Pile. Padre Pio told us not to leave until he said so. We went to ask him every day. The fifth day he said: "Go now. It is now safe for you to leave. Trust our Lady." We left, and marched for five days and finally reached Campobasso without meeting any Germans."

### Healing:

#### Giving sight to Gemma di Giorgi:

Gemma di Giorgi, born on Christmas day in 1939, was blind, born without pupils. In 1947 she was brought to padre Pio. In the hallway Padre Pio touched her eyes and she started seeing normally.

"I had no pupils in my eyes," said Gemma in an interview with Father John Schug in 1971, several years after Padre Pio's death. "I had no sight at all. Today I still see normally. As you can see I have no pupils."

#### Giving sight in one eye:

A blind man begged Padre Pio to restore his sight "even if only in one eye," so that he might again see the faces of his dear ones. Padre Pio questioned him repeatedly, "Only in one eye?" Padre Pio told the man to be of good heart and that he would pray for him. Some weeks later the man returned in tears to thank Padre Pio because his sight was restored! Padre Pio said: "So, you are seeing normally again?" The man replied, "Yes, from this eye here, not from the other." Padre Pio said: "Ah! Only from one eye? Let that be a lesson to you. Never put limitations on God. Always ask for the big grace!"

#### Giving sight to Lello Pegna:

In 1919, a priest named Padre Carlo Naldi came with his Jewish friend, Lello Pegna. The priest explained that Pegna had recently become totally blind. They had come to Padre Pio to see if he could be healed. Padre Pio told Pegna: "The Lord will not grant you the grace of physical sight unless you first receive sight for your soul. After you are baptized, then the Lord will give you your sight." Months later, Pegna came back without the dark glasses that he normally wore. Pegna explained to Padre Pio that, despite opposition from his family, he had become a Christian and was baptized. At the beginning, he was discouraged when his blindness continued, but after a number of months his sight returned. The physician who had earlier told

Pegna that he was hopelessly blind now had to admit that his eyesight was in perfect condition. Fr. Paolino kept in contact with Lello Pegna for nearly thirty years, and reported that his vision was still perfect.

#### The very first healing reported in a newspaper: Pasquale Di Chiara walks:

Reported by Il Mattino 6-11-1919. Pasquale Di Chiara had been forced to use a cane to walk for several months after a fall. Padre Pio seeing him commanded him to walk: 'I felt a burning sensation from my foot through my body. I began walking perfectly without assistance.'

Pasquale's daughter was using braces on her legs for infantile paralysis. Padre Pio asked her to take them off. She was able to walk and never use them again.

#### Francesco Visco Santarello walks:

Francesco Visco lived near the convent, and had walked on crutches all his life because of a deformity from infantile paralysis (polio) contracted right after birth. He dragged himself about on his knees, supported by a pair of miniature crutches. The children used to make fun of him all the time. He was usually positioned near the door of the cloister, soliciting alms.

When he was 43 he took the courage to ask: "Padre Pio bless me." Many people, including Padre Paolino da Casacalenda witnessed the happening.

Padre Pio promptly answered: "Throw away your crutches." Francesco, stunned didn't move. This time Padre Pio shouted: "I said, throw away your crutches." In front of all those people Francesco threw his crutches away, and walker for the first time, and for several years after, until his death.

#### Pasquale Urbano walks:

Pasquale Urbano of Foggia had been walking with two canes after falling from a carriage.

After the confession in 1919 Padre Pio said: "Get up and go. Throw away those canes". He walked away to everyone's amazement.

#### Giuseppe Canaponi walks:

Giuseppe Canaponi of Firenze, on May 21, 1945 was hit by a truck while driving his motorcycle. Multiple fractures from skull to feet, including 5 fractures of left femur. Multiple surgeries. Walking on crutches since. In 1948 confessed with Padre Pio. He walked away normally. without realizing it. He went back to thank Padre Pio. "I didn't do the miracle. I only prayed for you. The Lord healed you."

Healing the brain:



#### Enrico's tuberculosis:

Alberto Del Fante was a journalist who despised Padre Pio. A few years later, Del Fante's grandson, Enrico, was struck with kidney disease and tuberculosis. The doctors gave little hope that Enrico would recover. Relatives of Enrico traveled to see Padre Pio and ask him to pray for him. Padre Pio assured them the boy would recover. Del Fante himself said: "If Enrico gets well, I will make a pilgrimage to San Giovanni Rotondo myself." He was convinced that nothing would happen, but the boy was healed. Del Fante was deeply moved by this miracle, and went to see Padre Pio who helped him turn to God. After Del Fante's conversion, he became a dedicated promoter of Padre Pio.

#### Padre Costantino's tuberculosis:

In 1935 Padre Costantino Capobianco told Padre Pio that he had a relapse of tuberculosis, and had been ordered to report to a sanitarium. Padre Pio: "Don't worry. This is just an excursion." Padre Costantino was soon discharged, and outlived Padre Pio.

#### Healing Joe Greco's father from afar:

Joe Greco had a dream in which he met Padre Pio on a road and asked him to save his sick father. Joe's father suddenly recovered after the dream. Months later he went to thank Padre Pio. As soon as he kneeled at the confessional, Padre Pio said: "Well, your father is all right, than."

#### Young Marinelli's heart condition:

In February 1950 the 15 years old son of Leonello Marinelli from Montignana near Perugia was diagnosed with a incapacitating disorder of the heart. The specialists said that it was beyond medical help. The child asked the father to go tell Padre Pio. When Lionello approached Padre Pio, he, before Lionello could open his mouth, said: "I know why you came. The boy is better and gradually will be cured." When Lionello went back home, the son told him that he had a dream of Padre Pio, and was feeling better. The doctors, after examining the boy, affirmed that the heart disorder had disappeared, and declared that there was no way this could have happened naturally. In March the young Marinelli was completely well, and able to visit Padre Pio with his father.

#### Paralysis in San Francisco:

Frances Pasqualini from San Francisco, California, testified that in December 1951 her 29 years old brother in law was stricken with "a rare illness on the nervous system" which left him paralyzed from the neck down, and the doctors "gave no hope for his life." The family wrote to padre Pio, asking for his prayers. Two months later she reported that "the same young man is now back home with his wife and

children, eating by himself, learning to walk without a cane, and showing signs of a thorough and complete recovery.”

#### Paolo Sala's meningitis:

Dr. Giuseppe Sala sent a telegram to Padre Pio requesting his prayers for his son Paolo who was in critical condition with spinal meningitis. Padre Pio wired back: “On the third day he will have no more fever and he will turn out to be the most intelligent of all your children.” The prophecy proved true.

#### The Savino family: Lina, Giuseppe, and Giovanni are healed:

Rosa Di Cosimo and Giovanni Savino met Padre Pio six weeks after their wedding, and became his spiritual children. He became a construction worker at the friary. They had eight children.

Daughter Lina was struck by a moped. At the first aid station the doctor diagnosed head trauma, and severe internal hemorrhage. She was in a coma and there was no close hospital to take her to. The mom ran to Padre Pio. “looked into heaven like he saw another reality” and said “Let’s pray and we’ll leave everything in Our Lord’s hands.” Three days later she opened her eyes, and recovered quickly and completely.

Few years later son Giuseppe was hit by a motorcycle. He had head injury and was in a deep coma. Padre Pio prayed for him. He recovered consciousness and recovered quickly.

Giovanni went to Padre Pio's Mass every morning and got his blessing before going to work.

On February 12, 1949 Padre Pio told him: “Giovanni, I’m praying the Lord that you might not be killed.” Padre Pio said the same thing for the next three days.” Giovanni was scared, and asked for an explanation, but Padre Pio was silent.

On February 15 he told his crew “Let’s not work today.” But they refused. They had to blast away some rocks in preparation for the friary annex. Giovanni placed a charge of dynamite under a boulder and lit the fuse. It failed to detonate. After few minutes Giovanni went over to check the charge. As he bent over the dynamite exploded in his face. The face was severely damaged. The right eye was an empty socket. The left eye had numerous foreign bodies in it. Padre Pio exposed the Blessed Sacrament and was heard to pray: “Lord, I offer You one of my eyes for Giovanni, because he is the father of a family.”

On February 25 he smelled the “aroma of paradise” and felt like Padre Pio was near him and slapped three times on his forehead. Giovanni said: “Padre Pio give me my sight or let me die. I cannot live like this. Later that morning the ophthalmologist, who was an atheist, came to examine Giovanni.

Giovanni exclaimed: “doctor I see you with my right eye. The doctor:”You might see me with the left eye. The right is completely destroyed.” Upon further exam the doctor had to admit the Giovanni was right, and said: “Now I too believe because this has happened right in front of me.”

Giovanni was released from the hospital in June and visited Padre Pio. He told him: “If you only knew what this cost me!” Giovanni continued to see perfectly from his empty right eye until his death in 1979.

### Listening and watching from afar:

#### Confession out of turn.

Many, many people wanted to confess to Padre Pio. So a registry to sign up in person was started, then people had to return home and wait for a phone call. For men the wait was about a month, for the women 10-12 weeks.

The whole process was very strict, and there was no way to get around it. The board and lodging ladies at the place where the pilgrims stayed went every morning to check the reservation book. Then they would call the person when their turn was 2-3 days away.

A woman was called and told that her turn would come in two days. The woman was there on time and waited a friar to call her so that she could get in line for Confession. Her name was not called.

She went to ask the friar about it, and to her dismay she realized that the board and lodging lady, Signora Vasini, had called the wrong person, and her turn for Confession was 7-8 days away. The friar was unmovable; he could do nothing to help. Confessions with Padre Pio started.

The woman left the sacristy, went outside the church, and sat on the bench around an elm tree, telling the other people in her party and strangers what had happened. No words could comfort her.

At a certain point the woman stood up, raised her arm and pointing at the church said: “If you really are the Padre Pio they say you are, send your friar right away, so that I can confess to you.”

Between 1 and 3 minutes passed.

Then a friar (not the keeping the reservations), came out of the door looking around and said: “Who is Signora Caccioppoli? Padre Pio is waiting for you. He says that is your turn to confess.”

The woman moved towards the friar despite her shaky legs. She went inside, and confessed to Padre Pio.

### The necklace:

A woman from Pesaro, the wife of a workman, testified that she brought her deaf-and-dumb daughter to Padre Pio. He cured her instantly. In an outburst of gratitude the woman took a gold chain from the child's neck, the only object of value that she owned, and gave it to Padre Pio for the Virgin.

When she returned home she told everything to her husband. He flew into a rage at the offering she had made to Padre Pio. He said that she should have chosen some other article rather than the gift that he himself had made to his daughter.

The next morning they found the chain on the bedside table.

### Figs:

A woman was preparing to confess to Padre Pio. The night before she had eaten several figs, and decided to confess it as gluttony. "Father I have another sin to confess, but I can't remember it." "That's ok. Just a few figs."

### Kneeling:

A man told Padre Pio: "My wife every night kneels in front of your picture and asks for your blessing." "Yes, I know. And you laugh at her when she does that." That was true.

### Rosary:

Showing him a Rosary to be blessed: "But this is already blessed."

### 32 sins:

Father my daughter is sick. "And you are much sicker than your daughter." "No, no, I'm feeling very well."

"How can you be well if you have so many sins on your conscience? I see at least 32 of them."

### Candies:

Silvio Scocca was on a train with a bag of candies that he intended to give to Padre Pio. He became hungry and opened the bag, and ate some of the candies. When he gave the bag to Padre Pio, he said: "How did the ones taste that you ate on the train?"

### Imposter:

On a bus, in an organized trip to see Padre Pio, in 1961, a man tells his wife: "I'm going to just accompany you, because I don't believe in this imposter." When Padre Pio passed: "Well, here is the imposter."

And puts his hand on his head, while the man asks for forgiveness.

### Smoking:

A man decided to stop smoking and to offer it as a penance for Padre Pio. Every night he would stop by an image of Padre Pio and show an unopened packet of cigarettes, and say: Father, here is one. Next night: Here are two. And so on. When he met Padre Pio: Father, are 81 days since I stopped. "I know, and you made me count the packets every night."

### Terror:

When her turn to confess came, a woman kneeled in the confessional but felt terrorized and couldn't utter a single word. "Do you want me to talk for you?" He said word by word all the things I had prepared to say, and then added "I will be you spiritual father."

### Birthday:

On a May 25, a woman wanted to say happy birthday to Padre Pio, but he was too far away, so she just thought about it. Few days later, at the end of the confession: "Happy birthday. Sorry I couldn't say it the 25th." "But you did already."

### Blessing:

Padre Pio was confessing, and a woman in line was just told that there will be no more confessions for the day. She had a thought: "Father, send me a blessing, I need it." Instantly Padre Pio turned the head from the grille of the confessional, looked at her, made a blessing sign and then turned his face to the grille.

### Speaking with Zene:

Mary Pyle urged her sister in law Zene to confess with Padre Pio. "Adelia, you know, I don't speak Italian". After the confession she said: "I spoke in English and he spoke in Italian, and we understood each other perfectly. I came out rather dazed."

### Paolina coming back:

Paolina, mother of five, from San Giovanni Rotondo, known to Padre Pio as a special soul, fell gravely ill before Easter. The doctors said there was nothing that they could do to save her. The husband and children went to Padre Pio to implore his help. He said: "She will resurrect on Easter Sunday". On Good Friday she lost consciousness. On the morning of Holy Saturday she went into a coma. The relatives went again to Padre Pio. He said: "She will resurrect." She died late Saturday evening. The family made the preparations for her body to be dressed in her wedding gown as it was customary in the area. Padre Pio started the Easter Vigil Mass and at the moment of the Glory,

When the bells ring and the organ resound he started crying. At the same time Paolina got up un-helped, kneeled beside the bed and started reciting aloud the "Credo". Everybody was astonished. They asked her what had happened. She said: "I was climbing and climbing happily. When I was about to enter in a great light I started coming back, and went back." Padre Pio had not said "She will recover" but "She will resurrect."

### **"Two-year reprieves".**

With Padre Pio, at times a grave physical illness disappeared for a period of two or three years, sometimes longer. People were given time to organize their life and prepare for the final journey.

#### **Ricciardi:**

Dr. Francesco Ricciardi, suddenly cured of cancer in 1928, lived nearly four years.

#### **Antonelli:**

Playwright Luigi Antonelli had cancer of the face, neck, and jaw. The doctors told him that he would die within three months. He confessed to Padre Pio. Back home he refused surgery, felt "miraculously cured", and worked intensely on several literary projects until his death, three years later.

#### **Scatigna:**

Giuseppe Scatigna of Palermo was being treated at Casa Sollievo in 1968, just before the death of Padre Pio. He had malignant melanoma with widespread metastases. The cancer was so advanced that he was told that he was unlikely to live for more than 48 hours. The wife got from the friars a linen clot that had been used by Padre Pio. The two of them prayed that he might have five more years of life so that he might help grow the adopted daughter. He felt immediately better. X rays revealed no trace of cancer. He went back to Sicily and was in good health for almost ten years. Before he died he said: "I wanted five years so that our daughter could grow up. Padre Pio obtained nine. So I am grateful." He died a happy death.

#### **Lynches:**

John and Elle Lynch lived in Canterbury, England. In 1981 they were expected to die in a matter of days. John had terminal congestive heart failure, and Ellen had advanced pancreatic cancer. Padre Pio appeared to John and both husband and wife recovered almost instantaneously. The doctors were amazed and begun to doubt their diagnoses, but they had documentation of the tests done for John, and the exploratory surgery for Ellen. For next two years they lived extremely well and

united to the Roman Catholic Church. Than the original diseases recurred, and they died grateful that they had been given time to sort out their lives.

### **Padre Pio helping the deceased souls:**

#### **Knowing about a Pope:**

Pope Pius XII died in Castelgandolfo on October 9, 1958. On that day Padre Pio told a friar: "Pius XII is in heaven. I saw him during Mass."

#### **And about another Pope:**

When Pope Pius X died, Padre Pio said: "I believe that this holy soul has no need of our prayers, but let's pray for his eternal rest just the same, since our prayers will never go to waste."

#### **Having the exact knowledge of the state of a soul after death, including the duration of the pain:**

Nina Campanile's brother Pasqualino died in combat on September 26, 1916. Her mom sent Nina with her teacher Vittorina Ventrella to ask Padre Pio if Pasqualino was saved. " Yes he is saved, but he needs your prayers." She asked again on Christmas 1918. Padre Pio said: "He is up there!"

#### **Celebrating Mass upon request of a soul in Purgatory:**

Padre Pio was in a room at the convent. A man came: "I am Pietro Di Mauro. I died on September 18, 1908, in this room during a fire. The Lord let me come from Purgatory. If tomorrow you say the Mass for me, I will go to Paradise." Padre Pio reported: "I was agitated. I told the superior Father Paolino da Casacalenda what had happened and asked to celebrate the Mass for Pietro." Father Paolino gave the permission and later went to consult the registry at City Hall. In that date a fire had killed a man with that name.

#### **Saving soldiers dead on the battleground:**

One night in 1944 the friars heard loud voices coming from downstairs saying "Viva Padre Pio". The superior Padre Raffaele da S. Elia a Pianisi told the doorkeeper Fra Gerardo da Deliceto to let those people out and lock the door properly. Fra Gerardo went downstairs, didn't find anybody, and the door was double locked as it was supposed to. He went back to report. Padre Raffaele was puzzled and went straight to Padre Pio asking if he knew something. "Oh! Those were soldiers who had died on the battleground, and came to thank me for their salvation."

### Seeing souls from Purgatory:

In 1922 Bishop Alberto Costa asked Padre Pio if he had ever seen a soul in Purgatory. "I have seen so many of them that they don't scare me anymore."

### Thanks from the souls in Purgatory:

A friar testified: We were all in the dining room when Padre Pio got suddenly up and walked at steady pace to the door of the convent. He opened it and started having a conversation. The two friars that went with him didn't see anybody and started thinking that something might be wrong with Padre Pio. On the way back to the dining area Padre Pio explained. "Don't worry. I was talking to some souls on their way from Purgatory to Paradise. They came to thank me that I remembered them today in the Mass."

### The soul of Padre Vittore da Canosa:

Carmela Marocchino's brother Padre Vittore da Canosa died suddenly on January 29, 1958. Carmela asked Padre Pio why the sudden death. "Do you know what Jesus did of your brother? Jesus went into the garden, and there were many flowers, and one was more beautiful than the others. He leaned on the most beautiful and picked it." Is he saved?" Yes, but we need to pray." On July 29 she asked again if he was saved. "My daughter, we priests are more responsible in front of God. Let's continue praying." On December 29, 1958 she asked again where her brother was. "He is in Paradise."

### A friar in Purgatory:

Padre Francesco Napolitano reported that in 1945 Fra' Pietro, entering his cell at night, saw a young friar sitting on his desk, with the head down like he was meditating. He asked who he was, but he disappeared. Terrorized, he ran to Padre Pio. Padre Pio accompanied him back to his cell and said: "That young friar is a poor novice who is serving his Purgatory in this cell. But don't worry he will not bother you again, and you will never see him again."

### Knowing where a soul is:

Padre Giuseppe Antonio da San Marco in Lamis was ill in the Foggia convent. On December 30, 1936 Padre Pio was asked to pray for him because his health was deteriorating. That night somebody knocked at Padre Pio's door. Padre Giuseppe entered in the room. "How are you doing? They told me that you were gravely ill and now I see you here." "I'm well, Padre Giuseppe replied. All my suffering has ended, and I came to thank you for your prayers." Then he disappeared. Padre Pio told to the other friars what had happened. Nobody knew yet that Padre Giuseppe had died. Later they found out that he had died at the same time that he had visited Padre Pio.



### Out of the blue

In the summer of 1949 Padre Pio told a man out of the blue: "They are saved." The man was stunned. He later reported to Padre Dominic Meyer that for several years he had been concerned about some relatives who had been killed during a bomb raid during the war.

### Knowing how a soul does the Purgatory:

Padre Francesco Napolitano reported what he had heard from Orazio, Padre Pio's father. Orazio went to spend some few days with his son in 1926. He was assigned the cell #10. When he tried to enter the cell, two friars stood in front of the door, not letting him in. He explained who he was, to no avail. When he made a step to force himself in, they disappeared. He was terrorized, and went to Padre Pio. "Dad, don't get agitated, those are two poor friars in Purgatory. They have to serve their Purgatory in the spot where they disobeyed the rule of St. Francis."

### Deciding the length of stay of a soul in Purgatory:

Padre Anastasio di Roio testified about a fact that Padre Pio had told him: "One night I was alone in the choir and I saw a friar cleaning the altar late at night. I asked him to go to bed since it was so late. He said: "I'm a friar like you. I did here my novitiate and when assigned to take care of the Altar, and I passed many times in front of the Tabernacle without making the proper reverence. For this sin I am in Purgatory, and the Lord sent me to you. You decide how much longer I have to suffer in those flames." I told him: until the Mass in the morning. He said "Cruel" and disappeared. I still have a wound in my heart. I could have sent him immediately to Paradise; instead he had to stay one more night in the flames of Purgatory."

### Viva Padre Pio:

One night in 1944 the friars heard loud voices coming from downstairs saying "**Viva Padre Pio**". The superior Padre Raffaele da S. Elia a Pianisi told the doorkeeper Fra Gerardo da Deliceto to let those people out and lock the door properly. Fra Gerardo went downstairs, didn't find anybody, and the door was double locked as it was supposed to. He went back to report. Padre Raffaele was puzzled and went straight to Padre Pio asking if he knew something.

"Oh! Those were soldiers who had died on the battleground, and came to thank me for their salvation."

### The flames of Purgatory:

In 1945 Fra' Modestino asked Padre Pio a comparison between a fire on hearth and the flames of Purgatory. "They compare like fresh water and boiling water."

### The ancestor:

One day Padre told his doctor: "I'm praying for the good death of my great great grandfather". "But he died more than one hundred years ago!" replied the doctor.

Padre Pio: "Remember that for God there is no past and no future, and everything is present. So God made use at that time of the prayers I'm saying now."

#### **A friar going to Heaven:**

Padre Giuseppe Antonio da San Marco in Lamis was ill in the Foggia convent. On December 30, 1936 Padre Pio was asked to pray for him because his health was deteriorating. That night somebody knocked at Padre Pio's door. Padre Giuseppe entered in the room. Padre Pio told him: "How are you doing? They told me that you were gravely ill and now I see you here." "I'm well, Padre Giuseppe replied. All my suffering has ended, and I came to thank you for your prayers." Then he disappeared. Padre Pio told to the other friars what had happened. Nobody knew yet that Padre Giuseppe had died. Later they found out that he had died at the same time that he had visited Padre Pio

#### **Knowing what is happening somewhere else:**

Dec. 30, 1937 Padre Pio was praying in the choir with the other friars. Suddenly he said: "Let's pray for our Provincial Father Padre Bernardo Apicella who is in agony." Nobody knew that he was sick. The day after they were told that he had suddenly died.

#### **Seeing a Pope go to Heaven:**

Pope Pius XII died in Castelgandolfo on October 9, 1958. On that day Padre Pio told a friar: "Pius XII is in heaven. I saw him during Mass."

#### **Seeing a soul go to Heaven:**

Padre Pio to Cleonice Morcaldi, a month after the death of her mother: "This morning your mom flew to Paradise. I saw her during Mass."

#### **Devils in action:**

##### **Assault by the devils:**

Father Francesco was about to leave Padre Pio's cell. "Don't leave; otherwise the devils (cosacci) come." He left after a while but while few steps away he heard a terrible noise, and came back. Padre Pio had been assaulted.

### Letters manipulated by the devil:

Opening the letters from his spiritual director Padre Agostino at times they were all blank. He would put some holy water on them and the writing could be seen again.

Padre Pio: "Barbablu' made it invisible so that it couldn't be read."

August 9, 1912, in a letter to Padre Agostino: 'Barbablu' prevents me from writing to you. Every time I try, I get a terrible headache, and the arm is paralyzed and I can't hold the pen in my hand."

December 3, 1912, in a letter to Padre Agostino: "I received you letter on November 29. It only contained a blank page. It must have been the 'cosaccio'."

On the late evening of Sunday July 5, 1964 Padre Pio cried: "My brothers help me." When the friars came they found Padre Pio lying on the floor bleeding from the nose and the forehead, and with a number of wounds above his right eyebrow. He had been badly beaten by the devils.

Such incidents happened frequently in Padre Pio's life. Brother William, future Father Joseph Pius noted: "To encounter Padre Pio was likely reading medieval history."

### Humor from Padre Pio:

"Keep an attitude of holy joyousness that gives encouragement to others."

"When I am dead I will make an even bigger din than when I was alive."

About his painful sufferings: "Well, a fool was needed for this".

During a lightning a friar told Padre Pio: "Father let's move away from the transformer. Ten people were killed yesterday. "We ran no risk of this. There are only two of us."

"Father I haven't smelt you perfume for a long time" "You are here with me so you don't need to."

"What is like a sick person in between two doctors? A mouse between two cats!"

"Who enters first, the doctors or the lawyer? The butchers first and then the thieves."

The drunken: "Why Lord you have given a thousand feet to this little caterpillar, and I can't hold myself up on two."

"Three things are useless: washing a donkey's head, adding water to the ocean, and preaching to religious."

### The King:

Padre Pio used to say frequently this anecdote: The king was coming to inspect, and the recruit was prepared by the sergeant: The King will ask you 3 questions: how old are you? Answer 22.

How long have you been in the army? Answer 2. Whom you like most, your king or your country? Answer: both. The king came and asked the recruit: How many years have you been in the army? 22. How old are you? 2. The king got frustrated and said: Either of us is stupid. The recruits answer: "Both your majesty."

### Psychiatry:

A woman told Padre Pio her doctor had recommended shock treatment. "If you are not crazy already, you surely will be after shock treatments."

An Austrian psychiatrist came to the convent hoping to observe Padre Pio. The superior let him in the backyard during recreation time. He reported: "He certainly is not hysterical. Hysterical people have no sense of humor."

### The ox:

Carlo Campanini told his doctor in Florence: Tomorrow I'm going to see Padre Pio. The doctor replied: 'He is a hysterical who got the wound by thinking too much about Jesus on the Cross.'

When Campanini visited Padre Pio, he told him: "When you see your doctor, tell him to think intensely about being an ox. Let's see if he grows horns."

### Barbarossa:

Frederick Barbarossa (Holy roman Emperor of the 12<sup>th</sup> century) went to a monastery and said to the superior: "I will come back a year from now, and if you don't know the answer to three questions I will destroy your monastery. The first question was: "What is the distance between the earth and the moon?". The second "What is my worth as an emperor?" The third was: "What I am thinking now?" The superior was desperate, but the cook said to him: "Don't worry, I will answer those questions." The year passed, the cook put on the vestments of the superior, and Barbarossa came back. "Do you have the answers?" "Yes, sire."

"What is the distance?". The cook gave an enormous cipher. "How do you know?" "I measured it, and if you don't believe it, measure it yourself." "All right. What is my worth?" "Judas sold our lord Jesus for thirty pieces of silver. You must be worth a little less than him, let's say twenty eight." "All right. Now what am I thinking?" "You are thinking that you are speaking to the superior when you are speaking to the cook!"

## The path to be proclaimed Saint.

Five years must pass from the time of a candidate's death before a cause may begin. At the expiration of the five years a "nihil obstat" meaning "nothing stands in the way", from the Congregation for the Causes of Saints is needed to get the cause started.

The "nihil obstat" is requested by the bishop of the diocese in which the person died. During the five years information can be gathered about the deeds and the writings of the candidate, so that the bishop can send a documented request to obtain the "nihil obstat".

When the 'nihil obstat' is granted, the proceeding may begin. At this point the candidate can be called **Servant of God**.

The process has two phases, first in the Diocese and second in the Vatican. For the diocesan process the bishop appoints two committees: the Ecclesiastical Tribunal and the Historical Commission.

The bishop also will consult with the bishops of his region to solicit their opinions on the merit and timeliness of introducing the cause.

The Ecclesiastical tribunal of five members collects evidence from witnesses.

The witnesses are called before the tribunal to recount concrete facts on the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity, and the cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, temperance and fortitude.

The Historical Commission of five members examines the published and unpublished writing.

Any documents written by and about the candidate must be gathered and examined. Once the diocesan investigation is finished, the documentation is passed on to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

In the Vatican, the Congregation for the Causes of Saints reviews all the information submitted and refers the conclusions to their own Theological Committee and Medical Committee for their opinion.

The Theological Committee evaluates if the candidate practiced in "heroic" mode the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity, and the cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance.

The Medical Committee examines a healing happened after the death of the candidate, and attributed to his intercession, and evaluates if it is scientifically inexplicable.

The theologians also evaluate if the healing attributed to the intercession of the candidate is a miracle.

If everything is approved, the case is presented to the assembly of the Bishops and Cardinals members of the Congregation, for consideration and approval.

The case is then presented to the Pope. If the Pope approves, he emanates a decree that the candidate can be proclaimed **blessed**, and set the date for the Beatification.

For sainthood, a second miracle is needed, that happened after the Beatification. The same procedural investigation as in the first miracle is applied. Then the Blessed is proclaimed **Saint**.

## **The Path of Padre Pio to be proclaimed Saint.**

Padre Pio died September 23, 1968 in San Giovanni Rotondo, dioceses of Manfredonia.

On November 4, 1969, Padre Bernardino da Siena, General Postulator for the Capuchin order, petitioned Mons. Antonio Cunial bishop of Lucera and Apostolic Administrator of Manfredonia, to request the 'nihil obstat'.

On November 11, 1980, the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith granted a "nihil obstat cum mente".

On November 29, 1981 the Congregation for the Causes of Saints the "nihil obstat" for the proceedings to get started.

On March 20, 1983 the process was started in the church of St. Mary of Graces in San Giovanni Rotondo.

On January 21, 1990 the diocesan process was completed with a solemn ceremony in the church of St. Mary of Graces.

On February 12, 1990 the documentation was given by Mons. Valentino Vailati Archbishop of Manfredonia, to Mons. Antonio Casieri, chancellor of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

At this point the process moved to Rome.

On February 12, 1990 the process in Rome is initiated by Mons. Antonio Casieri, Chancellor of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

The opening was held in the hall St. Lorenzo da Brindisi at the General Curia of the Capuchin Order.

On December 7, 1990, the Cardinal Angelo Felici, Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints emits a decree "De Validitate".

The decree means that the congregation declares "valid" all the work that had been done in the Diocesan Process.

On June 13, 1997 the nine members of the Theological Committee of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints offer a unanimous decision of the "heroic virtues" of Padre Pio.

On December 18, 1997 the decree about the heroicity of virtues is solemnly read to John Paul II in the Consistory Hall of the Vatican. Padre Pio is proclaimed Venerable.

On January 1998 the Congregation for the Causes of Saints starts the evaluation "super miro" meaning of the "miracle" received by Consiglia De Martino.

On April 30, 1998 the Medical Committee of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints CCS, composed of five members, gives unanimous approval.

They state that "The healing of the traumatically ruptured thoracic duct of Consiglia De Martino on November 3, 1995 is scientifically inexplicable".

On June 22, 1998 the seven members of the Theological Committee of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints unanimously confirm the Consiglia De Martino case as a miracle .

On October 20, 1998 the assembly of Cardinals and Bishops members of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints approves the Consiglia De Martino case as a miracle.

On December 21, 1998 Pope John Paul II promulgates the Decree on the veracity of the De Martino miracle, and sets May 2, 1999 and the date for the Beatification of Padre Pio.

On May 2, 1999 Padre Pio is proclaimed **Blessed** by Pope John Paul II in St. Peter's Square.

On June 11, 2000 starts the Diocesan Process for the healing of Matteo Pio Colella. The process ends on October 17, 2001.

On November 22, 2001 The Medical committee of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints unanimously states that the healing of Matteo Pio Colella was quick, complete, and lasting, without consequences, and scientifically inexplicable."

On December 11, 2001 The Theological Committee of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints unanimously confirms the case of Matteo Pio Colella as a miracle.

On December 18, 2001 the assembly of Cardinals and Bishops members of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints approves the case of Matteo Pio Colella as a miracle .

On February 2002 Pope John Paul II promulgates the Decree on the veracity of the miracle of Matteo Pio Colella, and sets June 16. 2002 as the date for the Canonization of Padre Pio.

On June 16, 2002 Padre Pio is proclaimed **Saint** by Pope John Paul II in St. Peter's Square.

### **The miracle for the beatification of Padre Pio was received by Consiglia De Martino**

Consiglia (Lina) De Martino is the wife of Antonio Rinaldi.

On November 1, 1995 she did not feel good, like fainting, sweating and suffocating. Looking in the mirror she saw a lump under the left clavicle "in the form of a large grapefruit".

She asked her sister and brother in law to be taken to the Hospital.

She was examined by the Emergency Room physician, and a CT scan without contrast was immediately performed. It was about 1:00 PM.

*CT (computed tomography), also called CAT (computed axial tomography) scan, in Italy called TAC, generates digital three dimensional image of the inside of the body. The scan can be done with or without contrast, according to specific needs.*

Another CT scan, this time with contrast, was performed at 6:30 PM.

The thoracic duct in her neck had ruptured. A huge lump containing about half a gallon of lymphatic fluid had formed. This was confirmed by the two CT scans.

She was told it was 'necessary a difficult and complicated surgical intervention as soon as possible'.

The surgery was scheduled for November 3.

While going back to her room she smelled the intense perfume of Padre Pio.

On November 2 she experienced again "the typical and intense perfume of Padre PIO" and started feeling better.

On November 3, at a checkup before surgery the doctors were amazed that there was no more lump. The lymphatic fluid had all been absorbed.



The morning of November 4 at 7:30 AM she heard a voice: "Lina you are healed", and she smelled again the intense perfume of Padre Pio.

A chest X-ray was performed, and a total body CT scan was completed. Everything was normal.

She left the Hospital on November 6, without ever having surgery or medication.

### **The miracle for the canonization: Matteo Pio Colella.**

The miracle happened at the "Home for the Relief of Suffering" "Casa Sollievo della Sofferenza", the hospital created by Padre Pio, and located few steps from his tomb. Matteo is the son of Dr. Antonio Colella, Urologist at the "Home for the Relief of Suffering" Hospital, and of Maria Lucia Ippolito.

Matteo received the miracle when he was seven. He was born on December 4, 1992. On the morning of January 20, 2000, Matteo was seized with high fever, weakness, headache, vomiting, and mental disorientation.

At 10:00 the child was in school, and Lucia got a cell phone call from his teacher. She stated that Matteo was slumped on his desk and markedly shaking.

Lucia took the child home. The temperature was above 104 F. The father thought that he had the flu. By the evening purple spots were spreading all over his body.

Matteo was taken at once by his mom and dad to Casa Sollievo della Sofferenza.

On the stretcher in the emergency room he told his father out of nowhere: *"Daddy, when I grow up I want to get rich and give everything to the poor."*

Despite intensive treatment Matteo went in septic shock, with difficult breathing, and irregular pulse. He was placed on a respirator.

Matteo's heart stopped, and the attending physician had to revive the boy.

The attending told Matteo's parents that the intensive treatment was not having the desired effect, and the prognosis was that the comatose child "would die soon".

The mother went to pray on Padre Pio's tomb, and while praying the Rosary with the friars she reported that:

*"With my face on the cold granite I saw with closed eye a friar with a beard, who advanced resolutely to a bed and picked up with both hands the small rigid body of a child and put him on his feet."*

Three days later Lucia was "assailed by a very strong smell of flowers, a penetrating and most pleasant perfume."

Eight days after he fell ill Matteo surprised everybody by emerging from his coma. The mother questioned him if he remembered anything.

*"Yes, I saw myself while I was sleeping from a distance, on the bed. There was an old man with a white beard. He had a long brown habit."*

He gave me his right hand and said: *"Matteo, don't worry, you will get well quickly."*

The mother showed him a picture of Padre Pio, and the boy identified him as the old man he had seen.

A CAT scan done on January 27 did not show any kind of lesion to the brain of Matteo.

On February 6, 2000 Matteo Pio Colella left the Casa Sollievo della Sofferenza completely healed.



## Who is Padre Pio

Padre Pio is a masterpiece of God's love for us.

With Padre Pio the extraordinary was ordinary, the uncommon was common, the supernatural was natural, the unthinkable was routine, the unpredictable was norm. It cannot be imagined a more complete, lasting, unwavering selflessness in a human being.

From birth to death every day of his life was consumed by the love and imitation of God through Jesus, consumed by the love and help for the suffering humanity of his brothers and sisters on earth, consumed by the love and suffrage of the souls in Purgatory to shorten and mitigate their pain, consumed by the love and obedience at any price to the Roman Catholic Church.

God lavished on him his gifts with an abundance that has no equal.

And Padre Pio made good use of them, with healings, resurrections, levitations, prophecy, reading the hearts, speaking in tongues, reading unknown languages, spreading a scent of flowers, multiplying food in times of need, permanent visible presence of the Guardian Angel, frequent visitations with heavenly Beings, seeing the souls from Purgatory, knowing in details the status of the deceased, preventing bodily harm in bilocation, preventing car accidents in bilocation, preventing destruction of things in bilocation, healing in bilocation, assisting in bilocation dying people for a peaceful trespassing.

He did those things while ingesting minimal food, taking minimal sleep, having constant headaches, enduring a chronic bronchitis, going through bouts of extremely high fevers, profuse nightly sweating.

**Padre Pio's distinguishing characteristics were kindness, joy, serenity, humility, modesty, piety, attitude of forgiveness, perfect obedience to all ecclesiastical authorities,**

He relieved the Passion of Christ through thousands of Masses,  
By raising his right wounded hand He absolved millions of sins.  
He walked millions of painful steps on his wounded feet.

His fingers went through millions of rosaries. His lips uttered billions of "Ave Maria".

His body went through billions of seconds in pain for the wounds.  
Each and every one of His trillions of heartbeats was a grandiose symphony for the Glory of God.

Now He is in Heaven immersed in the joy of the beatific vision.  
In Paradise he continues to work for us, pray for us, intercede for us, distributing all kinds of graces for the asking.  
The only thing he doesn't do anymore is suffering.  
Thank you God for having given us Padre Pio.

## **Saint Francis of Assisi and Padre Pio side by side**

Padre Pio loved and admired St. Francis to the point that he decided to spend his life in the Franciscan Capuchin Order.

Padre Pio saw St. Francis frequently, while in ecstasy.

*St. Francis was born in Assisi on Sept. 26, 1181 to Pietro di Bernardone, a prominent businessman, and to Pica Bourlemont, originally from France.*

*He was baptized Giovanni in honor of St. John the Baptist, while the father was in France for business. When Pietro came back he decided to call him Francesco instead.*

Padre Pio was born in Pietrelcina on May 25, 1887, to Orazio Forgione and Maria Giuseppa De Nunzio. They farmed their own land. The day after birth Padre Pio was baptized Francesco.

*Francesco was self-thought, and by himself read a lot of books, learned several languages, and he liked enjoying the company of many friends.*

Padre Pio went to Mass and recited the rosary daily with his family since his early childhood.

He received informal schooling through private teachers, including elementary and junior high levels.

*In 1201, age 20 Francis was a soldier in a military expedition against Perugia, was taken prisoner at Collestrada, and spent a year in captivity.*

*In 1204 Francis left for Puglia to enlist in the army of Gualtiero di Brienne. But on his way, in Spoleto he had a celestial vision, and decided to return to Assisi.*

*In the fall of 1205 in the church of San Damiano the icon of Christ Crucified came alive and said to him three times: "Francis, Francis, go and repair My house which, as you can see, is falling into ruins."*

*In January 1206, age 25, his father was very indignant with him because of his religiosity. After a final interview at the presence of the bishop Guido II, Francis renounced his father and his patrimony, laying aside even the garment he had on, and started living as a beggar and preaching.*

Padre Pio spent the years to 23 preparing for priesthood in the Capuchin order.

He spent the 5 years after ordination as a recruit in the Italian army spending most of the time in Pietrelcina, where he prayed and meditated and receive the invisible stigmata..

*In 1209, age 28, Francis and his followers went to Rome and got approval from Pope Innocent III to found a new religious order.*

*He called the community 'lesser friars' (frati minori), and they lived in a deserted lazar house in Rivo Torto, near Assisi.*

*Two years later, on Palm Sunday, 28 March 1211 Francis received Clare at the Porziuncola and established the Order of Poor Dames, later called Poor Clares.*

When Padre Pio moved to the convent of San Giovanni Rotondo in 1918, age 31, he encouraged his spiritual children to join the third order of Saint Francis. He exchanged numerous letters of spiritual direction, promotes prayer groups, and started first the Saint Francis Hospital, and then the House for the Relief of Suffering.

*In 1217 the growing congregation of 5000 friars, followers of Francis was divided in provinces and groups were sent to France, Germany, Hungary, Spain and to the East. In 1219 Francis went to Egypt. Crossing the lines between the sultan and the Crusaders in Damietta, he was received by the sultan Melek-el-Kamel. He visited the holy places in Palestine in 1220.*

Padre Pio did not found a new order, and never went on a mission.

*La Verna, a gift to Francis from the count Orlando di Chiusi was his favorite spot for prayer and contemplation. While he was praying on 14 September 1224, the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, he received there the stigmata.*

*Brother Leo reported: "Suddenly he saw a vision of a seraph, a six-winged angel on a cross. This angel gave him the gift of the five wounds of Christ."*

*The wound stayed until his death 2 years later.*

Padre Pio got the invisible wound in 1910 at the age of 23 in Pietrelcina, and the visible wounds by the Crucifix in the choir of the church in 1918.

He suffered the pain of the stigmata until his death, 58 years later.

*Suffering from several ailments, Francis was brought to the Porziuncola where he spent the last days of his life.*

*He died at the age of 45 on the evening of 3 October 1226 singing Psalm 141.*

*He was buried at the Church of San Giorgio in Assisi.*

Padre Pio stayed in the same convent for 50 years. He died whispering "Gesù, Maria."

*Francis preached to the birds, talked to the wolf in Gubbio, created the nativity scene in Greccio.*

*He was a poet of the creation and called the things in the "Cantico delle creature": mister brother sun, brother wind, brother fire, sister moon, sister water, sister death, mother earth, madonna poverty.*

*His prodigies are reported in the "Fioretti" "The little flowers of St. Francis", and in the writings of Tommaso da Celano, one of the first disciples of St. Francis.*

Padre Pio confessed many hours a day, celebrated daily a majestic mystical Mass, recited innumerable rosaries, healed souls and bodies in person and bilocation, built a grandiose hospital for the suffering. He had special gifts that are unique in the catholic literature, for quantity and variety. He had permanent visible companionship of his Guardian Angel since his infancy. He had unparalleled detailed access to the world of afterlife, giving us spectacular glimpses of it.

*On 16 July 1228 less than two years after his death, Francis of Assisi was pronounced a saint by pope Gregory IX. His feast day is observed 4 October.*

On June 16, 2002, 33 years after his death, Padre Pio was proclaimed saint by Pope John Paul II. His feast day is observed 23 September.

*The day after canonization, on July 17, 1228 Pope Gregory IX laid the foundation stone for the church.*

*The Basilica of Saint Francis in Assisi, built on several levels, was consecrated by Pope Innocent IV in 1253, 25 years after construction was started.*

The church of Padre Pio was started in 1994, and inaugurated on July 1, 2004. On April 24, 2008, after 42 years in the crypt of the Sanctuary of Santa Maria delle Grazie, the body of Padre Pio was translated in the crypt of the new church dedicated to him.

In 1959 Padre Pio was show the newly built church of Santa Maria delle Grazie, just before the inauguration on July 1<sup>st</sup>. The church was several times larger than the original church, and to everybody's surprise Padre Pio was not impressed and called it "a mousetrap". He said "Ma che avete fatto. Nu mastrillo? Doveva essere piu' grande, molto piu' grande." "What did you make? A mousetrap? It should have been bigger, much bigger."

The wish of Padre Pio has been fulfilled after his death, with the San Pio church, that he certainly loves.

It is a spectacular new modern rendition of a grandiose "grazie" "thank you" to God from all the faithful for His generosity in giving us Padre Pio, the man that reached the fusion with Christ.

## Padre Pio and the apostle Paul

Padre Pio felt very close to the apostle Paul:

**"I'm giving you an example and model of the true Christian in my beloved Apostle St. Paul."**

**"I cannot read St. Paul's letters without experience a fragrance that reaches the very apex of my spirit."**

Quotes from Paul that apply to both him and Padre Pio:

Gal 2:19 **"I have been crucified with Christ"**

Gal. 2:20 **"I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me."**

Col.1,24 **"I rejoice in my suffering for your sake."**

Col.1,24 **"In my own body I am filling up what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ on behalf of the Church."**

Gal. 6:17 **"I bear the marks of Jesus on my body."**

Acts 14:11-12 **So extraordinary were the mighty deeds God accomplished at the hands of Paul that when face cloths or aprons that touched his skin were applied to the sick, their diseases left them and the evil spirits came out of them."**

*People unable to approach Padre Pio in person were often granted a cure by contact with some objects that had been touched by him.*

# St John of the Cross and Padre Pio

## **The path to the perfect union with God, through the dark night.**

St. John of the Cross (1542-1591) lived in Spain and died at the age of 49.

In 1568, at 26, he joined St. Teresa of Avila, in the foundation of the Discalced Carmelites.

St. John and St. Teresa are the most brilliant, articulate, energetic and successful figures that the Counter-Reformation has produced.

On December 3, 1577 he was imprisoned for more than nine months in the convent of Toledo in a narrow stifling six feet by ten feet dark and cold cell, in complete isolation. The severe regime included public lashing three times a week before the community of the monks. He escaped in a miraculous manner in August 1578. In prison he wrote some of his exquisite poetry.

He was austere to the extreme and also full of joy and kindness. He was declared saint in 1726, and Doctor of the Church in 1926.

St. John of the Cross explained in a poem "**The dark night of the soul**", the test of abandonment which God reserves for those who have followed him with sublime generosity, to reach the perfect union with the Creator.

In the mystical journey the union is reached in three stages.

1. The way of the beginner (Purgative way).

2. The way of proficient (Illuminative way): The dark night of the senses.

3. The way of the perfect (Unitive way): The dark night of the spirit.

*Padre Pio wrote in a letter to his spiritual director on 12-12-23: "In vain I turn to God. Everywhere there is silence, even in Heaven, which has become as bronze to me." "I live in a perpetual night."*

At the end only the veil of the flesh separates the soul from the Beatific Vision.

Padre Pio completed all the stages and reached the "**fusion**" with God, as He said: "**Like two candles that melt together and are no longer distinguishable.**"