Outstanding Dates in Padre Pio’s Life

- **Birth** May 25, 1887 in Pietrelcina (Benevento), Italy.
- **Baptism** May, 1887, Pietrelcina.
- **Confirmation** September 27, 1899
- **Investiture** January 22, 1903 – took name of Father Pio
- **Ordination** August 10, 1910 – in Benevento.
- **Temporary** September 7, 1910 – stigmata would appear and disappear alternate weeks until 1919 Stigmata
- **Transverberation** of heart causing visible wounds on side – August 5, 1918
- **Stigmata** September 20, 1918 – visible wounds appeared making him the first stigmatized priest in the history of the church. He spent his whole life praying and suffering for souls the world over until his holy death.
- **Death** September 23, 1968 at 2:30 A.M. Padre Pio departed this earth. He died in the humble serenity of his cell with the last words emerging from his lips: “Gesu e Maria” (Jesus and Mary).
- **November 29, 1982** Pope John Paul II approves the decree for the opening of the canonical informative Process on the life and virtues of the servant of God, Padre Pio of Pietrelcina.

Introduction

This little booklet was written in response to the thousands of requests from people all over the world. “How can we learn more about Padre Pio, his thoughts and his teachings?” In response, the Capuchin Friars of San Giovanni Rotondo have compiled these priceless gems of wisdom, gathered from Padre Pio’s letters.

Much of what you will read here has been said before, in similar words, by holy persons who have already earned the cherished path to Heaven years before our venerated Padre Pio departed this earth. However, if we agree that the one and only path to heavenly reward is but one, long, straight and narrow road then we have substantiated why our beloved Padre Pio of Pietrelcina spoke the same language of love, charity and obedience as the Saints in Heaven.

Born of humble parentage in the farming village of Pietrelcina (Benevento) on May 25, 1887, little Francis Forgione was destined to revive in the 20th century the Franciscan love of God and of fellow man.

Almighty God in his constant never ending desire to bring all souls to Himself employs every means necessary to obtain this end. The 20th century with its many advances in science and medicine also brought about an era when educated persons said, “We must see in order to believe”.

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*Book Cross Publishing*
Counsels and Exhortations By Saint Padre Pio

Already in Italy great numbers of people were arriving daily, knocking on the door of the isolated, little monastery, at the top of a stone filled hill, to beg help from the Capuchin monk whom gossip claimed “made miracles”. It wasn’t until the Second World War when the U.S. Armed Forces established an air base in Foggia 25 miles away from the Capuchin Friary in San Giovanni Rotondo, that Americans became much interested. As frequently as possible, U.S. servicemen would travel up to the monastery church to assist at Mass or merely to witness the beautiful movements of the pious monk whose body by now bore five distinct, bleeding wounds corresponding with those on the body of our crucified Saviour.

Commercial Jet travel in the mid-fifties made it possible for people of all walks of life to come to the tiny village atop the Gargano Mountain, which would eventually claim having been traversed by aristocrat and poor alike. Some came to scoff, some came to give support, some believed and many a non-believer and agnostic made a visit.

But, most important is what was their impression or their feelings after having been in the presence of Padre Pio. The countless thousands of spiritual children and devotees from every part of the globe come up with but consensus. “There lived among us, for over fifty years, a truly, obedient priest. One who gave all to Almighty God even his vital blood – in order to assist Him in the great task of saving souls from perdition.”

Many are premature in their appraisal of Padre Pio. They call him a saint. But, this decision must be made by an authority whose wisdom and prudence cannot be questioned or challenged. Although only fourteen months after Padre Pio’s holy death, the preliminary phase for the Cause to beatify him was opened by the Bishop of Manfredonia, in whose diocese San Giovanni Rotondo lies, time will pass too slowly for his enthusiastic supporters and collaborators. Huge volumes of testimonies attesting to the holiness and virtuous life of Padre Pio in addition to his own writings and diaries are now in the hands of the Postulator of the Cause. We pray that Holy Mother Church, ever careful and ever prudent will give consideration before too long.

The spiritual maxims in this little booklet, extracted from the writings of Padre Pio, can be read carefully, meditated on and applied to daily living. Undoubtedly they can do but one thing – purify one’s soul – in preparation for the heavenly reward.

In order to facilitate reading, we have attempted to put into categories these words of wisdom or spiritual guidance repeated by Padre Pio. However, many of the maxims or sayings are so full of richness and love of God that it is difficult to place them under a definite classification, such as Charity, Humility, etc. These are all printed together at the end of the listed categories.

Love of God

You must speak to Jesus also with the heart, besides with the lips; indeed, in certain cases you must speak to Him only with the heart.

My daughter, may Jesus be always the only center of our aspirations, sustain us with His grace, enlighten our mind and warm our hearts always with new love for Him. Behold, this is the synthesis of all my desire which I place assiduously before Jesus for
you and for me. May Jesus in his infinite goodness listen to them and grant them.

Do not worry over things that generate preoccupations, and anxiety. One thing only is necessary: to lift up your spirit and love God.

A pure soul is synonymous with a heart full of love of God.

The Heart of our Divine Master has no more amiable law than that of sweetness, humility, charity. Often place your confidence in Divine Providence and be assured that sooner heaven and earth shall pass away than that the Lord neglect to protect you.

Thank and sweetly kiss the hand of God that strikes you, because it is always the hand of a Father who strikes you because He loves you.

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

You must always have prudence and love, Prudence has the eyes. Love has the legs. Love which has the legs would like to run to God, but its impulse to rush towards Him is blind and at times might stumble, if it were not guided by prudence which has the eyes. When prudence sees that love could become unbridled, it loans its eyes to love. In this way, love restrains itself and, guided by prudence, acts as it should and not as it would like.

God loves man with an infinite love and when He punishes, He does so with reverence, almost fearing to hurt.

Always live under the eyes of the Good Shepherd and you will walk unharmed through evil pastures.

God can reject everything in a creature conceived in sin and which bears the indelible impression inherited from Adam. But he absolutely cannot reject the sincere desire to love Him.

Are sufficient of ourselves to form one holy desire without grace? Certainly not! Faith teaches us this. If in a soul there is nothing else but the longing to love its God, everything else is there already, because God is not present where there is no desire of His love. Say to God: Do you want greater love from me? I have no more. Give me more, therefore, and I will offer it to You. Don't doubt. God will accept this offer.

Have you not for sometime loved the Lord? Do you not love Him now? Do you not long to love Him Forever? Therefore: Do not fear! Even conceded that you had committed all the sins of this world, Jesus repeats to you: Many sins are forgiven you because you have loved much!

You are trying to find the highest good but, in all truth, it is within you and holds you stretched out on the naked cross, instilling strength to sustain the insupportable martyrdom, and also to love bitterly. Say to Our Sweetest Lord, and say it always: “I want to live by dying, because from death comes life which does not die and assists life to raise the dead”.

Let us follow the advice of David: “Raise your hands in the holy places during the night and bless the Lord”. Yes, children, let us
bless Him always and let us pray that He will always be our guide, ship, and our port.

If Jesus reveals Himself, thank Him; if He hides Himself thank Him also. All is a pleasantry of His love. May the merciful and compassionate Virgin continue to obtain for you from the ineffable goodness of the Lord the strength to endure to the end so many proofs of charity which He bestows on you. My wish for you is that you will come to expire on the Cross with Jesus and be able sweetly to exclaim to Him: “Consummatum est!”

Often kiss Jesus with affection and you will recompense Him for the sacrilegious kiss of the unfaithful Apostle, Judas.

Charity

The pivot of perfection is charity. He who lives in charity lives in God, because God is charity, as the Apostle says.

Charity which has not truth and justice for its foundation is faulty. He who offends against charity, offends the pupil of the eye of God.

To fall in charity is like wounding God in the pupil of his eye. What is more delicate than the pupil of the eye? To fail in charity is like failing against nature.

Try always to advance more in charity: enlarge your heart with confidence for the divine gifts which the Holy Spirit is anxious to poor into it.

Always do a little work. The wise man praises the valiant woman. Her fingers, he says, worked the spindle. Your distaff is the sum of your desires. Spin a little therefore every day; make your design thread by thread till they are all used up and you shall infallibly see their completion. But see that you do not hurry, because you might twist the thread with knots and you would entangle your spindle. Work, therefore, and though you keep on advancing slowly, you will nevertheless go a long way.

Charity is the queen of virtues. As the pearls are held together by the thread, thus the virtues by charity; and as the pearls fall when the thread breaks, thus the virtues are lost if charity diminishes.

Humility and charity are the master chords, all others depend on them. The one is the lowest, the other the highest. The preservation of the entire edifice depends on the foundation and the roof. If the heart keeps itself directed in the exercise of these, no difficulty will be encountered in the others. These are the mothers of virtue, the others follow them as the chicks do their mother.

Resignation to God’s Will

Walk in the way of the Lord with simplicity and do not torment your spirit. You must hate your defects, but with a quiet hate, not troublesome and restless.

Lean on the Cross of Jesus as the Virgin did and you will not be deprived of comfort. Mary was as if paralyzed before her crucified Son, but one cannot say that she was abandoned by Him. Rather,
how much more did she love Him when she suffered and could not even weep?

Be comforted with this divine thought that your spiritual and physical pains are the test of the Divine Will. All lovers of Jesus must conform themselves always more to this divine and eternal model. Jesus went to the limits of abandonment of the spirit. Jesus wanted to experience in this humanity this incomprehensible pain of seeing Himself abandoned by His heavenly Father.

You should rather humble yourself before God than be distressed if He reserves for you the sufferings of His Son, and makes you experience your weakness. You should offer up to Him the prayer of resignation and hope, even when you fail through frailty, and thank Him for all the benefits with which He continually enriches you.

You are suffering, it is true, but with resignation. Fear not, because God is with you. You do not offend Him but love Him. You suffer, but believe also that Jesus Himself suffers in you and for you.

Crosses are the necklaces of the Spouse and I am jealous of them. My sufferings are pleasant. I only suffer when I don’t suffer.

The ardent desire to be in eternal peace is good and holy. But it is necessary to moderate it by a complete resignation to the Divine Will. It is better to do the Divine Will on earth than to enjoy heaven. To suffer and not to die was the motto of St. Therese. Purgatory is sweet when one suffers for the love of God.

Why should you worry whether god wants you to reach the heavenly home by way of the desert or by the fields, when by the one as well as by the other one arrives all the same at a Blessed Eternity? Keep far from you all excessive preoccupation which arises from the trials which the good God wishes to visit upon you. And if this is not possible put away the thoughts, and in all live resigned to the Divine Will.

You should fell at home with sufferings which it pleases Jesus to send you, since you always have to live with them. Acting thus you think less of being freed from them. Jesus who cannot suffer long to keep you in affliction will come to relieve and comfort you by infusing fresh courage into your soul.

Strong and generous hearts are not grieved except for serious reasons; and then do not allow such motives to penetrate into their inmost heart. Let us ascend Calvary, burdened with the Cross but without tiring. And let us be convinced that our ascent will lead us to the heavenly vision of our sweetest Savior.

The longer the trial to which God subjects you, the greater the goodness in comforting you during the time of trial and the exaltation after the combat.

When you are exposed to any trial, be it physical or moral, bodily or spiritual, the best remedy is to think of Jesus who is our life and not to think of the trial without joining it to the thought of Jesus.

Don’t draw back, and worse still, don’t stop going up the Calvary of life. Jesus will extend His hand to steady you. The thought of the sustaining grace of God and the prize that Jesus has reserved for you will be a sweet comfort.
Prayer and Meditation

Why do you distress yourself because you cannot meditate, as you suppose? Meditation is a means to rise to God, but not an end. The purpose of meditation is the love of God and one’s neighbor. Love the first with all your soul and without reservation. Love the second as another self, and you will have arrived at the final purpose of meditation. I beg of you therefore, not to spoil the work of God in yourself when the soul feels itself called to contemplate God. Be it in Himself or in His attributes, let yourself be conquered and don’t desire to have the presumption to rise up to Him by the discursive way, which would be the first part of meditation. Apply yourself to move towards God, which would be the second part of meditation and, I would almost say, the all. Use the first part of the meditation when you must come to the second part. But when the good God already places you in the second part, don’t wish to turn back, which would be the same as spoiling everything.

One thing is necessary: to be near Jesus. You know well that at the birth of our Lord the shepherds heard the angelic and divine chants of the heavenly spirits. The Scriptures say so. But they do not say that his Virgin Mother and St. Joseph, who were nearer to the Child, heard the voices of the angels or saw those miracles of splendor. On the contrary, they heard the Child weeping and saw by the light of a poor lantern the eyes of the Divine Child all bathed in tears, in sighs and shivering with cold. Now I ask you: Would you not have preferred to have been in the dark stable, filled with the cries of the little Child, rather than to have been with the shepherds, beside yourself with joy over those sweet melodies from heaven and the beauties of this wonderful splendor?

Ahead! Courage! In the spiritual life, he who does not advance goes backward. It happens as with a boat which always must go ahead. If it stands still the wind will blow it back.

When you do not succeed in meditating well, do not for this reason cease to do your duty. If there are many distractions do not lose heart. Make a meditation of patience; you will profit all the same.

Fix the time, the length of your meditation, and do not rise from your place until you have finished it even at the cost of being crucified.

While assisting at holy Mass renew your faith. Have your mind elevated to the mystery that is happening before your eyes.

Go with your mind to Calvary and think and meditate on the victim who offers Himself to divine justice, absorbing the price of your redemptions.

If you want to assist at Mass with devotion and with fruit, think of the sorrowful Mother at the feet of Calvary.

Prayer is the best weapon we possess, the key that opens the heart of God.

He who does not meditate acts as one who never looks into a mirror and so does not bother to put himself in order, since he can be dirty without knowing it. The person who meditates and turns this thoughts to God who is the mirror of his soul, seeks to know his defects and tries to correct them, moderates himself in his impulses and puts his conscience in order.
The holy gift of prayer is placed in the right hand of the Saviour. And in the measure in which you will be empty of yourself – that is the love of the body and your self-will and will keep on rooting yourself in holy humility, the Lord will keep on communicating himself to your heart.

Have patience in persevering in the holy exercise of meditation and be contented to begin with small steps till you have legs to run, and better, wings to fly. Be contented to be obedient, which is never a small thing for a soul which has chosen God for its portion, and be resigned to be, for the present, a little bee in the nest which will soon become a large bee capable of making honey.

When you have distractions, don’t distract yourself still more by stopping to consider the why and the wherefore. Just as a traveler who misses his way, returns to the right road as soon as he is aware of it, you should continue to meditate without stopping in the distractions which you had.

The most beautiful credo is that which comes from your lips in darkness, in sacrifice, in pain, in the supreme effort of an unbending will for good. It is this which, like a stroke of lightning, penetrates the darkness of the soul. It is this which in the flash of the tempest lifts you and leads you to God.

The prayers of the Saints in Heaven and of the just on earth are a perfume which never will be lost.

Pray, hope and don’t worry. Anxiety doesn’t help at all. Our Merciful Lord will listen to your prayer.

I always pray for the sick. The best consolation comes from prayer. Every day I say a holy Rosary for them.

Let us bind ourselves tightly to the Sorrowful Heart of our heavenly Mother and reflect on its boundless grief and how precious is our soul.

When there is no time for both, meditation is to be preferred to vocal prayer, because it is more fruitful.

In the spiritual way the more one runs the less one feel fatigue; rather peace, prelude of eternal joy will take possession of us. We will be happy and strong in the measure in which, living in this endeavor, we will make Jesus live in us, mortifying ourselves.

Let others follow the way traced out for them by Divine Providence. You look to yourself and follow me (Padre Pio) by the more beautiful way.

**Temptation**

Do not fear, Jesus is more powerful than all Hell. At the invocation of His Name every knee in Heaven, on earth and in hell must bend before Jesus. This is the consolation of the good and terror of the evil ones.

Stop entertaining those vain fears. Remember it is not feeling which constitutes guilt but the consent to such feelings. Only the free will is capable of good or evil. But when the will sighs under the trial of the tempter and does not will what is presented to it, there is not only no fault but there is virtue.
Despise your temptations and do not dwell on them. Imagine you have Jesus Christ crucified in your arms and on your breast and, kissing his side, say: “Behold my hope, behold the living source of my happiness. I will hold You close, o my Jesus, and I will not leave You until You have put me in a place of safety”.

Walk amid wind and waves, but with Jesus. If fear strongly grips you, exclaim with St. Peter: “O Lord, save me!” He will extend his hand to you. Seize it firmly and walk cheerfully. Let the world turn topsy turvy, everything be in darkness and Mount Sinai all aflame, covered with lightning, thunder: God is with you. But if God lives in the darkness and Mount Sinai all aflame, covered with lightning, thunder, and noise, will we not be safe near Him?

The best means of guarding yourself against temptation are the following: watch your senses to save them from dangerous temptation, avoid vanity, do not let your heart become exalted, convince yourself of the evil of complacency, flee away from hate, pray whenever possible.

At a certain stage or whenever reflection takes precedence over imagination, it is better to reject the persuasion of your foolishness and baseness.

There can be no guilt except in that which the soul wills, or, not having willed it, approves it and does not make an effort to remove it.

If the soul would know the merit which one acquires in temptations suffered in patience and conquered, it would be tempted to say: “Lord, send me temptations”.

It is not a sin merely to have impure thoughts. Dispelling them is an exercise of virtue.

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. Remember that the devil has only one door by which to enter the soul: the will. There are no secret or hidden doors.

Temptations, discouragement and unrest are the wares offered by the enemy. Remember this: if the devil makes noise it is a sign that he is still outside and not yet within. That which must terrify us is his peace and concord with the human soul.

Your temptations are from the devil and from Hell; but your sufferings and afflictions are from God and Heaven. The mothers are from Babylon but the daughters are from Jerusalem. Despise temptations and embrace tribulations. No, my child, let the wind blow and do not think that the noise of the leaves is the clash of arms.

The field of battle between God and Satan is the human soul. It is in the soul and the battle rages every moment of life. The soul must give free access to the Lord so that it be fortified by Him in every respect and with all kinds of weapons; that His light may enlighten it to combat the darkness or error; that it be clothed with Jesus Christ, with His justice, truth, the shield of faith, the word of God, in order to conquer such powerful enemies. To be clothed with Jesus Christ it is necessary to die to oneself.
Blasphemy calls down malediction on your home: and, as the proverb says, it destroys even the ashes in the fireplace.

It is necessary to be strong, in order to become great: that is our duty. Life is a struggle, which we cannot avoid. We must triumph!

That which comes from Satan begins with calmness and ends in storm, indifference and apathy.

**Various Thoughts**

Always be faithful to God in keeping the promises made to Him and do not brother about the ridicule of the foolish. Know that the saints were always sneered at by the world and worldlings; and they have trampled them under foot and triumphed over the world and its maxims.

Continue to pray that God may console you when you feel that the weight of the Cross is becoming too burdensome. Acting thus you are not doing anything against the will of God, but are with the Son of God who, in the garden, asked His Father for some relief.

But, if it does not please Him to do this, be ready to say with Jesus, “Fiat!”.

Be firm in your resolutions; stay in the ship in which I placed you and let the storm come. Long live Jesus! You will not perish.

He who attaches himself to the earth remains attached to it. It is by violence that we must leave it. It is better to detach oneself a little at a time, rather than all at once. Let us always think of Heaven.

Walk the way of the Lord in simplicity. Do no torment your spirit. Say the truth, always the truth.

Do not be so given to the activity of Martha as to forget the silence of Mary. May the Virgin who so well reconciled the one with the other be your sweet model and inspiration.

That which proceeds from God begins with a salutary fear and finishes with peace of mind.

Jesus and your soul must cultivate the vineyard together. It is for you to pick up and carry away the stones, to pull out the thorn bushes. It is the task of Jesus to sow, plant, cultivate, to water.

The Lord, in his loving kindness, adds to trials a trembling of the spirit and fear, with some taste of desolation and spiritual darkness. But the darkness which surrounds the soul is light. You say well that you see nothing and find yourself in a burning thorn bush.

The thorn bush burns, the entire air is filled with smoke and the spirit sees nothing. But God nevertheless speaks and is present to the soul that listens, understand, loves, and trembles.

Do not cease in seeking the truth or in acquiring the greatest good. Be docile to the impulse of grace, following its inspirations. Do not be ashamed of Christ or his doctrine.

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

On this earth everyone has his cross. But we must act in such a way that we be not the bad, but the good thief.
Counsels and Exhortations By Saint Padre Pio

Some persons when they are with the good are good. When they are with the bad they follow evil. This is to have half a conscience; it is to act like children who, in the presence of strangers, abuse the occasion to eat things that please their taste, certain that the parents will not reprove them.

The time best spent is that which is spent for the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

Have courage! Do not wait for Tabor to see the Lord. You see Him already on Sinai.

If we wish to reap it is necessary not so much to sow abundantly as to spread the seed in fertile soil, and when this seed becomes a plant, our chief anxiety should be to watch that the weeds do not suffocate the tender plants.

At times the Lord makes you feel the burden of the Cross. This burden seems intolerable to you. But as for you, carry it because the Lord extends his hand and gives you strength.

Aridity is the fruit of our defects.

Do not let your heart become troubled by the sad spectacle of human injustice. Even this has its value in the face of all else. And it is from this that one day you will see the justice of God rising with unfailing triumph.

It is necessary to guard all your senses, particularly your eyes. They are the means by which all the fascination and charm of beauty and voluptuousness enter the heart. When fashion, as in our time, is towards provocation and exposes what formerly was even wrong to think about, caution and self restraint must be exercised. Whenever necessary, you must look without seeing and see without thinking about it.

Vanity makes the heart lighter and thus more easily led into temptation.

Glorification of the heart is in contact with that of the senses and one regulates the other.

In reading the present booklet, have your mind’s eye on He who immolates Himself and gives His life for the Redemption of humanity.

Divine goodness not only does not reject the repentant soul, but always seeks to find even the obstinate.

Endeavor to unite to the simplicity of children the prudence of adults.

But also in your work there is the operation of Jesus. Without Him you can do nothing.

A lie is a sin. But everything that corresponds to the truth is not sin.

Let us keep well engraved in our mind what the Divine Master tells us: “In our patience we shall possess our souls”.

The Cross is the standard of the elect. Let us always keep close to it and we will succeed in conquering in everything and over everyone.
Counsels and Exhortations By Saint Padre Pio

Never let our Seraphic Father St. Francis depart from your mind, who so beautifully knew how to reproduce in himself the God-man.

To doubt is the greatest insult to the Divinity.

We must know how to confide. There is the fear of God and the fear of a Judas. Too much fear makes one labor without love, and too much confidence prevents from considering the danger which we must overcome. The one must go hand in hand with the other and proceed as sisters.

In order to console a soul in its sufferings, point out to it all the good it can still do.

The gates of heaven are open for all creatures. Remember Mary Magdalene.

An unclean soul is synonymous with a heart full of frivolity.

Humility and purity of conduct are the wings which raise us up to God and in a manner deify us. Remember this: the sinner who is ashamed to do evil is closer to God than the upright man who is ashamed to do good.

Humility and charity go hand in hand. The one glorifies, the other sanctifies.

The sublime degree of humility is not only to recognize one’s own abjection but to love it. “I have chosen” says the prophet “to be abject in the house of God rather than to dwell in the houses of sinners”.

Obedience is mission: “I have come into this world to do the will of my Father, who has sent me”.

Obey promptly! Do not consider the age or merit of the person. And in order to succeed, imagine you are obeying the Lord.

Duty before everything else, even something holy.

Where there is no obedience, there is no virtue; where there is no virtue there is no good; where good is wanting, there is no love; where there is no love, there is no God; where God is not, there is no Heaven.

A Letter

My Dearest Daughter,

Jesus reigns in your heart to overwhelm it with His holy love! I am sorry I do not have adequate answers to all of the questions you asked in your last letter. Please forgive me for being brief in answering you; I am in bed sick for three days. But generally I assure you to be calm in regard to condition of your spirit, it is pleasing to God. I cannot really believe and absolve you from meditating solely because it does not seem to you that you are reaping any benefits. The holy gift of prayer, my good daughter, is in the right hand of the Savior; and in such measure that you will be empty of your own corporal love and will, and be instead rooted in holy humility. The Savior will thus communicate it to your heart.

Have patience in persevering in the holy exercise of meditation, and be content to progress in slow steps until you have legs to run and wings with which to fly. Be content to obey; which is never a
small thing for the soul who has chosen God as his portion, and resign yourself to be for now a small hive bee able to make honey. Be always humble and loving in front of God and men, because God talks to those whose heart is humble in front of Him, and enriches them with His gifts.

But the real reason that you do not meditate well is, I think that you approach meditation in an altered state, coupled with a great anxiety to find something with which to console your spirit – and that is sufficient not to allow you to find what you are looking for and to be unable to bring your mind into the meditation of truth and your heart empty of affections. Daughter of mine, be aware that when one seeks with great hurry and avidity something lost, one will touch it, one will see it a hundred times and yet will never notice it. From this vain and useless anxiety you can derive nothing but a great tiredness of spirit and a blurred mind. I only know of the following remedy: come out of this anxiety, because it is the worst traitor that real virtue and devotion could ever have; it feigns to work well, but it does not – it only slows us and does not let us run in order for us to fall down. This is why I must repeat what I told you loudly before, that one needs to look well at all times, especially during prayers. In order to pray well it is good to remember that the styles and graces are not waters of this earth but of the heavens, so that all of your efforts are not sufficient to make it fall. It is necessary that our disposition be put forth with great diligence, and always with humility and tranquility. We need to keep the heart open to heavens, and wait for the heavenly dew.

Do not forget, my daughter, to have with you these considerations when you go to pray, because this way you will come near to God, and you will put yourself in His presence for two principal reasons: The first to render God the honor and respect we owe Him, because this obligation is performed recognition that He is our God, and us His unworthy children who are prostrated with our spirit in front of Him waiting for His commands.

How many courtesans are there who come and go a hundred times in the presence of kings, none to talk or speak to him but simply to be seen by him, and doing so assiduously they let themselves be known as his real servants. This manner of staying in front of God to attest to our willingness to be known as His servants is very holy, very excellent, and of the purest and greatest perfection. Go ahead and laugh, but I am serious about what I have said.

Now my good daughter, one of these two riches is always you in prayer. If you can talk to God laud him, listen to Him. If you cannot talk to Him because you were crude do not feel bad in the ways of the spirit – stop in your room, disguise yourself as the courtesan and curtsy and revere Him. He will see and appreciate your patience, He will honor your silence, and next time you will be consoled – he will take you by the hand, talk to you, take a hundred strolls with you in the paths of the garden of prayers, and if this will not take place (although they say that is impossible because such a tender father’s heart could not stand to see His child in perpetual agony) be content just the same because we are obliged to follow Him, taking into consideration what a great miracle it is and what honor it is for Him to tolerate our presence. In this way you will not be despised when you talk to Him. In prayer, then, when you find yourself following God, talk to Him if you can – if you cannot stop, consider your truths,
let Him see your soul and do not trouble yourself further. You are always in my prayers which you speak of because I cannot forget you, who cost me many sacrifices and whose birth I have offered to God with a heart overwhelmed with grief. I confide in charity, that in your prayers, you do not forget who carries the cross for all.

I bless you with all my heart and please take care.

Saint Padre Pio

Padre Pio was born of simple, hard working farming people on May 25, 1887 in Pietrelcina, Southern Italy. He was tutored privately until his entry to the novitiate of the Capuchin Friars at the age of 15. Of feeble health but strong will, with the help of grace he completed the required studies and was ordained a priest in 1910.

On September 20, 1918 the five wounds of Our Lord’s Passion appeared on his body, making him the first stigmatized priest in the history of the Church. Countless numbers were attracted to his confessional and many more received his saintly counsel and spiritual guidance through correspondence. His whole life was marked by long hours of prayer and continual austerity. His letters to his spiritual directors reveal the ineffable sufferings, physical and spiritual, which accompanied him all through life. They also reveal his very deep union with God, his burning love for the Blessed Eucharist and Our Blessed Lady. Worn out by over half a century of intense suffering and constant apostolic activity in San Giovanni Rotondo, he was called to his heavenly reward on September 23, 1968. After a public funeral which attracted almost 100,000, his body was entombed in the crypt of Our Lady of Grace Church.

Increasing numbers flock to his tomb from all parts of the world and many testify to spiritual and temporal graces received. On February 16, 1973, the Archbishop of Manfredonia, Mgr. Valentino Vailati, consigned the documentation to the Sacred Congregation for the Causes of saints so as to obtain the “nihilo stat” for the beginning of the process of his Beatification.

Life With Jesus

As you well know, dear daughters, when Our Lord was born, according to the Scriptures, the shepherds heard, coming from the celestial spirits, and divine songs from the angels. The Virgin and Saint Joseph, who were closer to the Child, didn’t hear angel’s voices or see miraculous lights; at least the Scriptures don’t mention this. On the contrary, instead of angel’s songs, they heard the Child Jesus crying and saw, by the feeble light of a lamp, His eyes full of tears, weeping and crying with cold. I ask you: would you have chosen to be in the dark stable, full of the Newly-born cries, instead of being among the joyful shepherds, enjoying the melodies and the beauty of the delightful lights? Yes, certainly. You would also have exclaimed with Saint Peter: It’s wonderful to be here. Actually, you would find yourselves accompanying Jesus, who shivers with cold in
Counsels and Exhortations By Saint Padre Pio

Bethlehem, I tell you also, you are not in Tabor with Saint Peter, but in Calvary with the three Marys, where all you can see is the dead, nails, thorns, suffering, darkness, terrible desertions. Yes, you should love the Baby’s cradle, but also love the Lord’s suffering on Calvary, being crucified in darkness. Huddle close to Him, be sure that Jesus is in your hearts, more than you can think or imagine.

I tell you also, to love your poverty, by being meek, good natured, staying calm, remaining confident in your humble smallness. If in spite of all you don’t rebel, nor become anguished, but accept to carry, not gladly perhaps, but willingly, your crosses and remain immersed in your meekness, behaving in this way, you should love your poverty, because, what’s being a wretch but to be poor and neglected? Love each other for the love of He who loves you so much. That way you will love your poverty. My daughters, poverty means meekness, and meekness means poverty. When the Holy Virgin says in The Magnificat: Because He has seen the meekness of His Slave, she means: because He has seen my poverty and worthlessness. Besides, there is some difference between meekness and poverty, for meekness is the acknowledgement of our own poverty.

Now, the highest degree of meekness consists of not only in acknowledging our own poverty, but in our loving it. To this I exhort you. So that, the point I want to make with respect to this extremely important matter, is very clear, I will explain myself by using various examples. Among the ills we are victims of, many are repulsive, others are honorable; many get used to the first, few to the last. For example, everyone would be touched at the sight of a Capuchin, poorly dressed and shivering with cold, would be touched and fell admiration and reverence towards him and his clothes. While for example, upon seeing a worker, a poor student, a widow, also poorly dressed and in dire need, everyone would make fun of them, and look down on their poverty. A religious person endures patiently his/her superior who chastises him. Everyone would say he is contrite and obedient. A lay man would endure the admonitions coming from his superior, with great composure, while this behavior would seem like cowardice to others. Here we have rejection for the truth, long suffering being scorned.

There are two persons who suffer from cancer, the first one has it in this arm, the second in his face. The one who is hiding it does not suffer more than his illness; the one who cannot hide it, suffers the pain of his illness as well as other’s scorn. But still, there are virtues that can be rejected, as well as honorable virtues. Commonly, patience, gentleness, endurance, and plainness are considered by the lay person as virtues that can be rejected. To give alms and feel forgiveness when being offended are born out of chastity; the first is honorable, the last is seen by the world as despicable. I live in a community and am sick. Undoubtedly, I bother some people. Here then, you have something despicable combined with the sickness.

I believe that I have made myself clear. Please pay attention to what I am going to tell you. Although we love the scorn coming from evil, we should not forget to correct it. I will explain myself this way: I will try, as much as I possibly can, not to have cancer, but if I have it, I will love the contempt it may bring me. This norm is valid especially as far as sin is concerned. I have been wrong about this and that. It annoys me, but nevertheless, I would gladly
embrace the scorn I get as a result of it; and if I could separate scorn from sin, I would choose the first and would get rid of the last.

We have to remain alert about these matters. Sometimes kindness may force us to hide the object of our scorn, as so not to cause uproar. I prefer, says the prophet King, to be wretched in God’s home, than to live in a sinner’s mansion. As I am telling you this, I am sure, you would like to know which are the best scorns. The ones that are not chosen are the most heinous ones. The ones that do not attract us at all. Speaking plainly, the ones coming from our vocation or profession. Dear daughter, who will grant me the favor of allowing me to love my own suffering? No one but He who loved His suffering so much that He died to preserve it. This should be adequate.

Dear daughters be resigned in the hands of The Lord and give Him your lives, begging of Him to use it according to His divine will. Do not distress yourselves in vain with promises of peacefulness, gentleness and merits. Bring yourselves before your Divine Husband, emptying yourselves of any other love, pleading with Him to fill you with His love. Your heart, in this manner, as mother-of-pearls, will not accept anything but heavenly dew, not the waters from this world. You will see how God helps you, as much in making decisions as in your deeds.

Walk always under The Good Shepherd’s sight, and you will avoid poisoned grazing lands.

My Jesus be always at the center of your endeavors, my daughters. May He offer us comfort in our moments of sadness. May He sustain us with His grace, enlighten our minds and inflame our hearts with divine love.

That is what I say in my daily prayer, for you and for me, to Jesus. May He in His infinite goodness, hear it and take care of it.

Jesus always lends comfort to those who place their trust and hopes in Him. Jesus and you, in mutual agreement, will attend to the vineyard.

You must remove and transport the stones, remove the thorns. Jesus will sow the field, do the planting, far the land, and irrigate it. Jesus is also with you while you work. You will not be able to accomplish anything without Him.
HE BORE THE STIGMATA

... the real and visible wounds of the crucifixion. He was reputed to be capable of bilocation: the ability to be in two places at one time. His charisms were numerous and sensational, and quickly made Padre Pio the subject of world-wide interest. Yet in spite of these spectacular abilities, the most remarkable of his miracles must have occurred in the confessional....

Hundreds of thousands of pilgrims awaited their turn at the confessional of Padre Pio. In many instances, it wasn't uncommon for these people to wait for as long as fifteen and twenty days to have their confessions heard. Was it because he had a special grace which enabled him to penetrate consciences and stimulate his penitents to rise up and live in God's grace and love? Whatever the reason, he took sinners to his bosom and showed God's love and tender compassion. His entire priestly life was dedicated to the task of winning souls for God.

Padre Pio, a personality richly endowed with the Holy Spirit's gifts, a giant of contemporary spirituality, the “apostle of the confessional”, has let an important message for the world today. His life and writings will reveal those necessary values to which all Christians must relate. By his blessed example and with encouragement and prayers, we might all learn to live deep spiritual lives of humble prayer and repentance.