



# *“Pray, Hope and Don’t Worry”*



Padre Pio Newsletter

Editors, Ron & Diane Allen

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*“For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face; now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.”*

*1 Corinthians 13:12*

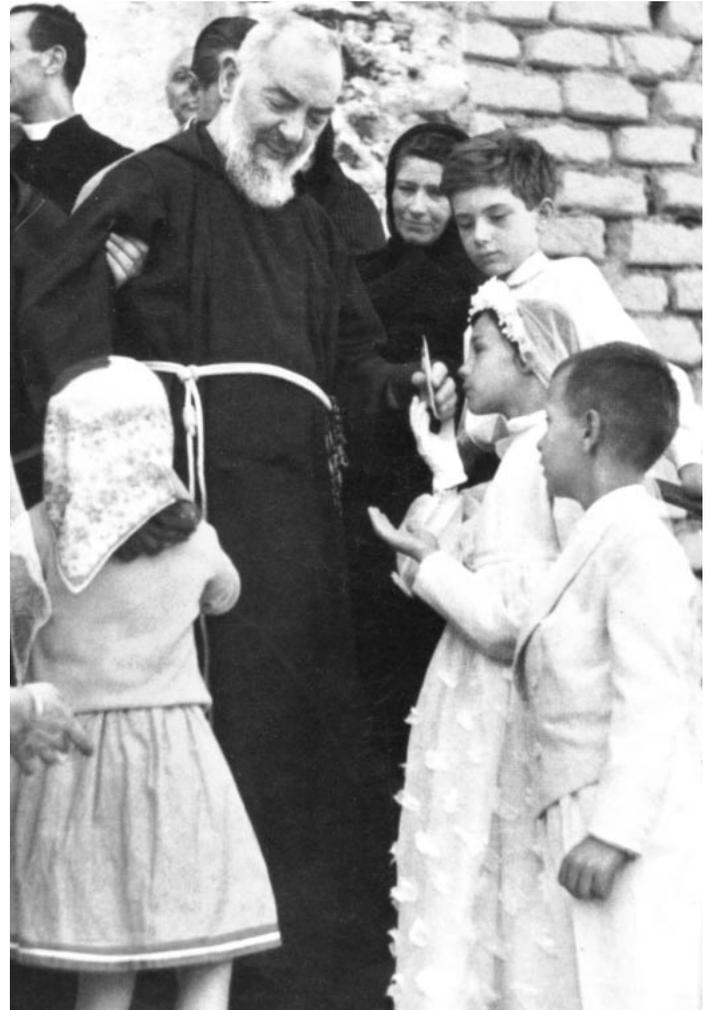
## **The Healing of Gemma di Giorgi**

Among the many miracles of healing attributed to Padre Pio, some are so unusual and unique that they have been the subject of much discussion and controversy in medical circles. In these particular cases, the person who has been healed lives a completely normal life afterward, even though they continue to have all the physical symptoms of their illness. From a scientific viewpoint, they are still sick. One such person is Gemma di Giorgi.

Gemma di Giorgi was born on Christmas day in 1939, in the Sicilian town of Ribera. Almost immediately, her mother realized that her eyes were different from other children’s eyes. The truth is, Gemma was blind. Her mother took her to a doctor who was unable to determine the gravity of her condition. She was referred to two specialists in Palermo. They determined that Gemma had no pupils in her eyes; that nothing could be done for her blindness; that her condition was inoperable. Gemma’s family was desperate, but there was nothing they could do. Her parents often took her to Mary’s altar in the church to pray because they felt it would take a miracle to heal her eyes.

A relative who was a nun, advised the family to seek out Padre Pio. Her advice gave the family a ray of hope. Gemma’s grandmother asked the nun to write a letter to Padre Pio on Gemma’s behalf.

When the nun returned to her convent, she wrote to Padre Pio asking him to pray for Gemma. One night the nun saw him in a dream. Padre Pio asked her, “Where is this Gemma for whom so many prayers are being offered that they are almost deafening?” In her dream she introduced Gemma to Padre Pio and he



**Padre Pio Greets Children on 1st Holy Communion Day**

made the sign of the cross on her eyes. The next day the nun received a letter from Padre Pio in which he wrote, “Dear daughter, rest assured that I will pray for Gemma. I send you my best wishes.”

The nun was struck by the coincidence of the dream and the letter that followed so she wrote to the family and encouraged them to take Gemma to see Padre Pio. And so it was, that in 1947, the grandmother took 7 year old Gemma to San Giovanni Rotondo to see Padre Pio, praying and hoping all the while for a miracle.

On the trip from Sicily to San Giovanni Rotondo, Gemma's eyesight began mysteriously functioning. About halfway to their destination, Gemma began to see the sea and a steamship and she told this to her grandmother. Her grandmother as well as other friends who were accompanying them, all marveled



**Gemma di Giorgi**

and began to pray. Still, the trip from Sicily to the monastery was very long and difficult. While Gemma's grandmother recognized the miracle that had taken place, she was still preoccupied by the idea of seeking Padre Pio's intercession in the matter. At San Giovanni Rotondo, Padre Pio called Gemma by name before the child was ever presented to him. He heard her confession, and even though she made no mention of her blindness, he touched her eyes with the wounded part of his hand, tracing the sign of the cross. At the end of the confession, as he blessed her, he said, "Sii buona e santa." (Be good and saintly)

The grandmother was upset that Gemma had forgotten to ask Padre Pio for the grace of a healing while she was in the confessional and so she began to cry. Gemma became upset also and began to cry. The grandmother went to confession to Padre Pio and in her own words, "I asked the grace for Gemma and I told Padre Pio that Gemma was weeping because, in her confession with him she had forgotten to ask this grace. I will never forget his soft and tender voice as he answered me with these words, "Do you have faith, my daughter? The child must not weep and neither must you for the child sees, and you know she sees." I understood then that Padre Pio was alluding to the sea and the ship Gemma had seen during the trip and

that God had used Padre Pio to break through the darkness that covered Gemma's eyes." The same day, Padre Pio gave Gemma her first Holy Communion and again made the sign of the cross over each of her eyes.

When Gemma returned to Sicily her eyes were again examined by a specialist. The doctor, to test Gemma, held up various objects in front of her and she was able to see each one of them. She was able to count the doctor's fingers at a distance of sixteen feet. Gemma, even though without pupils, had her eyesight—she could see. The doctor declared that Gemma's eyes were in no condition to see. There was no medical explanation for it.

Many doctors from all over Italy requested to examine Gemma's eyes. This extraordinary cure, and the prophecy preceding it, aroused enormous interest in the Italian press during the summer of 1947. Gemma's sight continued to improve and she was able to go to school and learn how to read and write. She was able to lead a perfectly normal life.

Clarice Bruno, author of the book, *Roads to Padre Pio* met Gemma in May of 1967. Clarice said that despite the fact that Gemma's eyesight was functioning, she still had those foggy, strange looking eyes that are a characteristic of the blind. Clarice told Gemma that she was writing a book about Padre Pio and wanted to include in it the story of Gemma's miracle. Gemma asked Padre Pio for permission to share her story and he gave his consent. Gemma, due to the sunny and very windy weather, was wearing sun glasses on the day she made the request of Padre Pio. He commented on this. "Why," he said as he passed his hand over her eyes, "are you wearing glasses? You see very well."

Father John Schug, author of *A Padre Pio Profile*, who met Gemma and interviewed her, also testified, "She looks like a blind person. Her eyes are sallow and lusterless, but there is no doubt that she can see. I saw her reach for a phone book, check a number, and dial the number without groping.

While the doctors could not all come to a consensus on the subject of Gemma di Giorgi's medical condition, the facts that can be definitely established are these: (1) Gemma di Giorgi was born with a severe congenital defect of the eyes; (2) before the prayers of

**PADRE PIO CANONIZATION SCHEDULED FOR JUNE 16, 2002 IN ROME**

Padre Pio were enlisted, her vision was either quite defective or altogether nonexistent; and (3) afterward, though the physical structure of the eye remained unchanged, Gemma was able to see normally—even though officially classified as legally blind.

So what must the conclusion be? Simply that while Gemma and her grandmother were traveling to San Giovanni Rotondo to ask for healing grace, the grace came to them through the intercession of Padre Pio's prayers before they had even arrived at their destination. God, for His own mysterious reasons, had wanted it to happen this way. Gemma has since traveled the world telling her story.

**(Padre Pio: A Great Man of Our Century is a moving video on the life of Padre Pio. It includes an interview with Gemma and her grandmother as well as testimonies by Padre Eusebio and Padre Pellegrino, both of whom assisted Padre Pio during his life. There is also footage of Padre Pio's last Holy Mass. This video can be ordered from any Catholic bookstore or by calling Ignatius Press 1-800-651-1531.)**



**Gemma on her first Communion Day**

*As we look forward to Padre Pio's canonization on June 16, 2002, it is appropriate to remember the beautiful words of the Pope at his Beatification May 2, 1999.*

## **Beatification Homily for Padre Pio by Pope John Paul II**

"...The people who went to San Giovanni Rotondo to attend Padre Pio's Mass, to seek his counsel or to confess to him, saw in him a living image of Christ suffering and risen. The face of Padre Pio reflected the light of the resurrection. His body, marked by the stigmata, showed forth the intimate bond between death and resurrection which characterizes the Paschal Mystery. Blessed Pio of Pietrelcina shared in the Passion with a special intensity: the unique gifts which were given to him, and the interior and mystical sufferings which accompanied them, allowed him constantly to participate in the Lord's agonies.

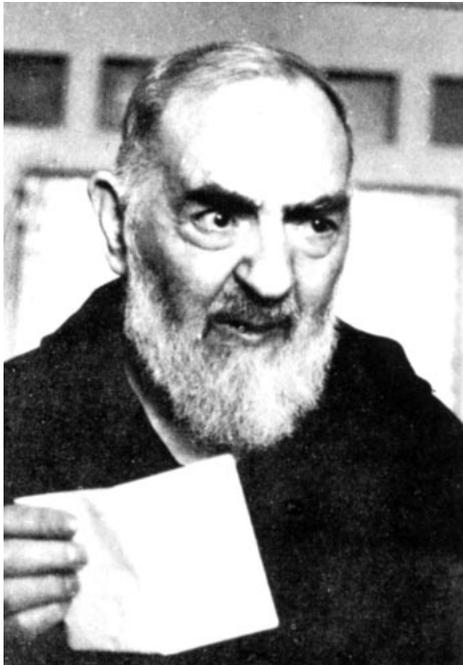
No less painful, and perhaps even more distressing from a human point of view, were the trials which Padre Pio had to endure as a result, it might be said, of his incomparable charisms. It happens at times in the history of holiness that, by God's special permission, the one chosen is misunderstood. In that case, obedience becomes for him a crucible of purification, a path of gradual assimilation to Christ.

So many people, meeting Padre Pio directly or indirectly, rediscovered their faith. Inspired by his example, prayer groups sprang up in every corner of the world. To all who flocked to him, he held up the idea of holiness. At the same time, his charity was poured out like balm on the weaknesses and sufferings of his brothers and sisters. Padre Pio worked to build a hospital complex which he called the "House for the Relief of Suffering."

May "Our Lady of Graces" help us to keep our gaze fixed on God. And you, Blessed Padre Pio, look down from heaven upon us assembled. Intercede for all those in every part of the world who raise their prayers to you. Come to the help of everyone. Give peace and consolation to every heart. Amen."

### **Padre Pio Devotions**

***Padre Pio Devotions are every 1st Monday of the month at Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Church on the corner of Date St. and State St. Rosary begins at 6:35 p.m., Mass begins at 7 o'clock p.m. Benediction and prayers to follow. For more info about Padre Pio call (619) 697-5958***



**In this photo, Padre Pio has just been handed a letter requesting prayers. It happened frequently through his charismatic gifts that he did not need a letter to know of the needs of his spiritual children.**

## Padre Pio's Words of Hope

**Padre Pio was an extraordinary spiritual director. Listen to his beautiful recommendations on daily prayer:**

"The soul should habitually meditate on the Life, Passion, and Death of our Lord Jesus. No soul, however advanced in the ways of the Lord, should neglect this.

Place yourself

in the presence of God, humbling yourself profoundly at the thought of who you are and to whom you are presenting yourself. Ask God for the grace of performing well the mental prayer you are about to practice. Finally, recommend yourself to the most Holy Virgin's intercession along with the entire heavenly court, that they may help you to meditate well and keep all distractions and temptations far from you.

Aim at correcting the defect which most impedes your union with God and which is the cause of many other defects and sins.

Finally, ask God for all the graces and help that you need. Recommend everyone to the Lord, both in general and in particular. Pray for the reestablishment of God's reign; for the propagation of the faith; for the exaltation and triumph of our holy mother the Church. Pray for the living, the dead, for the unfaithful, for heretics and for the conversion of sinners.

Once you have done all this, offer your meditation and prayers along with the offering of your entire self, besides all those people who are dear to you. Offer everything to God along with the merits of Jesus, and of his and our Mother. Offer all this through the hands of most Holy Mary, your Guardian Angel, and Saint Joseph."

*From our Spiritual Director*

## SO YOU ARE DOWN!

Blessed Padre Pio, soon to be canonized on June 16, 2002 **knew** the heart of people, the burdens they carry, and the **worries** that trouble the soul. He had a good sense of humor that people do not associate with saints because so often saints are thought to be serious and somber. Padre Pio was a man of serenity and joy.

The older we get, the more depressed we often become because of our fears, especially in our modern times. But Blessed Padre Pio says to all of us: "Do not let your souls be sad because sadness will stifle the **spirit** in you. Have **courage**, always have courage. The Lord is with us, always ready to accept our secret desires."

Secret desires are clear: Be happy and be calm— not to worry but to smile for God is in charge—to pray more rosaries. Remember:

- Smiles will take away your wrinkles;
- Happiness will lengthen your life;
- Calmness will give you inner peace and joy;
- and **PRAY, HOPE, AND DON'T WORRY.**

We feel that we are not needed as we grow older that we are a burden because of our dependency, that we cause extra work for others. But our **prayers** are needed, our **experiences** can be shared, and our **values** can teach others.

As we grow older we know that we have made the world better because we love God, the Church, the saints, religious values, and devotions. We will not die, we will live in others lives, souls, and thoughts. What we have done is the same that Blessed Padre Pio did **the will of God.** Amen

*—Rev. Louis M. Solcia, C.R.S.P*

**If you are unable to come to the Padre Pio devotions but would like to receive Padre Pio's prayers after Holy Communion, as well as the prayers he recited daily—send a self-addressed stamped envelope to:**

**D. Allen  
6941 Colorado Avenue  
La Mesa, CA 91942**