



Pray, Hope, and Don't Worry



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Let us always strive more and more to love the Lord. This great truth of loving God must not seem hard to us; on the contrary, we must consider ourselves honored, because the Lord God didn't limit himself to creating us and telling us to love him, but he made a commandment of it . . . He commands us to do so, and the commandment is full of love. It is he who instills it into our hearts. It is he who gives us the means to be able to love him. But that which is more surprising, he has also promised us the prize. It isn't something that is temporary, passing, or limited. It is as eternal as he is eternal; it is as immense as he is immense; it is as lasting as he is lasting. And God lasts forever, for all eternity.

— St. Pio of Pietrelcina

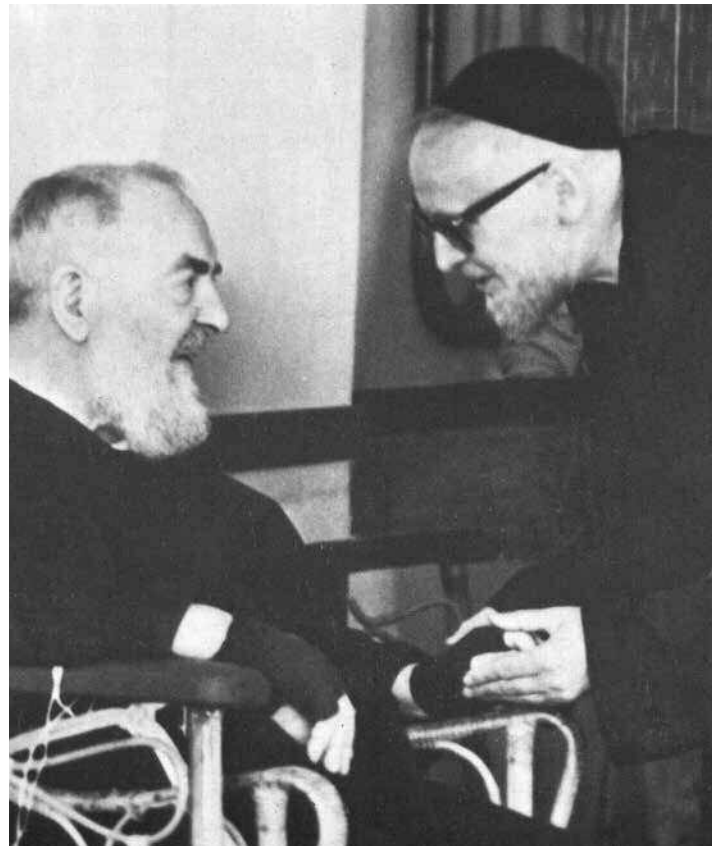
Padre Pio – A Priest of Extraordinary Gifts – Part II

On August 22, 1922, **Alberto D'Apolito** entered the Capuchin novitiate in Morcone, Italy and began the long years of study and formation for the priesthood. On one occasion during a few days of vacation time, he received permission to visit Padre Pio in San Giovanni Rotondo.

One day, during his visit, Alberto noticed Padre Pio staring out the window at a mountain in the distance. Alberto greeted Padre Pio, but he did not seem to hear him. He appeared to be deep in thought. When Alberto approached him, Padre Pio was not even aware of his presence. Alberto tried to kiss Padre Pio's hand but he noticed that it was completely rigid. He heard Padre Pio say, "Ego te absolvo a peccatis tuis." Padre Pio was pronouncing the Latin words of absolution, just as he did when he was hearing someone's confession.

Alberto ran to get the superior of the monastery, Father Tommaso. Father Tommaso rushed to the window where Padre Pio was standing. Padre Pio was still in the process of repeating the Latin formula of absolution when Father Tommaso approached him. Suddenly, Padre Pio shook himself, as though he was waking up from a deep sleep. He looked at Alberto and Father Tommaso and greeted them. "Oh, I was not aware that you were standing here beside me. I was looking out the window at the mountains," Padre Pio said.

A short time later, a telegram arrived for Father Tommaso from the city of Turin. It was from the relative of a man who had just passed away. The relative sent the telegram in order to thank Father Tommaso for allowing Padre Pio to leave the monastery and assist the dying man. It confirmed to Father Tommaso and Alberto what they had already suspected. Padre



A photo of Father Alberto D'Apolito and Padre Pio in 1957.

Padre Pio had gone in bilocation to hear the man's confession and to assist him in his last moments.

Maria Pompilio, who was one of Padre Pio's faithful spiritual daughters, worked as a school teacher in San Giovanni Rotondo. She attended Padre Pio's Mass every morning and went to confession to him regularly. Through the years, she had received many graces through her contact with Padre Pio.

Once, on Christmas Eve, Padre Pio had gone to the sacristy of the church about 8:00 p.m. to hear the men's confessions. It happened to be a very cold night. Because there was no heating in the monastery at that time, a stove had been placed in the sacristy to take the chill off.

While Padre Pio was hearing the men's confessions, Maria Pompilio and several other women stayed in the church to pray. After the confessions were over, Maria and her companions went into the sacristy to greet Padre Pio and to kiss his hand.

Maria noticed that Padre Pio's hand was ice cold. Padre Pio greeted his spiritual daughters and said to them, "May the Child Jesus make you feel his mercy and his tender love." "It is so cold tonight, Padre Pio," one of his spiritual daughters said. "Please speak to us for a while. Tell us more about the Infant Jesus and fill us with the warmth of his love."

Padre Pio then took his spiritual daughters to the visitors' room in the monastery. There was a long table in the room with enough chairs for everyone to be seated comfortably. Padre Pio spoke about the Christmas Mysteries and said, "Daughters, let us meditate on the words of scripture in the book of John. John, the beloved disciple said, *And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.*" Tears filled Padre Pio's eyes as he quoted John's words from scripture. He paused for a moment to dry his eyes and then continued. He reflected on the privations of Jesus' birth and infancy. He spoke of how Jesus was born in the winter, the coldest season of the year, in the depth of the night. There among the animals, he was laid in the manger. Mary and Joseph attended him lovingly as the angels in heaven rejoiced.

Suddenly Padre Pio closed his eyes and became silent. "Padre Pio has fallen asleep," one of the women whispered. "He heard confessions all day today and he is exhausted. Let's be very quiet and use the time to pray until he wakes up." "I do not think he is asleep," one of the other women said. "This is Christmas Eve. I believe that Padre Pio is in deep communion with Jesus at this very moment. It is truly a privilege for us to be sitting here with him."

After about thirty minutes, Padre Pio opened his eyes. One of his spiritual daughters then said to him, "Padre Pio, you were silent for a long time. Since it is Christmas Eve, we were wondering if you were with the Baby Jesus?" Padre Pio made no reply. Another said, "Padre Pio, please tell us what you experienced as you sat with your eyes closed." "If you promise not to say a word about it until after my death, I will tell you," Padre Pio replied. "We give you our word that we will tell no one," the women said in unison.

Padre Pio then said to the women, "The Lord permitted me to wish a happy Christmas to my brother Michael who is in America and also to my sister, Sister Pia, in her convent in Rome. Then Jesus showed me all of my spiritual children who have passed on to eternal life and I saw their dwelling places in heaven." The women were deeply inspired by his words.

Before long, it was time for Padre Pio to prepare for the celebration of the Christmas Midnight Mass. Softly glowing candles illuminated the little 16th century church of Our Lady of Grace. The church had never looked so beautiful. When the Mass began, Padre Pio, who held a small statue of the baby Jesus in his arms, processed solemnly down the aisle toward the

Christmas crib. Together with the choir, the Capuchins and the entire congregation sang Christmas carols and hymns of praise to God. All hearts seemed to glow with the fire of God's love.

After the midnight Mass, before retiring to his cell, Padre Pio spoke to his spiritual daughters for the last time that evening and said, "Tonight heaven opened and many graces came down into your souls." Truly, they had all been blessed.

In 1966, **Father Jean Derobert** made a trip to San Giovanni Rotondo in order to see Padre Pio. Padre Pio told Father Derobert that he wanted him to start a prayer group in Paris. At that time, Father Derobert was the chaplain of a college that was located on the outskirts of Paris. Father Derobert was apprehensive about the idea of starting a prayer group. For one thing, he did not know many people in Paris. Without an ample number of contacts, he did not see how he would be able to interest people in the idea. Just the thought of organizing a prayer group filled him with fear.

Padre Pio, however, was not the least bit dismayed at Father Derobert's concerns. He simply smiled at him and said, "I will help you." When Father Derobert returned to France, he told a friend about his conversation with Padre Pio. His friend was excited at the prospect of having a prayer group in Paris. "Padre Pio has sent me here to help you," the friend replied. "I feel certain of it." Father Derobert could not have been more surprised.

Father Derobert and his friend soon found a beautiful chapel in Paris where they received permission to hold monthly prayer meetings. From the very beginning, a number of people showed great interest and attended regularly. Everything was moving forward in a wonderful way.

A year later, Father Derobert returned to San Giovanni Rotondo. As soon as Padre Pio saw him, he wanted news about the prayer group. He listened with great interest as Father Derobert gave him a full report. Padre Pio then said, "I know the group well. There are some very beautiful souls who attend. I go there often." He then proceeded to describe in detail, the lovely chapel where they met each month. As a matter of fact, many of the members of the prayer group had told Father Derobert that they often felt Padre Pio's presence at their monthly meetings. Before Father Derobert returned to Paris, Padre Pio gave him some words of wisdom. "Do nothing but pray," he said.

Monsignor John Gannon was acquainted with a retired navy man who lived in Washington, D.C. The man had attempted suicide on two different occasions. Monsignor Gannon, who was very devoted to Padre Pio, advised the man to pray to Padre Pio and to ask for his intercession. He gave him a prayer card of Padre Pio. The man followed Monsignor Gannon's advice and frequently repeated the prayer to Padre Pio.

One night, the man went to a bar, and feeling a great sense of hopelessness and despair, he began to think once again about ending his life. There was a man at the bar with a beard who came over to him and said hello. "I know what you are planning to do tonight. Don't do it!" the stranger said emphatically. Monsignor Gannon's friend then asked the stranger for his name. He could not understand him completely

Padre Pio Devotions In San Diego

Every 1st Monday – Our Lady of the Rosary at State St. and Date St.
Every 3rd Monday – St. Anne's Church at Sicard St. and Irving Ave.

Holy Hour begins at 6:00 pm with Mass at 7:00 pm

Each week we post inspirational stories of Padre Pio and those whose lives he touched, on our Facebook and Google + pages:



www.facebook.com/PadrePioDevotions



[Padre Pio Devotions](#)

but his name sounded something like "Pio." There was no suicide attempt that night, thanks be to God. The man was convinced that Padre Pio paid him a visit and interceded for him in his darkest hour.

Giuseppe Massa was studying theology in Rome in preparation for the priesthood when he became ill. His mother was very worried about his condition. One day his mother, who lived in San Giovanni Rotondo, spoke to Padre Pio about Giuseppe's illness and asked him for his prayers.

Giuseppe soon recovered and was able to continue his studies for the priesthood. It was a great day for the entire Massa family when Giuseppe was ordained a Salesian priest. On the occasion of his ordination, Padre Pio wrote him a personal note and said, "I pray that you will be a holy priest and a perfect victim." Father Giuseppe treasured the handwritten note from Padre Pio. Shortly after his ordination, Father Giuseppe became ill. The high fever and weakness that he had experienced previously, returned once again. He was finally diagnosed with a kidney disease and was told that he would have to have surgery.

The doctor spoke to Father Giuseppe's mother and told her that it was advisable that she travel to Rome and stand by at the hospital during the time of her son's surgery. Mrs. Massa knew that it would be very difficult for her to make the trip to Rome. She could not decide what to do. She went to the monastery and asked Padre Pio for his advice. "You already have five other children to care for. You should not make the trip to Rome," Padre Pio said emphatically. "But I think Father Giuseppe will want me to be there when he is having the operation. How will he manage without me?" Mrs. Massa replied. She then began to cry. Seeing Mrs. Massa so distraught, Padre Pio felt very sorry for her. "If you don't think I should go to Rome to be with my son, then I want you to go in my place," Mrs. Massa said. "Oh, all right then," Padre Pio replied, "I will go."

After Father Giuseppe had his surgery, his health steadily improved. Later, he told his mother that while he was in the hospital, Padre Pio had come and had stood at his bedside. When Father Giuseppe had the opportunity, he traveled to San Giovanni Rotondo and spoke to Padre Pio. He thanked Padre Pio for the visitation he had made to him in his hour of need.

Father Giuseppe's health continued to improve. He would live for fifty more years. Dedicating his time and effort to the religious education of youth, he helped countless souls through his priestly ministry. He truly became the holy priest that Padre Pio prayed that he would be.

Giovanni Gigliozzi, was a famous journalist, broadcaster and writer who lived and worked in Rome. Giovanni had a great love for Padre Pio and Padre Pio in turn, had a great love for him. Giovanni's beautiful spiritual reflections and writings were presented in some of the earliest publications put out by Our Lady of Grace monastery in San Giovanni Rotondo. Giovanni always looked forward to attending Padre Pio's Mass and he did so whenever his schedule would allow him to.

For a long time, Giovanni had suffered from migraine headaches. On one occasion, shortly before he was scheduled to go on the air at his broadcast studio in Rome, he had a severe migraine headache. He knew from experience that the



A photograph of Giovanni Gigliozzi (center).

terrible headache would probably last for a long time. He told the director of the show that he would not be able to do the program that day. "But you have to do the program!" the director said. "We have no one who can substitute for you." The director led him to one of the offices that had a couch. He told him to lie down and rest and perhaps the headache would go away. Giovanni followed his advice. He stretched out on the couch, closed his eyes and tried to relax.

Lying on the office couch, Giovanni suddenly heard a strange sound; it sounded like the clicking of Rosary beads. Next, he heard footsteps. He opened his eyes and to his utter surprise, he saw Padre Pio standing beside him. He was staring intently at Giovanni. Giovanni was so startled by the unexpected appearance of Padre Pio that he let out a scream. The thought occurred to Giovanni that perhaps he was about to die and that Padre Pio was there to usher him into the next world. Padre Pio smiled and put his hand on Giovanni's head in a blessing. Right after that, he disappeared. Giovanni then realized that his migraine headache had vanished. He was able to continue with the scheduled broadcast that day.

The next time Giovanni visited the monastery of Our Lady of Grace, Padre Pio greeted him and said, "By the way, how are those headaches doing?" "I am feeling very well now," Giovanni replied. "And I thank you for assisting me." Padre Pio then smiled at him and said, "My goodness, those hallucinations!" It was Padre Pio's way of confirming to Giovanni that he had come to his aide.

Though I was honored by his presence for such a long time, I understood practically nothing about Padre Pio. . . And if I have not understood him, believe me, it is not all my fault. Padre Pio had a special talent for hiding himself. He was humble, but with cleverness, I dare say, with merriment. Although he had

Padre Pio Devotions Books

Pray, Hope, and Don't Worry: True Stories of Padre Pio Book I
Pray, Hope, and Don't Worry: True Stories of Padre Pio Book II
written by Diane Allen and available at amazon.com

so many virtues, he never let them weigh on those who were around him.

— *Giovanni Gigliozzi*

Martha Gemsch had been devoted to Padre Pio for many years. Martha had a sister named Lisa who was planning to make a trip to the missions. Lisa, who was an x-ray technician, was a person who had great compassion for others. She wanted to bring the modern-day technology of her profession to India as well as to other third world countries. She talked to Padre Pio about her plans and he advised her against it. However, she could not be swayed by his words and was determined to follow her heart.

Lisa was in the city of Dar es Salaam on the coast of East Africa when she was involved in a terrible auto accident. She died in the hospital the day after the accident. The day that Lisa died was the first day that Padre Pio had resumed hearing confessions after a long absence due to illness. That day, Martha, Lisa's sister, was at the monastery of Our Lady of Grace. She noticed that Padre Pio didn't seem like himself. He was unusually quiet all through the day and seemed very unhappy.

According to Lisa's doctor, Lisa died peacefully and with a smile on her face, even though she died alone and without the support of family or friends. One of the nuns who worked at the hospital, spoke to Lisa's sister, Martha. The nun told her that Padre Pio had come to her in bilocation at the hospital. He spoke her and said, "I feel so sorry about what happened to Lisa, but I was here to assist her." Martha was greatly consoled to know that her sister was assisted by Padre Pio at the time of her death.

Twenty year old **Tony Collette** of Houston, Texas had a rare disease that affected his muscles and nervous system. He lived in a constant state of pain. He wore braces on his legs and had metal supports for his weak back. Even with crutches, it was very difficult for Tony to walk. He had several operations, but his condition did not improve. The doctor finally told Tony that nothing more could be done for him.

In 1973, Tony saw a Capuchin monk enter his room. He recognized him at once as Padre Pio. He had a great devotion to Padre Pio and had prayed to him many times through the years. Padre Pio smiled at Tony and said, "I want to help you. Do not be afraid." At that moment, Tony felt a tremor course through his entire body. He felt the presence of God in the room. He suddenly realized that he was free of pain. Tony was permanently healed from his debilitating illness.

Padre Pio and his Friends from Ireland

In 1967, Franciscan lay brother **Pius McLaughlin** of Derry, Ireland had the honor of being chosen to attend the General Chapter Meeting of the Franciscan Order which was held in Assisi, Italy. His responsibilities included assisting the English speaking provincials who were attending the Chapter from many different parts of the world.

One day, three of the provincials wanted to visit Padre Pio and asked Brother Pius to make the arrangements. He traveled to San Giovanni Rotondo with them and they were invited to

stay in the monastery for the duration of their visit. Brother Pius was able to make his confession to Padre Pio, an experience that, as he said, "transformed his life forever."

After Brother Pius finished his confession, there was a long period of silence. Finally Padre Pio said to him, "You did not mention that you were a Franciscan lay brother." Brother Pius was shaken by his words. It had not occurred to him to tell Padre Pio that he was a lay brother and he certainly wasn't trying to hide it. But the fact that Padre Pio had knowledge of it came as a shock.

Next Padre Pio said, "Would you like to talk to me about your problem and what you plan do about it?" Brother Pius wasn't sure what Padre Pio was talking about and was at a complete loss for words. He began to perspire heavily and felt very much afraid. Finally he said, "I don't have a problem." Padre Pio answered and said, "But you do have a problem." "I don't have a problem," Brother Pius repeated. "You have a problem," Padre Pio said once again. It suddenly dawned on Brother Pius what Padre Pio was talking about. "Actually, there is something that has been bothering me," Brother Pius said. "For a long time I have carried a secret desire in my heart to become a priest but I am worried that I will not be accepted."

Padre Pio encouraged Brother Pius in his vocation and said, "Pray to God with all your heart and ask for His guidance. I advise you also to ask the permission from your superior." The next week, when Brother Pius returned to Assisi he spoke to his superior about his desire to study for the priesthood. His superior was surprised and explained to Brother Pius that there might be obstacles that could stand in the way. There would also be long years of schooling and study ahead. In the Irish province where Brother Pius had made his profession, there had never been a single instance of a lay brother becoming an ordained priest. It simply wasn't done. Brother Pius was determined to do his very best. He was accepted into the seminary and did well in his studies. He was ordained a Franciscan priest in 1973.

Dear Lord, help me to remove from my mind every thought or opinion which you would not sanction; every feeling from my heart which you would not approve. Grant that I may spend the hours of the day gladly working with you according to your will. Help me just for today and be with me in it: in the long hours of work, that I may not grow weary or slack in serving you; in conversations, that they may not be to me occasions of uncharitableness; in the day's worries and disappointments, that I may be patient with myself and with those around me; in moments of fatigue and illness, that I may be mindful of others rather than of myself; in temptations, that I may be loyal; so that when the day is over I may lay it at your feet, with its successes which are all yours, and its failures which are all my own, and feel that life is real and peaceful and blessed when spent with you as the guest of my soul.

Amen