

NOVENA TO PADRE PIO

1st DAY LOVE FOR JESUS

From the Letter to the Romans (8: 35-39)

What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? ... In all these things we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

From the Writings of Padre Pio

May the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, enlighten us ever more about the immensity of the eternal inheritance to which we have been destined by the goodness of our Heavenly Father. As our spirit enters this mystery, our soul distances itself from earthly things, and we become desirous of entering our heavenly homeland. (Letters II)

Reflection

Prayer

Loving Saint Pio, you loved Jesus with an ardent and burning love. You manifested this love by your detachment from worldly pleasures, your great love for “sister poverty” which was your true treasure. Through the humiliations you endured silently, grant that we may walk in the light of Divine Grace, that we may come to eternal salvation, and help make us worthy of the name “Christian” we bear.

Glory be to the Father ...

2nd DAY ABANDONMENT AND CONFIDENCE IN GOD

From the Gospel according to Matthew (8: 5-10)

When he entered Capernaum, a centurion approached Jesus and appealed to him, saying, ‘Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, suffering dreadfully’. He said to him ‘I will come and cure him’. The centurion said in reply, ‘Lord, I am not worthy to have you enter under my roof; only say the word and my servant will be healed. For I, too, am a person subject to authority, with soldiers subject to me. And I say to one, ‘Go’, and he goes; and to another, ‘Come here’, and he comes; and to my slave, ‘Do this’, and he does it’. When Jesus heard this, he was amazed and said to those following him, ‘Amen, I say to you, in no one in Israel have I found such great faith’.

From the writings of Padre Pio

Do not lose confidence in Divine Providence. Trust in God, and abandon yourself to Him. Let Him take care of you. Be calm and you will not be confused.... What I desire is that as your challenges grow, so also may your abandonment and confidence in God grow even more ... A soul that trusts in the Lord and places all its hope in Him, has nothing to fear. (Letters II)

Reflection

Prayer

Loving Saint Pio, you had compassion on human misery, and gave comfort to the afflicted. You obtained graces, consolation and peace for them from the Lord. Help us through the adversities of life, especially in our illnesses and infirmities, not to rebel against them. Help us to accept the will of God with confidence and abandonment in Him.

Glory be to the Father ...

3rd DAY PRAYER

From the I Letter to Timothy (2: 1-4; 8-10)

First of all, then, I ask that supplications, prayers, petitions, and thanksgivings be offered for everyone ... It is my wish, then, that in every place the men should pray, lifting up pure hands, without anger or argument. Similarly, too, women should adorn themselves with proper conduct, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hairstyles and gold ornaments, or pearls, or expensive clothes, but rather, as befits women who profess reverence for God, with good deeds.

From the Writings of Padre Pio

God's power triumphs over everything; but humble and suffered prayer triumphs over God Himself! It lowers His arm, extinguishes His lightning, disarms Him, overcomes Him, appeases Him and makes Him, I would almost say, a friend and dependent ...

Let us glance at the divine Master who prayed in the Garden and we will discover the true ladder which unites earth to heaven. We will discover that humility, contrition and prayer make this distance between man and God disappear, an act in such a way that God descends to man, and man ascends to God, so that they end up understanding, loving and possessing one another. (Letters III, 27 August 1915)

Reflection

Prayer

Loving Saint Pio, you are patron and protector of a host of children and devotees from around the world. Continue to speak to the heart of God, and present our needs to Him. Intercede for us that our prayers may be heard and answered, if they are for the good of our souls and in conformity to the Will of God.

Glory be to the Father ...

4th DAY

THE EUCHARIST

From the Gospel according to Luke (22: 14-20)

When the time came he took his place at the table with the apostles. He said to them, 'I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer, for, I tell you, I shall not eat it again until there is fulfillment in the kingdom of God'. Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and said, 'Take this and share it among yourselves; for I tell you that from this time on I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes'. Then he took the bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body, which will be given for you; do this in memory of me'.

And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which will be shed for you'.

From the Writings of Padre Pio

But what hurts me most is the thought of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. My heart feels drawn by a higher force each morning before I am united with him in the Blessed Sacrament. I have such a hunger and thirst before I receive him that I almost die ... (Letters I, 29 March 1911)

I think that the Holy Eucharist is a great means through which to aspire to perfection. But we must receive it with the desire and intention of removing from the heart all that is displeasing to Him with Whom we wish to dwell. (Letters III, 27 July 1917)

Reflection

Prayer

Loving Saint Pio, you were a passionate and loving apostle of the Eucharist. The Mass you celebrated was "life of your life", the only strength and comfort of your painful days of infirmity. Pray that the Eucharist may also be for us life and support on our difficult journey, that we may attain eternal life!

Glory be to the Father ...

5th DAY

OUR HEAVENLY MOTHER

From the Gospel according to John (19: 25-27)

Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple there whom he loved, he said to his mother, 'Woman, behold, your son'. Then he said to the disciple, 'Behold, your mother'. And from that hour the disciple took her into his home.

From the Writings of Padre Pio

We must make every effort, like many elect souls, to follow invariably this Blessed Mother, to walk close to her since there is no other path leading to life except the path followed by our Mother. Let us not refuse to take this path, we who want to reach the end of our journey. (Letters I, 1 July 1915) I wish I had a voice strong enough to invite the sinners of the whole world to love Our Lady. (Letters I, 1 May 1912)

Reflection

Loving Saint Pio, you had a tender love and devotion for our Heavenly Mother. Help us to render our devotion for this gentle and loving Mother of God ever more profound. Accompany us, that we may confidently approach her motherly heart, that we may love, invoke, and venerate her always with the recitation of her Holy Rosary.

Glory be to the Father ...

6th DAY SUFFERING

From the Gospel according to Mark (8: 31-32; 34-35)

He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer greatly and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and rise after three days. He spoke this openly ... He summoned the crowd with his disciples and said to them, 'Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and that of the gospel will save it.'

From the writings of Padre Pio

Learn how to suffer everything as a Christian, and do not be afraid. There is no suffering, for as insignificant as it may seem, that will not have its merit in eternal life ... You suffer with and for Jesus; be assured of this, and on the part of God I beg you to be at peace. Jesus himself is in the depths of your heart when you suffer. You are neither separated nor far from the love of this God Who is so good. (Letters II)

Reflection

Prayer

Loving Saint Pio you were always a comfort for any human suffering. Look at us who are in dire need of your assistance. From heaven raise your hand wounded by divine love and bless the little ones and those who are vulnerable, the sick and infirm, the abandoned aged, families in difficulty, the world troubled by the evil one, and all of us your devoted children.

Glory be to the Father ...

7th DAY TEMPTATIONS

From the I Letter of Saint Peter (5: 8-9)

Be sober and vigilant. Your opponent the devil is prowling around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, steadfast in faith, knowing that your fellow believers throughout the world are undergoing the same sufferings.

From the writings of Padre Pio

You must not be surprised, therefore, that our common enemy has done all in his power to make you pay no heed to what I wrote you. This is his task and he receives his reward. But always despise him and arm yourself against him with increasing steadfastness of faith ... Temptation is a sure sign that the soul is very pleasing to the Lord. Accept everything, therefore, with thanks. Do not think that this is a mere opinion of mine; no, the Lord himself has pledged it with His divine word: 'And because you were acceptable to the Lord', the angel says to Tobit, (and through Tobit, to all those souls who are dear to God) 'it was necessary that you should experience temptation'. (Letters III, 29 January 1915)

Reflection

Prayer

Loving Saint Pio, in life you underwent constant battles with Satan, and you were always victorious. Pray that we, trusting in divine assistance and with the protection of the Archangel Saint Michael, may not succumb to the terrible temptations of the devil.

Glory be to the Father ...

8th DAY RECONCILIATION

From the Gospel according to John (20: 21-23)

Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.' And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained'.

From the Writings of Padre Pio

I haven't a free moment. All my time is spent in releasing my brothers from the snares of Satan. May God be praised. Please do not afflict me further, like the others, by appealing to charity, because the greatest charity is that of snatching souls from Satan so as to win them for Christ. This is precisely what I am doing

constantly by night and by day ... Innumerable people of all classes and both sexes come here for the sole purpose of making their confession, and I am only sought for this purpose. There are some wonderful conversions. (Letters I, 3 June 1919)

Reflection

Prayer

Loving Saint Pio, you were a great apostle of the confessional. You snatched many souls from Satan's grasp. Lead us and many more brothers and sisters back to the font of pardon and grace.

Glory be to the Father ...

9th DAY THE GUARDIAN ANGEL

From the Acts of the Apostles (5: 17-20)

Then the high priest rose up and all his companions, that is, the party of the Sadducees, and, filled with jealousy, laid hands upon the apostles and put them in the public jail. But during the night, the angel of the Lord opened the doors of the prison, led them out, and said, 'Go and take your place in the temple area, and tell the people everything about this life'.

From the Writings of Padre Pio

May your good guardian angel always watch over you; be your guide on the rugged path of life; always keep you in the grace of Jesus and sustain you with his hands so that you may not stumble on a stone; protect you under his wings from all the snares of the world, the devil and the flesh ... Always have him present to your mind's eye. Often remember the presence of this angel; thank him, pray to him, always keep him good company ... Turn to him in times of supreme anxiety and you will experience his beneficial help. (Letters III, 15 July 1915)

Reflection

Prayer

Loving Saint Pio, during your life you had a particular devotion to the angels, and a very special devotion to your Guardian Angel. Help us to 'understand and appreciate this great gift that God in his excessive love' wants to give everyone, by entrusting each person to his particular guidance and protection.

Glory be to the Father ...

RECALLING THE FINAL HOURS OF SAINT PADRE PIO OF PIETRELCINA

On 22 September 1968, after 9:00 p.m., when Father Mariano had already left cell No. 4 and I had entered, Padre Pio called me with the intercom to his room. He was in bed and lying on his right side. He only wanted me to tell him what time it was from the alarm clock on the table by his bed. I wiped a few tears from his red eyes and returned to cell No. 4 where I remained with the intercom left on in case he needed me.

The Padre called me another five or six times before midnight and his eyes were always red with tears, but they were gentle and tranquil tears.

At midnight like a frightened child he begged me: *“Stay with me, my son”* and he began to ask me frequently what time it was, looking at me with imploring eyes and holding my hands tightly.

Then as if he had forgotten the time, which he had asked me in continuation, he asked: *“My son, have you said Mass?”*

I answered smiling: *“Spiritual Father, it is too early now for Mass”*.

And he answered me: *“Well this morning you will say it for me”*.

And I: *“But I say it for your intentions every morning”*.

He then wanted me to hear his confession, and after he had confessed himself he said: *“My son, if the Lord should call me to Himself today, ask my fellow friars to forgive me for all the trouble that I have caused them and ask my spiritual children to say a prayer for my soul”*.

I answered: *“Spiritual Father, I am sure that the Lord will let you live still for a long while, but if you should be right, may I ask you for a last blessing on behalf of your fellow friars, all your spiritual children and the sick?”*

And he: *“Yes I bless them all; and ask the Superior that he give on my behalf this last blessing”*. Finally he asked me to renew the act of his religious profession. It was 1:00 a.m. when he asked me: *“Listen, my son, I can no longer breathe here in bed. Help me to get up. I will be able to breathe better in the chair”*.

Between 1:00 and 3:00 a.m. was the usual time that he would get up to prepare to say Mass and, before sitting in his armchair, he would take a few paces in the hallway. That night, to my great surprise, I noticed that he walked erect and quickly like a young man, so that I did not even have to help him.

At the doorway of his cell, he said: *“Let's go onto the balcony for a while”*.

I followed him, holding his arm. He switched on the light and when he reached the armchair, he sat down and looked around the balcony as if he was looking for something. After five minutes he wanted to return to his cell. I tried to help him up, but he said to me: *“I can't manage it”*. In fact he had become heavier.

“Spiritual Father don't worry”, I said to him, encouragingly and at once went to get the wheel chair that was nearby. I lifted him up from the armpits from the armchair and placed him in the wheel chair. He himself placed his feet on the foot rest.

In his cell, after I had seated him in his armchair, looking at and pointing to the wheel

chair with his left hand he said to me: *“Take it outside”*, Back in the cell, I noticed that the Padre began to turn white. On his forehead there were cold beads of sweat. I became frightened however, when I saw that his lips began to turn bluish.

He repeated continuously: *“Jesus, Mary!”*, with a voice that became always more weak.

I got up to call a fellow friar, but he stopped me saying: *“Don't wake anyone up”*. I went off running all the same and, I had only gone a few paces from his cell, when he called me again. And not thinking that he had called me to say the same thing, turned back. But when I heard him repeat: *“Don't call anyone”*, I said to him imploringly: *“Spiritual Father, let me see to things now”*. And running I started for Father Mariano's cell, but seeing the door to Brother Bil0l's cell open, I went in, switched on the light and shook him awake saying: *“Padre Pio is in a bad way!”*

In a moment, Brother Bill reached the Padre's cell and I ran to telephone Doctor Sala.

About ten minutes later he arrived and as soon as he saw the Padre he began to prepare an injection. When it was ready Brother Bill and I tried to help him up, but not able to we rested him on his bed. The doctor gave him the injection and then helped us to place him in his armchair, while the Padre repeated with an always more weak voice and with the movements of his lips always more imperceptible: *“Jesus, Mary!”*.

Called by me, the Father Guardian, Father Mariano and other friars immediately arrived; while one by one, having being called by phone by Doctor Sala, there arrived Mario Pennelli, Padre Pio's nephew, Doctor Gusso, the Medical Director of the “Home for the Relief of Suffering”, and Doctor Giovanni Scarale.

While the doctors were giving him oxygen, at first by tube and then with a mask, Father Paolo of San Giovanni Rotondo gave the last sacraments (the anointing of the sick) to his spiritual Father and the other friars, on their knees around him, prayed.

At about 2:30 a.m., he gently inclined his head and gave up his soul.

In faith
Padre Pellegrino Funicelli
San Giovanni Rotondo, 29 September 1968