

February 2015

What is this? A teaching with authority. He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him. (Mark 1:21-28)

Everyone is looking for you! ... Let us go to the nearby villages that I may preach there also ... (Mark 1: 29-39)

If you wish you can make me clean ... I do will it. Be made clean. (Mark 1: 40-45)

Take care not to perform righteous acts in order that people may see them ... (Matthew 6: 1-6; 16-18)

This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the Gospel. (Mark 1: 12-15)

Father, in Padre Pio of Pietrelcina, You have given us a modern image of the Suffering Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ. Through his intercession and your divine grace, may we turn to you in our need, thank you in our abundance, and share your love with the world around us. Amen.

1

How much you will be indebted to divine goodness, which makes you so ardently desire to live and to die in his love.

2

By his holy love, the supreme Goodness will keep the nest of your heart safe from the assaults of the world. He will keep you from being submerged.

3

Rest your heart in God alone, and no longer take it away from Him.

4

(God) is your peace, consolation, goodness, and your glory. Make every effort to unite yourself more tightly to this most sweet Savior, so that you can produce good fruit for eternal life.

5

You seek your God; you sigh for Him, call Him, but cannot see any trace of Him. God seems to hide Himself; to abandon you.

6

Jesus has not abandoned you, nor will He. On the contrary, in that painful state in which your soul is immersed, Jesus is closer to you, clasped tightly to your heart.

7

In moments of spiritual oppression, place yourself in the presence of God and pronounce your *Fiat - Thy will be done!*

8

It is sufficient to know that Jesus is pleased with you and that you are on the true path.

9

Let it be sufficient for you to be united to God by your will.

10

Cast off your doubts! Your will is united with God's will.

11

A person who does not love God does not pay any attention to Him, does not fear not loving Him, and never thinks of God with the sincere desire to love Him.

12

Console yourself that as long as you fear you do not love God, and as long as you fear offending Him, you already love Him and no longer offend Him.

13

If everyone felt the fear (of offending God) that you feel, no one would offend God.

14

Console yourself and be quite sure that God is not found where there is no desire to love Him.

15

If your soul longs for nothing else than to love God ... don't worry, and be quite sure that your soul possesses everything, that it possesses God Himself.

16

You must continually implore two things from our most tender Lord: that He increase within you love and fear, for this will make you fly in the ways of the Lord ...

17

(He increase within you love and fear) will make you careful where you set foot, make you see the things of the world for what they are, and lead you to beware of all negligence.

18

When love and fear kiss, it will no longer be in your power to give your affections to the things of this world. You will no longer experience strife or envy.

19

(When love and fear kiss) your only desire on this earth will be to delight the loved One ... You shall advance cautiously, but with holy freedom. You shall feel that the Lord ... is leading you to beware of sin as of a poisonous viper.

20

While you take the greatest care to never commit deliberate sin, you will have a greater fear of mortal sin than of fire.

21

Trust in God and hope that in His fatherly goodness, He will let His light come into the darkness of your troubles.

22

Lift up your mind full of faith, to your heavenly home, and may all your yearnings and aspirations be directed there.

23

Admire the heavenly regions which can be reached by no other road than that of suffering. Heaven is your true home. What does it matter if you reach it by treading no other paths than the rough ones of tribulation and sacrifice?

24

In order to reach your final goal, you must follow your divine Leader, who usually leads chosen souls by the path He Himself trod ... by the path of self-denial and suffering.

25

Consider yourself fortunate to see yourself treated in this way by Jesus. Foolish are those who fail to fathom the secret of the cross.

26

You must have boundless faith in the divine goodness, for the victory is absolutely certain. How could you think otherwise? Isn't our God more concerned about our salvation than we are ourselves?

27

Isn't (God) stronger than hell itself? Who can ever resist and overcome the King of the heavens? What are the world, the devil, the flesh, and all your enemies before the Lord?

28

Humble yourself a great deal and confess that if God were not your armor and your shield, you would immediately be pierced with all kinds of sin ... Therefore, do not fear. Jesus is more powerful than all hell ...

The "Our Father" prayed and meditated by St. Francis of Assisi

(Pray this paraphrase of the Our Father, composed by our Seraphic Father St. Francis of Assisi, and let the words and reflection you recite each day help you to appreciate and pray more confidently and lovingly this beautiful prayer that Jesus Himself taught us)

Our Father most holy: Our Creator, Redeemer, Consoler, and Savior:

Who are in heaven: In the angels and the saints, enlightening them to know, for You, Lord, are light; inflaming them to love, for You, Lord, are love; dwelling in them and filling them with happiness, for You, Lord, are Supreme Good, the eternal Good, from Whom all good comes without Whom there is no good.

Holy be Your Name: May knowledge of You become clearer in us that we may know the breadth of Your blessings, the length of Your promises, the height of Your majesty, the depth of Your judgments.

Your kingdom come: That You may rule in us through Your grace and enable us to come to Your kingdom where there is clearer vision of You, perfect love of You, blessed companionship with You, eternal enjoyment of You.

Your will be done on earth as in heaven: That we may love You with our whole heart by always thinking of You, with our whole soul by always desiring You, with our whole mind by always directing all our intentions to You, and by seeking Your glory in everything, with all our whole strength by exerting all our energies and affections of body and soul in the service of our love and of nothing else; and we may love our neighbor as ourselves by drawing them all to Your love with our whole strength, by rejoicing in the good of others as in our own, by suffering with others at their misfortunes, and by giving offense to no one.

Give us this day: in remembrance, understanding, and reverence of that love which our Lord Jesus Christ had for us and of those things that He said
Reflecting on the Passion of Christ (during the days of Lent)

and did and suffered for us.

Our daily Bread: Your own beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Forgive us our trespasses: through Your ineffable mercy through the power of the passion of Your beloved Son and through the merits and intercession of the ever blessed Virgin and all Your elect.

As we forgive those who trespass against us: And what we do not completely forgive, make us, Lord, forgive completely that we may truly love our enemies because of You and we may fervently intercede for them before You, returning no evil for evil and we may strive to help everyone in You.

And lead us not into temptation: hidden or obvious, sudden or persistent.

But deliver us from evil: past, present, and to come

Lord Jesus Christ, You call us to repent and believe the Gospel. Remove the barriers that keep us from you so that we might live fully the life we received at Baptism. You have given us Padre Pio of Pietrelcina as the living image of the Suffering servant for our times. He bore the wounds of Your Passion, Lord Jesus Christ, and thus became a support and encouragement for us as we are called to carry our daily crosses. Through his intercession and your divine grace, may we turn to you in our need, thank you in our abundance, and share your love with the world around us. We ask this of You who live with the Father and Holy Spirit, one God, forever. Amen.

Lord Jesus, may I walk this way with you, in the spirit of Padre Pio of Pietrelcina. May each step heighten within me a realization and love for all You endured for me. In the words of St. Alphonsus Liguori: *Grant that I may love You always, then do with me as you will.*

Litany of the Stations of the Cross

I Lord Jesus, that I may see the people in my life through your eyes, and not the eyes of a Pontius Pilate, who washed his hands of responsibility, **through Your life-giving Sacrifice, and the intercession of Padre Pio, grant me this grace.** (*)

II Lord Jesus, that I may embrace the crosses of my life, so that in recognizing my weaknesses I may discover Your strengths, (*)

III Lord Jesus, that I may always trust in Your loving care for me, even when I fall, (*)

IV Lord Jesus, that I may see how often You love me through the people in my life, as Mary loved you, and that I may always keep our Blessed Mother Mary, who accompanies me in life's journey, in my heart, (*)

V Lord Jesus, that I may see that loving others and assisting them in their need is the surest way to find and recognize You in my life, as Simon did, (*)

VI Lord Jesus, that I may have a deeper and more courageous faith to be unafraid to reach out to others, as Veronica did to You, (*)

VII Lord Jesus, that I may never hide behind pride, and that I may be ready and willing to begin again after my repeated falls, (*)

VIII Lord Jesus, that I may show compassion to others in their sorrow or need, and place my sorrow or need second to theirs for a while, (*)

IX Lord Jesus, that I may recognize how much I need You, and rely on Your strength in the many difficulties and pit-falls of life, (*)

X Lord Jesus, that I may let go of those things that prevent me from growing closer to You, (*)

XI Lord Jesus, that I may see Your cross as the great

sign of Your love for me, as did our Spiritual Father, Padre Pio of Pietrelcina, (*)

XII Lord Jesus, that I may see my crosses as ways of loving You and dying to myself, (*)

XIII Lord Jesus, that I may learn to place my life in Your hands, and not fear seeming unimportant, useless, helpless...as You allowed Your lifeless body to be placed in the hands of Mary, (*)

XIV Lord Jesus, that I may always believe in Your closeness and loving presence, especially when You seem distant from me, (*)

Concluding Prayers

Lord Jesus, help me to walk with You each day of my life, even to Calvary. The sorrow and joy, the pain and healing, the failures and triumphs of my life are truly small deaths and resurrections that lead me closer to You. Give me the faith and trust I need to walk with You always.

Mary, Mother of our Redeemer and our most Blessed Mother, be with us through life's journey. As you comforted Jesus on the road to Calvary by your silent and loving presence, as you held his lifeless body close to your Immaculate Heart, as you offered the sadness and suffering that only a mother can feel when she sees the suffering of her child, look upon me as you looked at Jesus. See His marred image in my frail nature; hold me close to your mother's heart in my moments of temptation and sin; and pray for me that I may be for God what I was created to be a - **LIVING IMAGE OF JESUS.** Amen.

Padre Pio of Pietrelcina, loving Father and Spiritual Guide, by a singular grace you were blessed to participate in the mystery of the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Through your ministry, God revealed the marvels of His mercy to numberless souls. Pray for us, that like you, and through your loving intercession we may remain one with Christ in his Passion so as to joyfully come with you to the glory of the Resurrection. Intercede for us with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who is God living and reigning for ever and ever. Amen.

***We adore you, O Christ, and we praise,
because by Your Holy Cross,
You have redeemed the world!***

***Jesus Christ Crucified, have mercy on us!
Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us!***