

Padre Pio Prayer Groups

National Office

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Dear Spiritual Children and Friends of Padre Pio,

The Lord give you His peace!

The following letter, believed to be the last letter that Padre Pio wrote, has a message for all of us to consider in these trying times. The issue of his letter is obviously not the pandemic. It is Padre Pio's undaunted faithfulness in obedience to the Roman Catholic Church and Her Pontiff. His entire life was lived as a faithful son of the Church. Faithful always in all things, at all times, even in challenging and personally painful situations.

The serenity and continued respect, love, and obedience for the Church and the person of the Holy Father (here it was Pope St. Paul VI) can be noted in the letter below. Spiritual Children of the Founder of his Prayer Groups, to be true children in his spirit, should follow his example of faithfulness and obedience.

San Giovanni Rotondo
September 12, 1968

Your Holiness,

I unite myself with my brothers and present at your feet my affectionate respect, all my devotion to your august person in an act of faith, love and obedience to the dignity of him whom you are representing on this earth. The Capuchin Order has always been in the first line in love, fidelity, obedience and devotion to the Holy See; I pray to God that it may remain thus and continue in its tradition of religious seriousness and austerity, evangelical poverty and faithful observance of the Rule and Constitution, certainly renewing itself in the vitality and in the inner spirit, according to the guides of the Second Vatican Council, in order to be always ready to attend to the necessities of Mother Church under the rule of your Holiness.

I know that your heart is suffering much these days in the interest of the Church, for the peace of the world, for the innumerable necessities of the people of the world, but above all, for the lack of obedience of some, even Catholics, to the high teaching that you, assisted by the Holy Spirit and in the name of God, are giving us. I offer you my prayers and daily sufferings as a small but sincere contribution on the part of the least of your sons in order that God may give you comfort with his Grace to follow the straight and painful way in the defense of eternal truth, which never changes with the passing of the years. Also, in the name of my spiritual children and the Prayer Groups, I thank you for your clear and decisive words that you especially pronounced in the last encyclical "Humanae Vitae"; and I reaffirm my faith, my unconditional obedience to your illuminated directions.

May God grant victory to the truth, peace to his Church, tranquility to the world, health and prosperity to your Holiness so that, once these fleeting doubts are dissipated, the Kingdom of God may triumph in all hearts, guided by your apostolic work as Supreme Pastor of all Christianity.

Prostrate at your feet, I beg you to bless me in the company of my brothers in religion, my spiritual children, the Prayer Groups, my sick ones and also to bless all our good endeavours which we are trying to fulfill under your protection in the name of Jesus.

Humbly yours,

P. Pio, Capuchin

(Padre Pio's letter above is taken from the Catholic Healthcare International website USA)

Obedience to the Church is the sign of a true son or daughter of St. Francis of Assisi. Padre Pio was a Capuchin Franciscan, a true son of the Seraphic Father of Assisi. The letter, written shortly before his death, is a sign of the spirit of Padre Pio that guided his entire life. He was a blessing to numerous souls. Yet many of his greatest challenges and moments of severe trials came from the Church he so loved. He was a man always under scrutiny in one manner or another because of the extraordinary mystical gifts attributed to him. His entire life in good times and in bad, in sickness and health – a true “marriage of love” - was always the same regarding the Church: he was lovingly faithful and unquestionably obedient, even when it cost him dearly.

How do we emulate the example and will of the founder of our Prayer Groups? How do we express our reverence (or not?) for the Holy Father? These trying times for the world have affected the life of “Holy Mother” Church and the external expressions of Her children.

Weakened and tired by all that happens around us and confused by the divergent “declarations” of one hierarchical member or another may have brought us either to “taking sides” or being just numb to it all. Do we re-affirm our trust in the Lord, invoke Our Blessed Mother’s almighty motherly intercession for us all, re-commit ourselves in obedience to the successor of Peter and faithfulness to all we profess as “Catholic” Church? What measure do we use to “evaluate” the actions and words of our Holy Father and the Magisterium? Have we forgotten that the Prayer Groups were instituted as a response to a request and permission granted by the Servant of God Pope Pius XII, thus being conceived and born from the very one who is so often maligned, misrepresented, and outright misquoted or conveniently partially so? You get the idea. As Prayer Groups of Padre Pio our faithfulness to the Church and respect and obedience for the Holy Father must be unquestionable. These times demand it even more!

Since this is the month dedicated to the Most Holy Rosary of our Blessed Mother (a prayer loved and prayed often in the course of Padre Pio’s every day) let us find strength in this simple and most powerful prayer. Through the Rosary we see Jesus through the eyes of His/our Mother Mary at the various moments of our Salvation History in His Redemptive Life-Death-Resurrection. Mary our Mother call us to be united as the family of God whom She accepted as Her children at the foot of the Cross. Redeemed in the Blood of Jesus and graced with the gifts of the Holy Spirit we witness unity in obedience and respect for one another, as the Mystical Body of Christ.

God bless all of you. May our Blessed Mother intercede for you. May our loving founder, Padre Pio of Pietrelcina guide, guard, and protect us and all our loved ones, as integral members of the Mystical Body of Christ. Depending on God, we depend on one another in a cloudy, confused, and at times even dark world. We are called to manifest the strength of unity in commitment to a conviction of the heart that offers ourselves as beacons of light making evident the image of God in Jesus that shines for others to see the “Way” more clearly.

Peace and Blessings,
Fr. Francis A. Sariago, O.F.M. Cap.
National Coordinator