

# February

## Month of the Hidden Life of Jesus

*Everyone is looking for you.* (Mark 1: 29-39)

*If you wish, you can heal me. He touched him and said to him, I do will it. Be made clean.*

(Mark: 40-45)

*Take care not to perform righteous deeds in order that people may see them.*

*Your Father who sees what is hidden will repay you.* (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)

*This is my beloved Son. Listen to him.* (Mark 9: 2-20)

*Lord Jesus Christ, Crucified and Risen, we thank You for having given us Saint Pio of Pietrelcina a messenger impressed with the signs of Your suffering and passion, an embodiment of the merciful Face of the Father. We ask You grant we may imitate the "Saintly Friar of the Gargano" and thus make our lives "an intimate and loving participation in Your sacrifice"; lives of diligent and generous availability to the service of fraternal charity, and a "credible sign of the message of Truth and Love" that we, as your disciples, proclaim to the whole world. Almighty Lord, we praise You for the holiness of Padre Pio, sign of eminent hope for our troubled world. May Your Holy Servant Crucified with You by love, intercede for us. Amen!* (Bp. Domenico D'Ambrosio)

1

Always struggle against the appetites of the flesh, against worldly vanity, against the seduction of gold or dignity, with which the evil one continually wages war on you.

2

How right you are to place your desire for the world in the hands of heavenly Providence.

3

Your worldly desires might not vainly occupy your soul, as it would undoubtedly do if it were left to itself.

4

Practice internal and external sweetness a great deal, and maintain a tranquil heart amidst your multiple worries.

5

Continue to keep your soul raised on high, without looking on this world, nor using your time, except to aspire to eternity.

6

May Jesus deign to make you such that, surrounded by the world and the flesh, you may live in the Spirit.

7

Praise Him with the angels, and may the foundation of your hope always be on high.

8

Do not be discouraged if you experience spiritual dryness. This does not mean the Lord has abandoned you. You are too dear to the Heart of Jesus.

9

You are too dear to the Heart of Jesus, all that happens in your soul is due to the exquisiteness of the love of Jesus for you.

10

Jesus wants you entirely for Himself.

11

He wants you to place all your trust and all your affections in Him alone.

12

(Spiritual aridity is permitted often) to unite you more closely with Him, to rid you of certain attachments which do not appear as such to you and which in many cases you do not even recognize or detect.

13

Don't worry. The Lord will never withdraw from you.

14

Beware of your speech. You can offend others externally in your speech (by blasphemy, obscenities, lies).

15

Beware (of speech that is unbecoming) if you intend to live according to the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

16

Two most powerful means for the attainment of Christian perfection (are) the constant study of God's law and the performance of all our actions for his glory.

17

May the grace of the divine Spirit always reign supreme in your soul, and may He guide you to greater Christian Perfection.

18

No chosen soul is free from temptation.

19

Remember and keep well impressed in your mind that Calvary is the hill of the saints.

20

Remember that after ascending (your) Calvary and having died on it, you immediately ascend another mount, Tabor (Mount of the Transfiguration).

21

Remember that suffering is short-lived but the reward is eternal.

22

Rest tranquilly, or at least resignedly, always secure Trust in God's authority and do not fear.

23

Heaven and earth will pass away but the word of God assures you that whoever believes will sing victory, will never pass away.

24

May Jesus be your comfort, sustenance, and compensation in this life and for blessed eternity.

25

Take heart for the Lord is with you.

26

The Lord suffers with you, groans with you, and is pleased with you.

27

Haven't you loved our Lord up until now? Don't you still love Him? Don't you yearn to love Him? Therefore, have no fear.

28

Even if you were to have committed all the sins of this world, Jesus tells you, Your sins are forgiven.

***(The following Meditative Prayer is Inspired by the Our Father and composed by Saint Francis of Assisi)***

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

***Who art 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, ... 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 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 your 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 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. Amen.

***(Remember Our Blessed Mother with the “Salutations” of Saint Francis of Assisi and with the “Sub Tuum Praesidium” an ancient prayer of the Church imploring our Mother’s intercession in our needs)***

**Hail, O Lady, holy Queen, Mary, holy Mother of God,** who are the virgin made Church, chosen by the most Holy Father in heaven whom He consecrated with His most holy beloved Son and with the Holy Spirit the Paraclete, in whom there was and is all fullness of grace and every good. Hail, His Palace! Hail, His Tabernacle! Hail, His Dwelling! Hail, His Robe! Hail, His Handmaid! Hail, His Mother! ... **Under your protection** we seek refuge, O Holy Mother of God. In our needs, despise not our petitions, but deliver us always from all dangers, O Glorious and Blessed Virgin.

***(Offer the following prayer invoking the intercession of our Father and Founder, Padre Pio of Pietrelcina)***

**Padre Pio, dear Spiritual Father and Guide,** your words bring me strength and encouragement. Your life offers me an example of trust in God, regardless of the circumstances of my life. A true son of St. Francis of Assisi, you lived in intimate relationship with the Father as an image of His Incarnate Son, Jesus the Christ. You were endowed with the gifts of the Holy Spirit so that all would know that God was truly with you. Pray for me, your Spiritual Child, that I too may grow in my relationship with the Father so that, like you, I may be an effective witness of God’s love, mercy and providence to all His children, my brothers and sisters. Be my companion on life’s journey and accompany me to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Who lives and reigns forever and ever. Amen.

***(Now Conclude with a Prayer Entrusting Yourself to God)***

Blessed are You, Lord, our God! You are God alone. To you, Almighty Father, Creator of the Universe and all Humanity, through Christ, the Living One, Lord of time and history, in the Spirit who makes all things holy, be praise and honor and glory. I place my life into Your hands. Never let me be parted from you; do with me as You please. Your will be done for ever. Amen.

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**(When Lent begins, Ash Wednesday, February 17<sup>th</sup>, you may desire to use this brief Via Crucis to reflect each day on Jesus' cross-laden journey to Calvary)**

### ***Reflecting on the Passion of Christ***

**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 P 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. *Grant that I may love You always, then do with me as you will.***

(\*)

**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 P 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 P 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 forever and ever. Amen.