

Padre Pio Prayer Groups

National Office

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Dear Spiritual Children and Friends of Padre Pio,

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The Lord give you His peace.

The **Sacred Heart of Jesus**, unfolds like an open doorway through which every soul is invited to step into the Father's boundless love. The Heart of Jesus remains forever open, wounded, yes, but never closed, pouring out mercy, healing, and reconciliation. In the Heart of Jesus we discover that the Father's embrace is not distant or abstract; it is made accessible through the very humanity of Jesus, who loved to the point of total giving of Himself. The self-giving of Jesus in suffering and death is not a defeat but a declaration that no human darkness is too deep for divine compassion. At the moment of His Death, when His Heart is pierced, the doorway is thrown wide open—blood and water flowing as signs of the new life offered to all. In the Resurrection this love triumphs transforming suffering into glory. We are drawn into this mystery of redeeming love. We recognize that the Father's desire is not simply to forgive but to restore, renew, and elevate the human heart. June is therefore, a month of invitation, a gentle summons to return, to trust, and to rest in the Heart that has already gone before us into every sorrow and every joy. In this Heart, the Father's love becomes tangible, personal, and transformative. It offers every soul a home where mercy is endless and hope is reborn.

The heart of Jesus, as reflected in Padre Pio's words to Anna di Tommaso, is not merely a symbol of divine affection but the living center of a love that seeks, pursues, and transforms the human soul. To contemplate this heart is to enter into a mystery where suffering and tenderness coexist, where justice and mercy embrace, and where the infinite bends low to meet the fragile. Padre Pio understood this with an intensity that marked his entire spiritual life. His counsel invited souls to rest in the certainty that the heart of Jesus is the safest refuge for every fear, every wound, and every longing. When he spoke of this heart, he was not offering a poetic metaphor; he was pointing to a living reality that shaped his own daily existence, a reality that continues to call believers into deeper intimacy with the divine.

Divine love is not abstract. It is personal, embodied, and profoundly relational. Christ's heart beats with a love that knows each soul individually. This is a love that feels, that suffers, that rejoices, and that desires to draw every person into communion. When Padre Pio encouraged a devotee to turn toward the Heart of Jesus, he was urging them to encounter a love that is both tender and demanding, a love that consoles but also purifies. The heart of Jesus is not a passive sanctuary; it is an active force that reshapes the soul from within.

This heart is also the place where divine compassion reaches its fullest expression. Padre Pio, who bore the stigmata and lived in constant union with Christ's suffering, understood that compassion is not sentimental. It is costly. It requires entering into the pain of others, just as Christ entered into the suffering of humanity. When he spoke of the heart of Jesus, he spoke of a heart pierced—pierced by love, pierced for love, pierced so that love might flow outward without limit. In contemplating this pierced heart, we are invited to see our own wounds not as sources of shame but as openings through which grace can enter. The heart of Jesus does not recoil from human frailty; it draws near to it, embraces it, and transforms it.

In his letter to Assunta di Tommaso, 24 March 1918), Padre Pio writes: *May the grace and peace of the Holy Spirit always be at the center of your heart. Place your heart in the open side of the Savior and unite it with the King of our hearts who is within it as on a royal throne, on order that he may receive homage and obedience*

from all other hearts. Keep its door open, so that everyone can approach him and gain an audience at all times. And when your heart speaks to him, don't forget to speak in favor of mine again, so that his divine and cordial Majesty may render it good, obedient, faithful, and less wretched than it is.

Padre Pio's guidance often emphasized trust. Surrender the illusion of self-sufficiency. Acknowledge that human strength alone cannot carry the weight of life's trials. The Heart of Jesus is thus the anchor in the storm, the steady presence that remains when everything else feels uncertain. Padre Pio knew that many of his spiritual children struggled with anxiety, fear, and doubt. His response was always the same: place everything in the Heart of Jesus. This was not a dismissal of their struggles but an invitation to see those struggles through the lens of divine love. Trusting in this heart means believing that no suffering is wasted, no tear unseen, no prayer unheard.

Yet trust does not eliminate the need for perseverance. The spiritual life is a journey marked by both consolation and desolation. The Heart of Jesus is present in both. In moments of joy, it is the source of delight; in moments of darkness, it is the hidden flame that continues to burn even when the soul feels cold. Padre Pio's own life was filled with spiritual trials, but he never wavered in his conviction that Christ's heart remained close. He taught that perseverance is not about heroic strength but about returning again and again to the heart that never stops loving. Even when prayer feels dry or God seems distant, the Heart of Jesus remains a wellspring of grace.

The Heart of Jesus is also the model of perfect humility. Though divine, Jesus chose to reveal his love through gentleness, meekness, and self-emptying. Padre Pio urged his spiritual children to imitate this humility, as a path to true freedom. Pride isolates; humility opens the soul to receive love. The Heart of Jesus is humble because it is entirely oriented toward the good of others. It does not seek its own glory but pours itself out without reserve. To draw near to this heart is to learn how to love without calculation, without fear, and without the need for recognition. Padre Pio knew that such humility is difficult, but he also knew that it is the key to spiritual transformation.

The Heart of Jesus is a furnace of charity. Divine love, described as fire, warms, purifies, and ignites the soul. This fire is not destructive; it is creative. It burns away selfishness, resentment, and indifference, making room for compassion, generosity, and self-giving. Padre Pio encouraged others to contemplate the heart of Jesus, inviting them to allow this fire to reshape their inner life. Charity was not merely an action but a disposition of the heart, seeing others through the eyes of Christ. To love as Christ loves is to recognize the dignity of every person, to forgive readily, and to serve without hesitation.

In contemplating the Heart of Jesus, we encounter the mystery of divine patience. Christ does not force but transforms, invites, waits, accompanies. Padre Pio, who spent countless hours in the confessional, witnessed firsthand the slow and often painful process of spiritual growth. He never rushed souls but guided them gently, mirroring the patience of Christ. The Heart of Jesus is patient because it understands human weakness. It does not demand perfection but encourages progress. It celebrates every small step toward holiness. Padre Pio's counsel reflects this patience. He reminds his spiritual children spiritual growth is not measured by dramatic experiences but by daily fidelity.

The Heart of Jesus is a place of profound intimacy. Prayer is about presence. To rest in the Heart of Jesus, to allow oneself to be seen, known, and loved. This intimacy is not reserved for the spiritually elite; it is offered to every soul. Padre Pio often told devotees that Jesus desires their love more than their accomplishments. He wants their hearts, not their perfection. In this intimacy, the soul discovers its true identity, not as a servant but as a beloved child. The heart of Jesus becomes the home where the soul finds belonging.

Love invites love. Padre Pio encouraged his spiritual children to respond to Christ's love with devotion, fidelity, and gratitude. It is not about earning divine favor but about participating in a relationship already offered. The Heart of Jesus is open, the question is whether we will open our hearts in return. Padre Pio knew that this

openness requires vulnerability, the willingness to let go of defenses and allow oneself to be transformed. He also knew that the reward is immeasurable: a life rooted in love, guided by grace, and sustained by divine presence.

Contemplating the heart of Jesus, we encounter the mystery of redemption. The Sacred Heart is both loving and saving. It is the Heart that endured the agony of Gethsemane, the scourging, the crown of thorns, and the crucifixion. Padre Pio, who shared in Christ's suffering in a unique way, understood that redemption is not an abstract theological concept but a lived reality. The Heart of Jesus saves because it suffers. It redeems because it loves unto death. When Padre Pio spoke of this heart, he spoke of a love that conquers sin, heals wounds, and restores hope. To rest in this heart is to rest in the certainty that redemption is always possible, no matter how great the darkness.

The Heart of Jesus is also the source of peace that endures even in the midst of turmoil. Padre Pio reminded devotees that true peace comes from union with Christ. It is the fruit of trust, surrender, and love. This peace transforms suffering, and allows the soul to remain steady in the midst of chaos. Padre Pio himself lived through misunderstandings, accusations, and physical suffering, yet he radiated peace because his heart was anchored in Christ's. He taught that this peace is available to all who seek refuge in the Heart of Jesus.

Finally, the Heart of Jesus is the ultimate revelation of God's desire for humanity. It shows that God does not remain distant but draws near, not in power but in love. Padre Pio's entire spiritual mission was to lead souls to this heart, to help them discover the love that had transformed his own life. His words about the Heart of Jesus were not merely spiritual advice; they were an invitation to enter into the deepest mystery of the Christian faith. To contemplate this Heart is to encounter the God who loves without limit, who forgives without hesitation, and who desires nothing more than to draw every soul into eternal communion.

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May we live in the Sacred Heart of Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, assisted by the Pure Heart of Joseph. As we rediscover the extravagant Love of God through the Hearts of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, let us never waiver from our resolve to enter the eternal embrace of God's Tremendous Extravagant Love.

Peace and Blessings

Fr. Francis A. Sariego, O.F.M. Cap.

National Coordinator