

# Padre Pio Prayer Groups

National Office

St. Francis of Assisi Friary

1901 Prior Road, Wilmington, Delaware 19809

tel: (302) 798-1454 fax: (302) 798-3360 website: [pppg.org](http://pppg.org) email: [pppgusa@gmail.com](mailto:pppgusa@gmail.com)

Dear Spiritual Children and Friends of Padre Pio,

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The Lord give you his peace!

As the days become shorter and the nights get longer, it might be spiritually worthwhile to reflect upon the words Padre Pio wrote to his Spiritual Director Padre Benedetto. It was on the Feast of all the Franciscan Saints, 29 November 1910. His interior battles with the evil one and the sufferings were already assailing him. His body was experiencing pains he could not explain. Time had to pass for “matters” to be unmistakably clear as coming from a Source beyond the imaginable. God prepares us for whatever He knows to be for our best way to be his messenger. On 20 September 1918 Pio would finally receive the “gift” that lasted fifty years for the world to “Come and See”. But not just yet!

Padre Pio was being prepared. Life’s journey of conformity to Christ had begun. All Christians must at least desire it and all Franciscans pray for this conformity. Our Seraphic Father St. Francis of Assisi, prayed: *Lord, I ask you for two graces before I die: First, that for the rest of my life I may experience in my soul and in my body, as much as possible, the same pain that you suffered, O sweet Jesus, during the time of thy most cruel Passion; and second, that I may feel in my heart, as much as possible, the same love which inflamed thee, the Son of God, and led thee to suffer thy Passion gladly for us sinners.* By the fact that we are sons and daughters of St. Francis of Assisi, our conformity with Christ must inevitably lead us to a share in Christ’s Paschal Mystery. The uniqueness of our origins and personalities will determine how God allows this sharing, but we are all called to live in Christ: *I have been crucified with Christ, and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me” (Galatians 2: 20).*

Padre Pio, from childhood, already had a unique relationship with the Eternal One. Things a child cannot understand but experiences were part of his life. The most frightening was how the evil one tormented him in many ways. He had learned early in life the enemy’s tenacity and relentless harassment strong enough to startle and confuse the innocence of a child and young adult. It was during the early years of religious life as a Capuchin that Padre Pio writes the following words to his Spiritual Director, Padre Benedetto in 1910:

*For several days now my health has been much worse...I am secretly so afraid that I say the Act of Contrition. The spiritual war has not ceased and, in fact, it is fiercer than ever. To put it briefly, dear Father, the enemy of our salvation is so furious that he hardly leaves me a moment’s peace and wages war on me in a variety of ways. I desire the grace from Jesus to be set free from this, because I fear to offend him. If he wants to mortify me, I wish he would do so by corporal suffering, which I would willingly accept.*

Padre Pio’s words reveal the profound struggle between human frailty and the desire to remain faithful to God. Despite his physical suffering and declining health, his greatest fear is not pain itself but the possibility of offending Jesus. This reveals the depth of his love and the sensitivity of his conscience.

Holiness does not necessarily bring immediate peace or freedom from fear in his spiritual battles. In fact holiness, true holiness, often manifests that the journey of faith can involve moments of darkness, uncertainty, and intense inner conflict. Yet, even amid these trials, Padre Pio continues to turn towards Jesus, seeking grace and deliverance. The trial deepens his willingness to accept bodily suffering rather than risk offending the Lord. He is totally surrendered to divine providence. Nevertheless, his words also reveal the vulnerability of a soul that longs deeply for God while struggling beneath the weight of spiritual anguish. His prayer is not simply a request for relief but an expression of his desire to preserve his relationship with Christ above everything else. In this, Padre Pio reminds us that genuine faith is not the absence of fear or suffering, but the perseverance of love through them. His experience reveals a heart that, even when overwhelmed, continues to seek refuge in the mercy, strength, and goodness of Jesus.

Padre Pio continues: *Patience! It is true that I am suffering, but I am very happy in this state for you have assured me that it does not mean that God has abandoned me but rather shows the delicacy of his exquisite love. I hope that the Lord is pleased to accept my sufferings in satisfaction for the innumerable times I have offended him. After all, what is my suffering in comparison to what I deserve for my sins?*

Padre Pio's words express a profound understanding of suffering through the eyes of faith. They reveal a soul that has learned to look beyond the immediate pain of life and discover the presence of God even in moments of trial. He does not deny the reality of suffering or pretend that pain is easy to bear. Rather, there is a quiet acceptance of suffering because of the conviction that God's love remains present even when circumstances seem difficult and overwhelming. This is the patience that grows from a deep and personal relationship with God, a patience that does not depend on the absence of hardship but on the certainty of divine love.

One of the most beautiful aspects of this reflection is the assurance that suffering does not necessarily mean that God has abandoned us. There are moments when prayers seem unanswered, when our burdens become heavy, and when the future appears uncertain. During such times, it is easy to interpret our difficulties as signs of divine displeasure or distance. Yet faith invites us to look more deeply. God's love is not measured by the comfort we enjoy or by the difficulties we escape. Sometimes, through suffering, we are invited to grow in humility, patience, compassion, and complete trust in his providence. Although we may not understand the reasons for our trials, we can still believe that we are never beyond the reach of his mercy.

The willingness to offer suffering to God also reveals the spirit of Christian sacrifice. Pain, disappointment, illness, and other hardships can become occasions for prayer when they are united with love and offered with a sincere heart. Such an offering does not mean that suffering is good in itself, nor does it require us to refuse appropriate help or relief. Rather, it means that even what we cannot change can become an expression of our trust in God. When accepted without bitterness and united with Christ's suffering, our trials can deepen our spiritual lives and increase our sensitivity to the suffering of others.

Padre Pio's awareness of personal sinfulness further reveals a humble heart. Recognizing our faults can lead us to genuine repentance and gratitude for God's mercy. However, we must remember that suffering is not necessarily punishment for particular sins, and God does not measure his love according to how much pain we endure. His mercy is a gift, not something we purchase through suffering. The deepest response to his love is sincere repentance, renewed faith, and a desire to live according to his will. True patience, therefore, is not merely enduring pain silently; it is remaining faithful, hopeful, and loving while placing our lives confidently in the hands of a God whose love never fails.

*However that may be, for me it is sufficient to know that God wills it and then I am quite happy...Now, my dear Father, I want to ask your permission for something. For some time past I have felt the need to offer myself to the Lord as a Victim for poor sinners and for the souls in Purgatory...it has now become...a strong passion. I have in fact made this offering to the Lord several times, beseeching him to pour out upon me the punishments prepared for sinners and for the souls in a state of purgation, even increasing them a hundredfold for me, as long as he converts and saves sinners and quickly admits to paradise the souls in Purgatory, but I should now like to make this offering to the Lord in obedience to you. It seems to me that Jesus really wants this.*

At the end of Padre Pio's letter, what a profound expression of love, faith, and self-giving this passage reveals! His words, "for me it is sufficient to know that God wills it and then I am quite happy," express spirituality deeply rooted in surrender to Divine Providence. This reminds us of St Francis of Assisi, who embraced God's will with simplicity, humility, and complete trust, finding joy not in possessing or controlling everything, but in belonging entirely to the Lord. St Francis teaches us that true peace comes when we allow God to guide our lives, even when His ways are difficult to understand. Yet this surrender is not passive resignation; it is a loving response to the One who first loved us.

The desire to offer oneself for sinners and the souls in Purgatory reveals the extraordinary depth of Christian charity. In his letter, Padre Pio expresses his desire to participate in Christ's redemptive love by offering personal sufferings, prayers, and sacrifices for the salvation of others. In this we find a beautiful connection with the spirit of St Francis, whose life was marked by compassion for sinners, tenderness toward the suffering, and an all-embracing love that saw every person as a brother or sister in God. His example reminds us that holiness is never merely a private journey toward God; it is also a willingness to become an instrument of His mercy for others. At the same time, Christ alone is our Savior, and it is through His Passion, Death, and Resurrection that Redemption is accomplished. Our sacrifices become fruitful when united with His love.

As we celebrate November, the month traditionally dedicated to remembering and praying for the faithful departed, what we have read and reflected upon, takes on a particularly moving significance. The Church invites us to remember those souls who are undergoing purification and to support them through our prayers, offering the Eucharist for them, works of charity, and the patient offering of our daily sufferings.

Our beloved Father and Guide, Padre Pio, longing that these souls may be admitted to Paradise reminds us that love does not end at the grave. Through the Communion of Saints, we remain united in Christ, and our prayer for the departed becomes an expression of hope in God's infinite mercy. In the spirit of St Francis, we are invited to extend our love beyond the boundaries of family, friendship, and even earthly life, remembering those who may have no one to pray for them.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of this offering is the desire to make it in obedience to a spiritual father. Padre Pio does not wish simply to follow a personal impulse, however generous, but seeks discernment and guidance, desiring to unite personal devotion with obedience. This, too, reflects the Franciscan spirit of humility: the willingness to surrender not only our possessions and preferences, but also our own will, so that our lives may become more fully available to God. Nevertheless, such self-offering should always be understood in the light of Christian hope, trust in Christ's saving grace, and wise spiritual guidance, rather than as a desire for suffering in itself.

During the month of November, this passage invites each of us to consider how we might offer our lives more generously for the salvation of souls and the consolation of those who mourn. We need not seek extraordinary sufferings or dramatic acts of sacrifice. We can begin with the quiet offering of our daily

difficulties, a prayer for an unknown departed soul, a Mass offered for someone who has died, forgiveness extended to another, or an act of kindness performed without seeking recognition. St Francis of Assisi reminds us that love becomes real through humble, practical acts of charity. May his example inspire us to entrust ourselves more deeply to Divine Providence, to pray fervently for sinners and the faithful departed, and to remember that every act of love, united with Christ, can become a prayer of hope for the world.

May the Lord grant eternal rest to the faithful departed, welcome the souls in need of purification into the joy of His heavenly Kingdom, and teach us, through the intercession of St Francis of Assisi, to live and die in the peace of His holy will.

Be assured of a remembrance in my prayers and Masses of the intentions – and this month especially of all the deceased family and friends of - my sisters and brothers affiliates of the Padre Pio Prayer Groups and Friends of Padre Pio in the USA and all over God's beautiful world. Through God's blessings we we generously collaborate with God's graces and Holy Will. Accompanied on our journey *Into God*, may our Heavenly Mother Mary, Good St. Joseph, St. Francis of Assisi and St Pio of Pietrelcina assist us in building a world according to the One Who said, on the sixth day of Creation: *very good!* May we do our part to make this world, the Theater of Redemption, the Vestibule (Welcoming Space) of Heaven, it was intended to be.

May our gratitude overflow in hearts open to one another. Let us disarm our hearts that we may recognize the image of Jesus among and within each one of us.

***Happy Thanksgiving 2026***

***Be grateful. Thank God always, in all ways, for everything.***

***Thank you God that I am who I am and nothing more and nothing less.***

***Thank You for creating me.***

Blessings

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

National Coordinator