

"The metacarpal bone shows no anatomical discontinuity, and although slightly enlarged in the middle section it appears to be regular in the rest of its length. On the reverse side of the same left-hand, more clearly in line with the metacarpal bone of the third finger, and therefore not corresponding exactly with the palm side, there is also a lesion similar to the other one in shape and appearance, which seems to be more restricted and apparently with a more superficial scab. Lesions which exists on both sides of the right hand can be similarly described. During my examination, tiny and continuous drops of blood oozed out of the lesion."

"When I asked Padre Pio to make a fist, he could not close his hand completely. It was only with very great difficulty that he could bend the tips of his fingers in toward the palm of his hand."

One day Padre Pio was preparing for confession in the sacristy. He was surrounded by men when he noticed one man and said, chidingly: "With you, one can't have peace, even at night. The man had sent his angel to Padre Pio on behalf of his sick child. This man begged his pardon. Padre replied, "Why do you beg my pardon? I am always pleased when guardian angels come, even if it happens at night."

A blind man approached him and asked that Father pray for him so that he would not fall down and stumble as he had been doing. Padre Pio told him that he would no longer fall down and stumble as the Lord had allowed him (Padre Pio) to give the blind man two more guardian angels. Father told him that sometimes while saying Mass he was in so much pain he could hardly turn the pages of the Mass book. At these times the angels helped him. " Send me your guardian angel."

Padre Pio was a devotee of the holy angels, especially St. Michael the Archangel. He also had a very unique and almost child-like devotion to his own guardian angel. He often told people to send their guardian angel to him as a means of bringing him their requests.



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Padre Pio's Hand Wounds and First Miracle



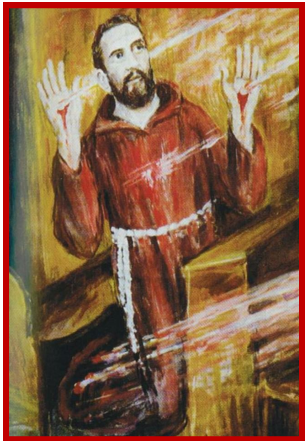
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"Father Pio, do they ache?"
He replied,
"Just as though you took a nail,
drove it into the hand and turned it around.."

Padre Pio's Hand Wounds and The First Miracle

Padre Pio was born on May 25, 1887. He was baptized Francis. Even as a child he had extraordinary gifts. While his brothers and sisters played, he prayed. When he was a teenager he received a present of chestnuts wrapped in a bag. He returned the bag to the sender of the gifts, a woman. The woman saved the bag, she thought it might be a future relic. This woman was in her barn when a spark ignited powder and there was a terrible explosion. She was in great pain, and bleeding from a serious wound. She remembered the bag and placed it to herself. She was instantly cured. This was the first miracle God performed through Padre Pio, he was 13 years old. At the age of 15 Padre Pio entered the Capuchins despite the fact that he was in bad health. One day he heard a voice from the tabernacle: "You will be scourged, crowned with thorns and nailed to the cross like St. Francis.

"In 1910 Padre Pio was ordained a priest. On September 20, 1915, he received the invisible wounds of Christ.

Three years later on September 20, 1918, Padre Pio received the visible wounds. On that day while he prayed before a crucifix a beautiful light shone forth from the tabernacle. Christ as a radiant young man moved towards Padre Pio. Rays of light from Our Savior's wounds transferred themselves to Padre Pio. The friars found him on the floor and took him to his room. They became aware of the large wounds he had in his hands and feet as well as the left side of his chest. From that time on the wounds never changed, and never ceased bleeding. The news of this awesome wonder spread all over the world. He was examined by the scientists over and over. They could not explain the wounds which neither



healed nor expanded. During the night his wounds bled incessantly. He wore white cotton gloves that were soaked with blood in the morning. The daily content of lost blood equaled a teacup. One woman asked him, "Father Pio, do they ache?" He replied, "Just as though you took a nail, drove it into the hand and turned it around. ... " Of the wounds Padre Pio said, "These are flames of Divine Love: I suffer gladly." He, like Christ, suffered for the conversion of sinners.

When Padre Pio said Mass he took off his woolen gloves. He often went in and out of ecstasy. He would weep and sob. There was a special handkerchief placed on the altar called a tear cloth. During the consecration his body shook with pain. Blood trickled down from the wounds of his hands. The consecration lasted about 5 minutes. When he received Holy Communion he usually went into ecstasy. He looked radiant. People came by the thousands to attend his Masses.



The flow of blood from the wounds on Padre Pio's hands were very abundant with arterial blood. The borders of the wounds were not inflamed. They were very sensitive to the least pressure. The lesions in his hands were covered with a dark red membrane, but there was neither any edema (swelling) or any inflammation. When pressure was applied on the palm or back of Padre Pio's hands, there was a sensation of an empty space. When doctors pressed on these (on the front and back of the hands) they could not tell whether the wounds were actually joined together, because the strong pressure caused intense pain in Padre Pio.

Dr. Giorgio Festa who examined Padre Pio on October 9, 1919, at the request of the General Superiors of the Capuchin Order in Rome wrote the following report: "In the palm of his left hand, more or less corresponding to the middle of the third metacarpal, I saw the existence of an anatomical lesion, round in shape, with clearly defined outer edges. In size it is a little more than 2 cm. (About 3/4 of an inch) in diameter."

The doctor then described at some length how "the lesion was covered with a reddish-brown scab which appeared on any normal wound. On contact with the air, blood usually would begin to coagulate and a healing process would start. But in the case of Padre Pio's wounds, the edges of the scab detached themselves and began to flake towards the center of the wound. Eventually the whole scab fell off. The wounds were continuously bloody and kept forming this kind of a scab."

The doctor continues: "The area of the lesion in the palm which I have just described has a clearly marked border, so that the surrounding skin, when I examined it with a powerful magnifying glass, showed no signs of edema, no sign of redness, no sign of infection, and not the tiniest indication of having been struck.