



*Padre Pio would make holy the short pause for rest with the reading of Vespers and Compline. Then he would remain a few minutes on the veranda of the friary, with his inseparable rosary in his hands and his thoughts always turned to God. At 3:00 p.m. he was again in the sacristy to hear the confessions of the men. At 5:00 p.m., from the choir loft, he would join in the communal recitation of the rosary. At 5:30 p.m. he would lead the evening Benediction and recite the prayer to Mary Most Holy composed by St. Alphonsus de Liguori.*

In reciting every evening "the prayer to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament" Padre Pio would be deeply moved, even to tears. To Padre Agostino of San Marco in Lamis he wrote: "I often ask myself if any people exist who do not feel their breast burning with divine fire, especially when they are close to him in the Blessed Sacrament. This seems impossible to me, especially in the case of a priest or a religious". (Letters I).

*Once Vespers were over; Padre Pio, when the weather was good, would go into the garden for some fresh air. He would walk along the path between the row of pine trees, or he would watch a game of bowling played by the friars. Then, in the summer, in the shade of a tree, or in the winter in a room of the friary, he would spend half an hour in conversation. To those present he would bring joy and smiles with his sense of humor and with his anecdotes that had a moral lesson he would give insights into the spiritual life.*

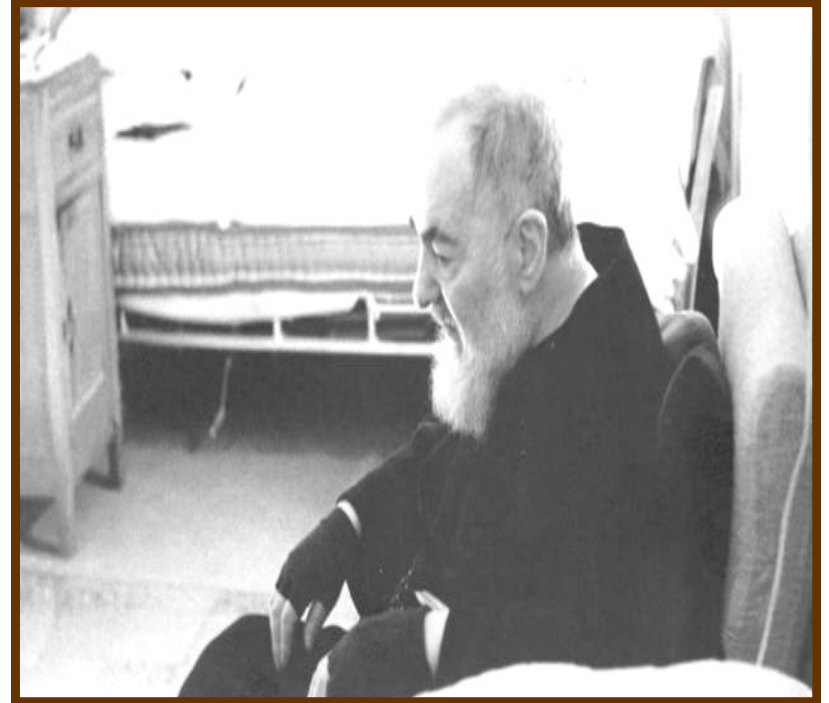


Padre Pio once recounted that at Foggia, in the church of St. Anne, a fellow Friar told him loudly that a doctor friend was arriving to see him. An elderly lady who had just confessed to Padre Pio, asked him at once if this friend could visit her daughter who was ill. Padre Pio answered her that the friend was a doctor of "philosophy"....The woman thinking that philosophy was a part of medical science, commented: "How many illnesses there are in the world!...Thanks all the same, Padre, but my daughter is not ill with philosophy". (Fr. A. Ripabottoni, "Padre Pio Recounts and Says").

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## *A DAY IN THE LIFE OF PADRE PIO*

This represents an imaginary day in the life of Padre Pio but as the routine of the friary did not change much it would have been very much a typical day. Each picture has a brief commentary with an interesting anecdote or quote.



*Padre Pio's day would begin about 2:30 a.m. when an alarm clock would ring in his cell. He would make the sign of the cross, kiss his rosary, glance at the image of Jesus and Mary and then say a prayer of thanksgiving to God for the new day. He would get up three hours before the other friars to prepare himself suitably for the celebration of Mass. I say he would get up and not wake up because he slept very little.*

Fra Modestino of Pietrelcina, in his book "Testimonies of Padre Pio", recounts: "One evening in 1964, I was alone with the Padre by his bed. Suddenly he said to me: *Listen, my son, pray to God that I am able to sleep. My eyes hurt and I am exhausted. It is three years that I have not slept.*"



***At the end of holy Mass Padre Pio would return to the sacristy, preceded and followed by a group of men who wanted to touch him and see him from close up. Without talking and still immersed in the divine mysteries just celebrated, he would remove the sacred vestments and would recollect himself in intense prayer of thanksgiving. He would be aware of nothing around him. If he could, he would have remained for hours in that intimate dialogue. And when he tasted all the sweetness of the immaculate flesh of Jesus, received in the sacrament, he felt himself in paradise!***

Padre Pio at the end of holy Mass, never omitted to do his thanksgiving. And our Lord would gratify him with marvellous experiences. In fact, to Padre Agostino, his confessor, he confided: "Yesterday, only God knows how much sweetness I experienced, especially after holy Mass, so much so that I still feel them. My head and heart were on fire; but it was fire that did me good. My mouth tasted all the sweetness of that Immaculate flesh of the son of God". (Letters I).

***At 9:30 a.m., with a surplice and stole, Padre Pio would distribute Communion to those penitents just absolved of their sins and those other faithful who wished to receive the sacred species from his wounded hands. He was happy to see so many pilgrims approach the sacred banquet of the divine Lamb that he considered such a powerful remedy against human weakness, and a "great means to aspire to holy perfection." He desired however that all approach the Eucharistic table with the desire and the intention to remove from their hearts all that displeases the One who becomes bread for us.***



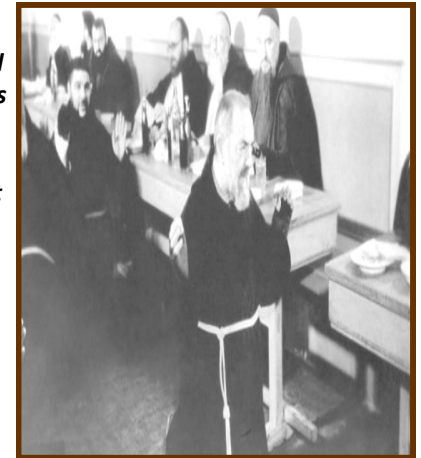
To his spiritual daughter Raffaolina Cerase, Padre Pio wrote: "Let us approach to receive the bread of angels with great faith and with a great flame of love in our hearts. Let us await this most tender lover of our souls in order to be consoled in this life with the kiss of His mouth. Happy are we if we succeed in receiving from the Lord the consolation of this kiss in the present life!". (Letters II).



***Padre Pio surrounded by the crowds and all the pushing and even fanatical outbursts that he always firmly scolded, would successfully reach the protection of the cloister. On the way, women and men of every age and social standing would be waiting for him, in the sacristy, in the corridor or in the "St. Francis hall", to ask him for advice, a prayer, a blessing; to give him a letter or an offering to give vent to their troubles, to recount their sufferings. And the stigmatic of the Gargano would give to all, words of comfort, spiritual direction and paternal exhortations.***

While Padre Pio was going by, a voice called from the crowd: "Padre, what must I tell my sister, Rose?". The woman convinced that she could obtain from him an answer... direct from heaven, almost shouting repeated: "Padre, what must I tell my sister Rose?" Padre Pio, to repress any fanaticism, answered: "Tell her that she will become a carnation..." and indeed she soon later met and married a man called Carnation. (Gennaro Preziuso, Padre Pio, Apostle of the Confessional).

***At lunch time the friars summoned by the bell would unite in the refectory. Padre Pio would join them a little later having been delayed in the blessing of a car in the garden or held up by someone talking. Arriving at his place, he would kneel down with his arms outstretched, to thank providence for the food he was about to eat. His prayer would continue until he ate a few mouthfuls. He would then pass his plate to the friar sitting next to him and he would remain to listen to the reading of the Gospel or the Franciscan Rule.***



A fellow friar asked Padre Pio: "Padre, how are you able to live on so little food?" The Padre answered: "There are in nature fertile and non fertile fields. For the former, one grain of wheat will produce much; for the latter not even with the best fertilizers will any grain be produced. It must be the same with the human body or at least it is so for me." (Testimony from the Process of Canonization of Padre Pio).