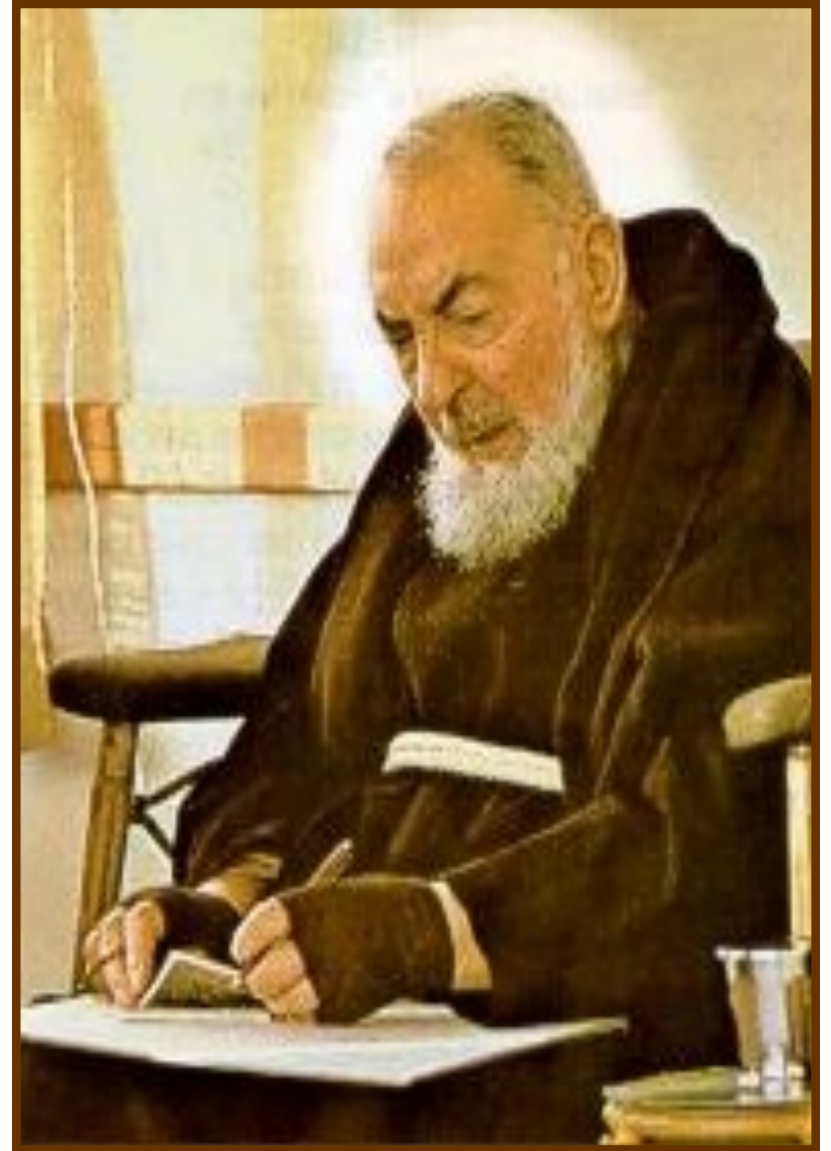




**ALWAYS LIVE UNDER THE EYES OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD  
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**Letter of Padre Pio:  
TRUST IN DIVINE GOODNESS**



## Letter of Padre Pio: TRUST IN DIVINE GOODNESS

In Letter five, dated 20-April-1914, Raffaella Cerase thanks Padre Pio for his fatherly charity towards her. Once again, she relates to him how she is deprived from receiving holy Communion because of inclement weather which conspires against her spiritual growth. She asks Padre Pio to ask Jesus to grant her solitude with Him, interior silence, deep recollection, and continual union with His adorable heart. She also states that Jesus' intentions, purpose and feelings are also hers.

Raffaelina wants Padre Pio to thank Jesus on her behalf for all the spiritual aids He has obtained for her and to ask Him to make her put them to good use. Otherwise, break off, cut off and put an end to everything in and around her. She wants Padre Pio to tell Jesus in the greatest confidence about her perpetual worry: her sister (Giovina's) lack of approaching the holy table more than two or three times a year and for Jesus to grant her soul peace by transferring her to different surroundings which will reduce the impressionable nature which has resulted in her conflicts, disillusionment and continual tears.

Next, Raffaelina asks for help with her continuing family problems, especially with her brother Matteo, who refuses to recognize his obligations to both Raffaelina and to her sister Giovina. She wants to know how does God want her to react in the midst of the disputes and upsets of all description within the family. Specifically, how does she manifest God's glory for the good of both her and her sister's soul.

Next, Raffaelina discusses the problem of a spiritual friend of hers, Rosina or Rosininella who has an aged father, a younger sister whose only concern in life is to get married, and a sick brother whose marriage is only recorded in the town registry office.

She relates a story to Padre Pio of a family of six first cousins of hers, all of them old, without ever having decent housing or employment. She describes this as being a never ending situation which her sister Giovina is trying to cope with and maintain a semblance of order but who is unable to stabilize the family situation.

Relating to Padre Pio yet another story about a spiritual friend of hers, still relatively young, who has been confined to a bed for 15 years and who has a brother, a priest, who is chronically ill, two unmarried sisters, another very pious sister who is married, and awaiting with tears and prayers the conversion of her husband and eight children.

Meanwhile, there is a terrifying drought going on in Foggia, and if the harvest fails, which is the only resource for the town, then the entire town will be facing a real

**Reminder:** The contents of this letter is specific between Raffaelina Cerase and Padre Pio. Someone else having similar problems may receive different answers from Padre Pio.



“May the merciful Virgin relieve your distress  
and bless both yourself and your sister.”

*Padre Pio*

Now, if such rays of light produced these three effects in your soul, consider them as coming from God. Neither the enemy much less our own imagination can produce these effects in the soul.

I have taken very much to heart all those needs which you have explained to me. May our most sweet Jesus bring peace to all these afflicted hearts. I tell you sincerely and without fear of lying, beloved daughter Jesus, that my soul can say with the apostle St. Paul (although, alas, I haven't even the thousandth part of the charity that burned in the heart of this holy Apostle): *I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brethren.* (Rom 9:3). Yes, let our most sweet Lord excommunicate me, separate me from Him, abandon me and allow me to suffer the shame and sufferings earned by my brethren; let Him even cancel my name from the Book of Life as long as He saves my brothers and my companions in exile and does not deprive me of His grace, from which nothing can separate me.

Pray to the Lord that he may gratify these desires which are burning up my internal organs and causing me to die continually.

You are distressed, moreover, by man's ingratitude towards God and you do well to weep over their misfortunes. In reparation to God, offer Him your blessing and all your actions, making sure that all of these are good. But after you have wept privately over the misfortunes of others, it is well to imitate once more Our Lord and the Apostles by dismissing these things from your mind and turning to other matters and other occupations more useful for God's glory and the salvation of souls. *It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken first to you, said the Apostles in addressing the Jews. Since you thrust it from you and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles.* (Acts 13:46). *The kingdom of God will be taken away from you, says the Divine Master in the holy Gospel, and given to a nation producing the fruits of it.* (Mt 21:43).

To spend too much time, then, in deploring the state of those who obstinately persist in sinning would be a waste of time which could be appropriately spent and should be spent in promoting the salvation of others and in works for God's glory.

I am obliged to stop at this point, but before ending I make a last effort in order to urge you not to bother thanking me, because I certainly do not deserve it. Address all your thanks, instead, to the heavenly Father. Don't worry and don't be racking your brains about your inability to express your needs clearly, for in this matter I don't expect a lot by any means. Far from reproving you, I admire and am pleased with your simplicity in explaining all your needs with holy confidence. May the merciful Virgin relieve your distress and bless both yourself and your sister.

Your servant,  
Padre Pio, Capuchin

disaster. Finally, will there be peace for Italy ravaged by wars (WW I), political factions, by servility, indifferentism and skepticism.

She also complains about her poor writing skills and her free and easy manner, without "head or tail." She states that she is a proud person and wants to know how it can be eradicated so as to destroy the evil and poisonous plant which has taken root so deeply in her heart. Sins in distress from such a labyrinth that she is unable to escape from it. She wants to understand Jesus and how she should act to please him.

The response Raffaolina receives from Padre Pio is a letter dated 25 April 1914. In the letter Padre Pio reveals the following:

Beloved daughter of Jesus,

May the peace of Jesus be always in your heart. Amen.

I am consoled to hear that the storms are increasing, for this is a sign that God's kingdom is being established within you. Keep cheerful and don't be discouraged. The temptation and storms that are circling around you are sure signs of divine predilection. Your fear of offending God is the surest proof that you are not offending Him.

Place your unlimited trust in the divine goodness and the more violent the enemy becomes, the more you should abandon yourself trustfully on the breast of the most tender heavenly Spouse who will never allow you to be overcome. God Himself has solemnly announced through Sacred Scripture: God is faithful and He will not let you be tempted beyond your strength, but with temptation will also provide a way of escape, that you may be able to endure it. (1 Cor 10:13).

To convince yourself of the opposite is infidelity and may God guard us from falling into similar absurdities. Even St. Paul was restless and besought the Lord to free him from the trial of the flesh: he too was very much afraid that he would yield, but did he not receive the assurance that grace would always be sufficient for him? (Cf. 2 Cor 12:9).

Our enemy who plots against us wants to persuade you that the very opposite is the case, but despise him in the name of Jesus and laugh heartily at him. This is the best way to make him beat a retreat. He plucks up courage when dealing with the weak, but when anyone takes up a weapon and faces him he becomes a coward. You may fear, if you like, but it must be that holy fear, I mean to say the fear that is never separated from love. When fear and love are united, they help each other, like sisters, to remain on their feet and to walk securely in the Lord's paths.

Love makes us hasten with rapid strides while fear, on the other hand, makes us watch prudently where we place our feet and guides us so that we may never stumble on the road leading to heaven. I know, my beloved sister, that the cross is painful and that for those who love, a thing is almost unbearable when it exposes them to the danger of offending the One they love and adore. But Jesus tempted in the desert and hanging on the Cross is a most clear, obvious and very consoling proof of what I tell you in the name of the most tender Spouse of souls. That is to say, for a soul that is seeking God in all things and longs above all to possess Him alone, that yearns to have Him reign as King in the depths of her spirit and ardently desires to be entirely and totally possessed by Him alone and in all this is much more jealous than any two people who have passionately vowed to love each other, for such a soul the storms of this life are a most evident sign of the special charity and exceptional mercy of God's loving providence, which He does not bestow on all souls, not even on those who are particularly privileged.

Courage, then, and go ahead. God is with you and hell, the world and the flesh will one day, to their confusion, have to relinquish their weapons and admit once more that they are powerless against the soul that possesses and is possessed by God.

You are tormented by the fact that you are unable to leave the house because of your delicate health and are therefore deprived of the immaculate Flesh of the divine Lamb. Moreover, you believe, or rather the enemy tries to make you believe, that this is a punishment from God. No, no, don't listen to him. I tell you in all sincerity that this is a particular predilection of the heavenly Father towards you. He wants to make you similar to His beloved Son who fasted from earthly food in the desert for 40 days. (Cf. Mat 4:2). By depriving you of this beneficial food, He wants to inspire you more and more with great reverence towards his Son in this sacrament, to enkindle within you an even greater love for the sacred table, for it is at the moment of privation, when God Himself brings this about, that the soul has a deeper appreciation of the greatness of this gift..

From these assurances you will understand that when you are convinced that deprived of Communion you will go from bad to worse, it is then that the shadows which have fallen on your soul do not come from the Father of light but from the tempter who wants to torment you. The unclean beast understands only too well that he is powerless to make you deviate from your duty, so he intends to vent his hatred on you by terrorizing you.

War has been declared upon you, my dear, and you need to be watchful at every moment, to put up a strong defense, with the eye of faith always fixed on God of hosts who is fighting along with you and for you. You must have boundless faith in the divine goodness, for the victory is absolutely certain. How could you think otherwise? Isn't our God more concerned about our salvation than we are ourselves? Isn't He stronger than hell itself? Who can ever resist and overcome the King of the heavens? What are the world, the devil, the flesh and all our enemies before the Lord?

I agree that you will go from bad to worse in the paths of the Lord if failure to approach the sacred table depended on your own choice, but since everything has been regulated by the heavenly Spouse, your soul will suffer no loss but will benefit all the more. You do well to desire to be united with Him every day and the best proof of this is that, whenever you can, you never neglect to go to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament to give and receive the kiss of peace.

Calm yourself, then, and rejoice, because in all this it is the Lord who is acting within you. You desire nothing else than to walk before Him all the time, so let Him guide you on the difficult journey of this life. Give Him your total assent so that He may act in the manner most pleasing to Him.

I am confused and I don't hide from you the fact that I feel continually a pang of grief with regard to your sister who approaches the altar so seldom to receive Jesus. This conduct really seems to denote indifference even if we don't want to call it – allow me to use a rather harsh expression – contempt rather than love for Jesus. Oh, if men could only appreciate this gift we should certainly not see such small numbers of communicants! These are very sad times, but what can be done? O unfortunate times on which we have fallen!

Let us pray to our most merciful Jesus to come to the aid of His Church, for her needs have become extreme.

You say that you are unable to distinguish whether the rays of light which appear at times in the depths of your soul come from God or from others and that you fear to be deceived in everything because of your subtle self-love.

Here, then, are the signs by which to know if these rays of light come from the Father of all light. These signs may be reduced to three. The first is that these lights produce an ever more admirable knowledge of God, who, while revealing Himself to us, gives us a deeper and deeper knowledge of His incomprehensible greatness. In a word, this light leads us to love God our Father more and more and to increase the sacrifices we make for His honor and glory. The second sign is an even greater knowledge of ourselves, a deeper and deeper sense of humility at the thought that such a wretched creature should have had the effrontery to offend Him and still dares to look at Him and tend towards Him. The third sign is that these heavenly rays produced in the soul and increasing contempt for all that belongs to this earth, with the exception of those things which may prove useful for the service of God.