

what is best for myself, how can I presume to know what is most useful and better for others? If God calls me I can hope in the help of his light and strength; but never let it be that by offering my services I have to experience the contradictions of those who trust in themselves."

What bitterness is reserved for the ambitious and how many ambitious people have been obliged to curse their own pride!

### **The Heart Of The Mother Reflects The Heart Of Jesus**

Saint Francis wept such copious and uncontrollable tears that he nearly lost his sight. And those tears were provoked by two spectacles: contempt for God's love and the suffering of the poor human race ruined by Satan. Let your tears flow freely as they can be as water to help extinguish the guilty ardour of many hearts, or as dew that mitigates its violence.

Whoever is not deeply moved by the sight of sinners, has not understood what a disaster sin is, and the extreme love Jesus has for sinners.

We believe it is a duty to feel pity and to help a poor wretch reduced to utter misery and ill-treated in his misfortune, but what compassion and concern should we not have for souls reduced to extreme poverty of grace and torn apart by Satan's teeth! Unfortunately they are the authors of their own misfortune and responsible for their horrible fate! But this does not exclude their being worthy of profound compassion because their guilt does not diminish their state of desolation.

Yes, repeat with the wanderer of Alvernia: "Love is not loved" and add: "Oh, how few there are who love the wretched, the most in need of mercy and tears!"

### **The Struggle Against Ourselves**

Tell your Sir Ego that resignation amidst joys and patience without problems has no significance in the Christian vocabulary.

True virtue knows triumph and is therefore not ignorant of violence and exertion. How true are the words of the Imitation of Christ that say that the more a soul contradicts and resists itself, the more it gains in perfection.

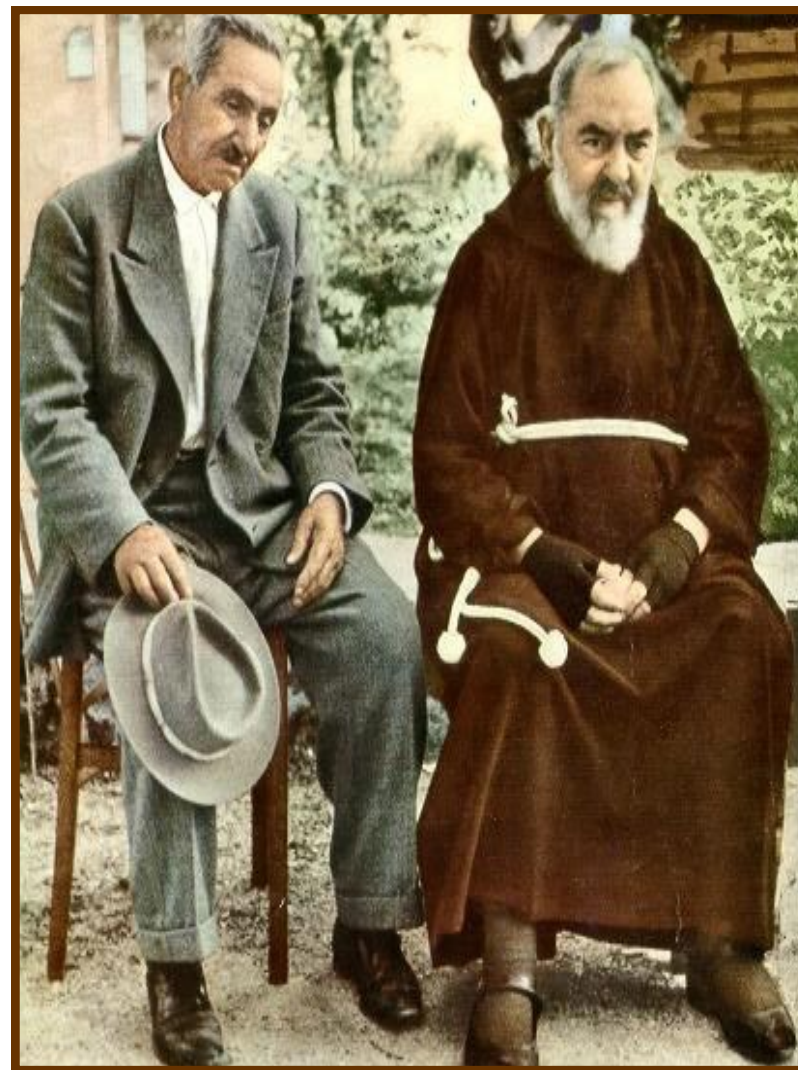
Self-control is born on the battle field, after pride has been broken and, strange as it may seem, evangelic joy derives from bitterness modestly endured. Otherwise why would Saints be called heroes?

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## **Padre Pio and Spiritual Formation**

Article 2

### **Brotherly Correction**



**Michael Forgione with his brother Padre Pio (Francesco)**

# Padre Pio and Spiritual Formation

**Padre Pio described his spiritual director, Padre Benedetto Nardella, as the man who "formed" him. Here are some of Padre Benedetto's teachings on the Christian life.**

## Article 2

### Brotherly Correction

Correcting and punishing are amongst the most beautiful acts of charity. The displeasure we feel for causing sorrow is a sign of goodness but it must not take on the aspect of scruples and even less make you hesitate to receive Communion. Because, if so, you would have to think negligence of education a virtue and let evil take its course with supine indifference.

Love inspires zeal, which is aversion for what harms beloved souls. But since it is aversion for evil, it is impossible not to become agitated in front of defects. Therefore, neither should you be preoccupied with the perturbation that accompanies reproof.

A sudden burst of anger is blameworthy if it arrives at the excess of cursing and insulting and surpasses the limits of truth and good manners.

Briefly, so long as the heart feels love and the storm is on the surface, there is nothing to fear.

Moreover, with the help of grace try to avoid bursts of anger and gain the mastery of yourself so that you dominate anger and are not dominated by it.

Indeed, I hope you are never angry but just appear to be, as did St Philip Neri.

If gentleness instigates insolence, it is because of their temperament. It is not possible to use the same method for everyone. Be gentle with the meek, indulgent with the timid, discreet with the sensitive. And with the tough? Alternate compassion with firmness.

### Knowledge And Joy For The Gifts We Possess

Knowing the gifts we possess is knowing the truth and is therefore not an imperfection. To enjoy this knowledge is justice because joy is the reward of virtue. It would be wrong if we did not acknowledge God as the giver and fount of all good things, because this would be against both truth and justice.

Since you are afraid of sinning, only knowing and rejoicing in good, you are a long way from being proud.

It is right that every morning you should wish that all praises given you should be referred to God and to reject all feelings of exaltation.

### Humility

Humility is the result of a hearty conviction of our nothingness and of our original baseness.

I say hearty because it is not enough to know, even clearly, these two great truths, but it is necessary to assimilate this consciousness so that we put into practice the correct knowledge of ourselves.

For the one who loves God, humility is not difficult, indeed whoever loves, wants the exaltation of the Beloved and enjoys acknowledging the good he receives from Him.

Saint Paul, one of the great divine lovers, gloried in repeating that he owed his existence and his vocation of apostle to God, and that he was weak in everything, so that he was able to declare that all his strength came from Jesus — 2 Cor 12,9. This is why the Saints lament, but are not upset by their falls; indeed in a certain sense they rejoice. They prefer to see God glorified through their infirmities rather than run the risk of not attributing their virtue to God.

From this it is evident why Saint Augustine affirms that with humility even sin becomes beautiful and because Jesus promises peace to the humble. I conclude. Humility is not the science of oneself, and even less is it an affectation, but love for one's own misery for the love of the One who is Glory.

### Command, Obedience, Ambition

For enlightened souls, it is much easier to obey than to give orders. All that is necessary to obey well is to obey out of love of God. Therefore the soul does not have to worry about prudence or lack of it of the given order, or whether it is the most appropriate for good results. But this is not the case for commanding well. Discretion is necessary for superiors, as well as purity of intention, a worthy purpose, charity and the absence of prejudice, passion and personal interest, etc. Consequently the Saints and the real Saints have always feared to accept prelacies and responsibilities; again, consequently the foolish and lukewarm have aspired to them and accepted them nonchalantly. Guard against all ambition by saying: "If I do not know