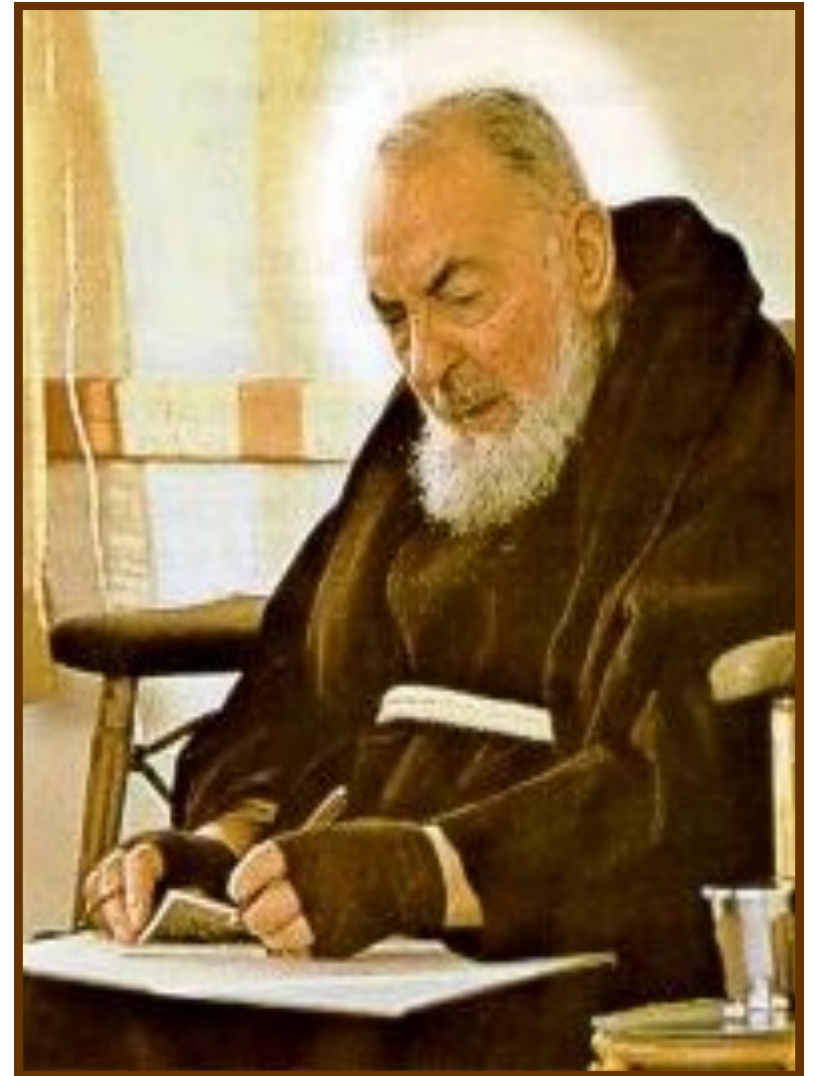




PADRE PIO READING A LETTER FROM A SPIRITUAL CHILD

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Padre Pio's Letter to a Directee



A Letter to a Directee

My Dearest Daughter,

Jesus reigns in your heart to overwhelm it with His holy love! I am sorry I do not have adequate answers to all of the questions you asked in your last letter. Please forgive me for being brief in answering you, I am in bed sick for three days, but generally I assure you to be calm in regard to condition of your spirit, it is pleasing to God. I cannot really believe and absolve you from meditating solely because it does not seem to you that you are reaping any benefits. The holy gift of prayer, my good daughter, it is in the right hand of the Savior; and in such measure that you will be empty of your own corporal love and will, and be instead rooted in holy humility, the Savior will thus communicate it to your heart.

Have patience in persevering in the holy exercise of meditation, and be content to progress in slow steps until you have legs to run and wings with which to fly. Be content to obey; which is never a small thing for the soul who has chosen God as his portion, and resign yourself to be for now a small hive bee able to make honey. Be always humble and loving in front of God and men, because God talks to those whose heart is humble in front of Him, and enriches them with His gifts.

But the real reason that you do not meditate well is, I think that you approach meditation in an altered state, coupled with a great anxiety to find something with which to console your spirit – and that is sufficient not to allow you to find what you are looking for and to be unable to bring your mind into the meditation of truth and your heart empty of affections. Daughter of mine, be aware that when one seeks with great hurry and avidity something lost, one will touch it, one will see it a hundred times and yet will never notice it. From this vain and useless anxiety you can derive nothing but a great tiredness of spirit and a blurred mind. I only know of the following remedy: come out of this anxiety, because it is the worst traitor that real virtue and devotion could ever have; it feigns to work well, but it does not – it only slows us and does not let us run in order for us to fall down. This is why I must repeat that I told you loudly before, that one needs to look well at all times, especially during prayers. In order to pray well it is good to remember that the styles and graces are not waters of this earth but of the heavens, so that all of your efforts are not sufficient to make it fall; it is necessary that our disposition be put forth with great diligence, and always with humility and tranquility. We need to keep the heart open to the heavens, and wait for the heavenly dew.

Do not forget, my daughter, to have with you these considerations when you go to pray, because this way you will come near to God, and you will put yourself in His presence for two principal reasons: The first to render God the honor and respect we owe Him, because this obligation is performed with recognition that He is our God,

and us His unworthy children who are prostrated with our spirit in front of Him waiting for His commands.

How many courtesans are there who come and go a hundred times in the presence of kings, none to talk or speak to him but simply to be seen by him, and doing so assiduously they let themselves be known as his real servants. This manner of staying in front of God to attest to our willingness to be known as His servants is very holy, very excellent, and of the purest and greatest perfection. Go ahead and laugh, but I am serious about what I have said.

The second reason why one puts oneself in the presence of God when praying is, in talking to Him hear His voice through his illuminations and inspirations so that He reaches us within and otherwise, and this gives us great delight for it is a grace given us to talk to such a great God, who when He answers us covers us with very precious unguents and a thousand balms which engulf the heart with joy.

Now my good daughter, one of these two riches is always you in prayer. If you can talk to God laud Him, listen to Him. If you cannot talk to Him because you were crude do not feel bad in the ways of the spirit – stop in your room, disguise yourself as the courtesan and curtsy and revere Him. He will see and appreciate your patience, He will favor your silence, and next time you will be consoled – he will take you by the hand, talk to you, take a hundred strolls with you in the paths of the garden of prayers, and if this will not take place (although they say that is impossible because such a tender father's heart could not stand to see His child in perpetual agony) be content just the same because we are obliged to follow Him, taking into consideration what a great miracle it is and what honor it is for Him to tolerate our presence. In this way you will not be despised when you talk to him. In prayer, then when you find yourself following God, talk to him if you can – if you cannot stop, consider your truths, let Him see your soul and do not trouble yourself further. You are always in my prayers which you speak of because I cannot forget you, who cost me many sacrifices and whose birth I have offered to God with a heart overwhelmed with grief. I confide in charity, that in your prayers you do not forget who carries the cross for all.

I bless you with all my heart and please take care.

Padre Pio