

**THE PADRE PIO  
PRAYER GROUP  
of Cleveland**

**Spiritual Director:**  
Fr. Edward J. Janoch

**Chaplains:**  
Fr. William E. Browne  
Fr. Michael Petkosek  
Fr. Kevin C. Shemuga

**Group Leader:**  
Cindy Russo

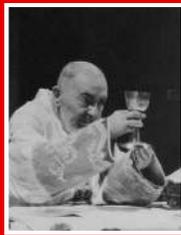
**MISSION &  
VISION:**

To carry out the works, words and devotion of St. Padre Pio through prayer and charitable works where we can touch lives and change souls.

Our vision is to create more Spiritual Children and lead souls to heaven.

**UPCOMING  
EVENTS:**

**Aug 1 -  
Padre Pio Prayer  
Group Gathering  
beginning with  
Rosary at 8:00 AM  
and Mass at 8:30 AM,  
Our Lady of  
Guadalupe Church,  
9080 Shepard Rd,  
Macedonia**



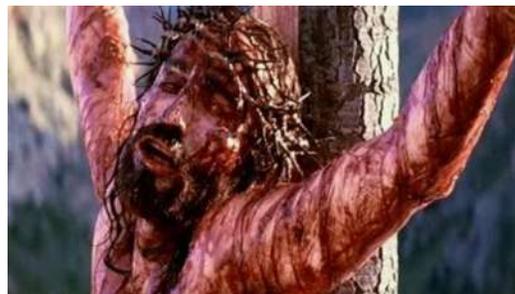
# St. Padre Pio Prayer Group Newsletter

JULY 2020

VOLUME 8, ISSUE 7

## Veneration of His Precious Blood

The Month of July is Dedicated to the Precious Blood. The feast of the Precious Blood of our Lord was instituted in 1849 by Pius IX, but the devotion is as old as Christianity. The early Fathers say that the Church was born from the pierced side of Christ, and that the sacraments were brought forth through His Blood. "The Precious Blood which we worship is the Blood which the Savior shed for us on Calvary and reassumed at His glorious Resurrection; it is the Blood which courses through the veins of His risen, glorified, living body at the right hand of God the Father in heaven; it is the Blood made present on our altars by the words of Consecration; it is the Blood which merited sanctifying grace for us and through it washes and beautifies our soul and inaugurates the beginning of eternal life."



The Church reminds us of the first drops of blood that flowed for our redemption on the day when Jesus was circumcised. It is night on Mount Olivet, and the moon is shining. We see the holy face crimsoned with blood during the agony in the garden. Unhappy, despairing Judas casts the blood-money down in the temple. "I have betrayed innocent blood!" In the scourging chamber we see the Lord in deepest humiliation; under raw strokes the divine Blood spurts out over the floor. Christ is led before Pilate. Pilate shows the blood-covered Body to the crowds: Ecce homo! We go through Jerusalem's streets following the footsteps to Golgotha. Down the beams of the Cross blood trickles. A soldier opens the sacred side and pours out Water and Blood. Through blood and water Christ willed to redeem God's many children and to lead them to an eternal home.

Devotion to the Precious Blood is not a spiritual option, it is a spiritual obligation, and that not only for priests, but for every follower of Christ. One of the symptoms of modern society is the lessening and the weakening of devotion to the Precious

Blood. The devotion to the Precious Blood of Christ, the Lamb of God who was slain, is to be venerated on our part, which is a composite of knowledge, love and adoration. We are to study to have a deeper understanding of what those two casual words, Precious Blood, really mean.

In one of the oldest documents from the first century of the Christian era, dated about 96 A.D., Pope St. Clement I says: "Let us fix our gaze on the Blood of Christ and realize how truly precious it is, seeing that it was poured out for our salvation and brought

the grace of conversion to the whole world." To understand the meaning of the Precious Blood we must get some comprehension of the gravity of sin, of the awfulness of offending God, because it required the Blood of the Son of God to forgive that sin.

We are living in an age in which to sin has become fashionable. This veneration of the Precious Blood means that we have a deep sensitivity to the awfulness of sin. Sin must be terrible. It must be awful. It must be the most dreadful thing in the universe. Why? Because it cost the living God in human form the shedding of His Blood.

Lord Jesus, You became Man in order by your Passion and Death, and the draining of your Blood on the Cross, You might prove to us, how much You, our God, loves us.

**Blood of Christ, Eucharistic drink and refreshment of souls, save us. Almighty, and everlasting God, who hast appointed Thine only-begotten Son to be the Redeemer of the world, and hast been pleased to be reconciled unto us by His Blood, grant us, we beseech Thee, so to venerate with solemn worship the price of our salvation, that the power thereof may here on earth keep us from all things hurtful, and the fruit of the same may gladden us forever hereafter in heaven. Amen.**

*“This blood, when worthily received, drives away demons and puts them at a distance from us, and even summons to us angels and the Lord of angels. This blood, poured out in abundance, has washed the whole world clean. This is the price of the world; by it Christ purchased the Church.” — St. John Chrysostom*



The month of July has been associated in the Catholic Church to the Precious Blood of Christ. The first Sunday in July was reserved for this feast. Since the liturgical changes in 1969, the celebration of the Precious Blood of Christ was merged with the feast of the Most Holy Body of Christ [*Corpus Christi*]. Also, the month of June is associated with the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Precious Blood of Jesus is associated with the Sacred Heart.

Our understanding of the importance of the Precious Blood of Christ is mentioned in St. John the Evangelist’s book, *Revelation [The Apocalypse]*. We read in Chapter 7, Verses 9 to 14:

### **Triumph of the Elect.**

After this I had a vision of a great multitude, which no one could count, from every nation, race, people, and tongue. They stood before the throne and before the Lamb, wearing white robes and holding palm branches in their hands. They cried out in a loud voice:

*“Salvation comes from our God, who is seated on the throne, and from the Lamb.”*

All the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They prostrated themselves before the throne, worshiped God, and exclaimed:

*“Amen. Blessing and glory, wisdom and thanksgiving, honor, power, and might be to our God forever and ever. Amen.”*

Then one of the elders spoke up and said to me, “Who are these wearing white robes, and where did they come from?” I said to him, “My lord, you are the one who knows.” He said to me, “These are the ones who have survived the time of great distress; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

So, we see the paradox that the Blood of Christ cleanses one and makes all that it touches immaculate. So, when our souls are washed in the Blood of Christ, instead of being stained with Christ’s Blood, the soul is made pure, clean, immaculate. Yet, in our world we have had so much blood shed in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and it looks like more is going to be shed during the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Are we in “*the time of great distress?*” It looks like it, but even if it is not, we have been called by Christ “*to take up our cross and follow him.*” Persecution is going to happen to the followers of Christ, but if we persevere, we will be among the ones wearing the white robes washed by the Blood of the Lamb and carrying palms to signify our martyrdom [witness] to Christ.

Padre Pio received revelations on the End Times. They have been broken down into 12 messages. The part of the first one mentions:

*“The world is going to ruin. Men have abandoned the right path, to venture into paths that end in the desert of violence ... If they do not immediately return to drink at the source of humility, charity and love, it will be catastrophe.”*

*(Continued on page 3)*

*(Continued from page 2)*

It seems that we may be in the beginning of the End Times, but from the moment Jesus ascended into heaven, the End Times began. These are warnings and they are not to frighten us but to prepare us for what will eventually happen, whether now or later. Padre Pio is telling us that we need to drink at the source of humility, charity and love. We do this every time we faithfully receive the Holy Eucharist. When we receive the Body of Christ, we receive the real presence of Jesus: His Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity. By receiving the Eucharistic Christ, we drink from the source of humility, charity and love which is needed to help us to survive the End Times. God loves us so much, that he gives us these “warnings” to help us be faithful and not fearful. We will not know the exact day, time or hour, but we know that it will come.

I know that I may have scared some of you, and I do not mean to. I want to remind us to persevere to the end, so that when the End Times come, we will be ready to receive our white robe which was washed in the Precious Blood of Christ and our palm of martyrdom; whether at the world’s end or at the hour of our death. I have also included the Litany of The Most Precious Blood for us to pray during the month of July, which is the Eucharistic drink and refreshment for our souls.

May we be washed in the Blood of the Lamb.

## The Litany of The Most Precious Blood

Lord, have mercy on us.  
*Christ, have mercy on us.*

Lord, have mercy on us. Christ, hear us.  
*Christ, graciously hear us.*

God, the Father of Heaven, *have mercy on us.*  
God the Son, Redeemer of the world, *have mercy on us.*  
God, the Holy Spirit, *have mercy on us.*  
Holy Trinity, One God, *have mercy on us.*

Blood of Christ, only-begotten Son of the Eternal Father, *save us.*

Blood of Christ, Incarnate Word of God, *save us.*

Blood of Christ, of the New and Eternal Testament, *save us.*

Blood of Christ, falling upon the earth in the Agony, *save us.*

Blood of Christ, shed profusely in the Scourging, *save us.*

Blood of Christ, flowing forth in the Crowning with Thorns, *save us.*

Blood of Christ, poured out on the Cross, *save us.*

Blood of Christ, price of our salvation, *save us.*

Blood of Christ, without which there is no forgiveness, *save us.*

Blood of Christ, Eucharistic drink and refreshment of souls, *save us.*

Blood of Christ, stream of mercy, *save us.*

Blood of Christ, victor over demons, *save us.*

Blood of Christ, courage of martyrs, *save us.*

Blood of Christ, strength of confessors, *save us.*

Blood of Christ, bringing forth virgins, *save us.*

Blood of Christ, help of those in peril, *save us.*

Blood of Christ, relief of the burdened, *save us.*

Blood of Christ, solace in sorrow, *save us.*

Blood of Christ, hope of the penitent, *save us.*

Blood of Christ, consolation of the dying, *save us.*

Blood of Christ, peace and tenderness of hearts, *save us.*

Blood of Christ, pledge of Eternal Life, *save us.*

Blood of Christ, freeing souls from purgatory, *save us.*

Blood of Christ, most worthy of all glory and honor, *save us.*

Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world,  
*Spare us, O Lord.*

Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world,  
*Graciously hear us, O Lord.*

Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world,  
*Have mercy on us.*

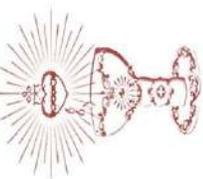
V. You have redeemed us, O Lord, in Your Blood.  
R. *And made us, for our God, a kingdom.*

Let us pray:

Almighty and eternal God, You have appointed Your only-begotten Son the Redeemer of the world and willed to be appeased by his blood. Grant, we beg of You, that we may worthily adore this price of our salvation and through its power be safeguarded from the evils of the present life so that we may rejoice in its fruits forever in heaven. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.



## Reflections of St. Padre Pio / July 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><b>JULY IS THE MONTH OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF JESUS</b></p> <p><i>“O Blood and Water, which gushed forth from the Heart of Jesus as a Fount of Mercy for us, I trust in You.”</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">--St. Faustina</p>						
5 God alone can enlighten the soul with His grace and show that soul what it is.	6 The more fully a soul knows his own ... unworthiness in God's sight, the more remarkable is the grace that enlightens him...	7 May your heart always be a temple of the Holy Spirit.	8 May Jesus always be the helmsman of your little spiritual ship.	9 Don't yield to the storms stirred up by Satan.	10 Place your trust in God all the time.	11 Fight the good fight like a strong one.
<b>14<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME</b>	<b>Weekday</b> <i>St. Maria Goretti</i>	<b>Weekday</b>	<b>Weekday</b> <i>St. Augustine Zhao Rong and Companions</i>	<b>Weekday</b>	<b>Weekday</b>	<b>Weekday</b> <i>St. Benedict</i>
12 May the grace of the Holy Spirit sustain you and enable you to grow more and more in virtue.	13 May Jesus and Mary provide you with the grace to fight all the time with fresh courage against the wiles of the Evil Spirit.	14 May your angel continually praise the Most Holy Trinity on your behalf.	15 The Lord ... is so good to all His creatures, especially those who do their utmost to love Him.	16 May Mary be the star which shines on your path and may she show you the safe way to reach the heavenly Father.	17 Praise be forever Jesus and may the divine mercy and providence be praised forever!	18 Humble yourself continually before the Lord.
<b>15<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME</b>	<b>Weekday</b> <i>St. Henry</i>	<b>Weekday</b> <i>St. Kateri Tekakwitha</i>	<b>Weekday</b> <i>St. Bonaventure</i>	<b>Weekday</b> <i>Our Lady of Mount Carmel</i>	<b>Weekday</b>	<b>Weekday</b> <i>St. Camillus de Lellis</i> <i>BVM</i>
19 Have boundless trust in God even when misfortune and deceitful prompting of the enemy trouble you.	20 (The Lord) never ceases to visit (his creatures) in time of trial.	21 He who abandons himself in God and trusts in Him will never be confounded.	22 Remain with (Jesus) always in times of misfortune and trial.	23 May your whole life be spent in giving thanks...	24 Live for (Jesus), in a word, and let your entire life be spent for Him.	25 Hand over to (Jesus) your departure and the departure of others from this earth, when, where, and as He wills.
<b>16<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME</b>	<b>Weekday</b> <i>St. Apollinaris</i>	<b>Weekday</b> <i>St. Lawrence of Brindisi</i>	<b>Weekday</b> <i>ST. MARY MAGDALENE</i>	<b>Weekday</b> <i>St. Bridget</i>	<b>Weekday</b> <i>St. Sharbel Makhlof</i>	<b>ST. JAMES</b>
26 In all things show yourself ever more worthy of your Christian vocation.	27 Live in such a way that your heavenly Father may be proud of you as He is proud of so many other chosen souls...	28 Live in such a way that you may repeat at every moment with the apostle St. Paul: Be imitators of me, as I am of Jesus Christ.	29 Live in such a way that the world will be forced to say of you: Here is Christ.	30 Every Christian who is a true imitator and follower of (Christ) can and must call himself a second Christ.	31 If only all Christians were to live up to their vocation, this very land of exile would be changed into a paradise.	
<b>17<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME</b>	<b>Weekday</b>	<b>Weekday</b>	<b>Weekday</b> <i>St. Martha</i>	<b>Weekday</b> <i>St. Peter Chrysologus</i>	<b>St. Ignatius of Loyola</b>	

## Seven Basic Steps to Holiness

Life here is all about the pursuit of sanctity. How does one go about that process, so as to know the greatest measure of fulfillment now. How does one get to Heaven? By being a saint on earth and living a life of holiness.

**1. Holiness consists in being childlike.** Our Lord Himself asserted – unequivocally – “unless you turn and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of Heaven” (Mt 18:3). But, as you have undoubtedly heard many times, being childlike is quite different from being childish. Saint Thérèse, for example, was devoted to the Holy Child Jesus because she found in Him all the qualities to become a saint herself. What is spiritual childhood? The human capacity for God can only be satisfied when one approaches that God as a child accepts the loving overtures of a father.

**2. Holiness consists in having a strong love for the Holy Eucharist.** You cannot point to a single saint in history who did not have a special devotion to the Eucharistic Christ. Padre Pio said “Every Holy Mass, heard with devotion, produces in our souls marvelous effects, abundant spiritual and material graces which we ourselves, do not know. If we only knew how God regards this Sacrifice, we would risk our lives to be present at a single Mass.” If you complain the Mass is so long, perhaps your love is short. It is the greatest action on earth. Jesus becomes present on the altar in flesh and blood. Two-thirds of those who receive the Lord in Holy Communion each Sunday do not believe in His Real Presence.

**3. Holiness consists in devotion to the Blessed Mother.** The Fathers of Vatican II in their Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, highlighted numerous titles of the Blessed Virgin, all of which find their way into the Catechism of the Catholic Church, where we read: This motherhood of Mary in the order of grace continues uninterruptedly from the consent which she loyally gave at the Annunciation and which she sustained without wavering beneath the cross, until the eternal fulfillment of all the elect. Taken up to Heaven she did not lay aside this saving office, but by her manifold intercession continues to bring us the gifts of eternal salvation. Therefore, the Blessed Virgin is invoked in the Church under the titles of Advocate, Helper, Benefactress, and Mediatrix.



**4. Holiness consists in doing the ordinary things of life extraordinarily well.** The saint of “The Little Way” achieved sanctity, precisely by attending to the humdrum details of daily existence with perfection and devotion. Whether she was sweeping the stairs, or working in the sacristy, or giving formation to the novices, she did everything with verve, deliberateness, and conviction. She believed that “God is in the details,” and that attending to such details

led one along the road to perfection. “Nothing is an obstacle to holiness. Different temperaments, situations in which we find ourselves, duties in our state in life, can become material for sanctity.”

**5. Holiness consists in embracing the sufferings that come our way.** A single characteristic of our age is the avoidance of suffering at all cost; therefore, it is not surprising to find people today who think that the acceptance of suffering is neurotic at best and psychotic at worst. But that is to misunderstand the Christian “take” on these matters. The first point that must be perceived is that the believer does not suffer alone – he suffers in union with Christ, which suffering is redemptive for the one suffering and for any for whom he offers his sufferings. The Head of the Body has indeed suffered and drunk from the chalice of suffering to the full, but what Saint Augustine calls the *Totus Christus* (the whole Christ), that is, His Mystical Body which is the Church, is called to drink deeply from that chalice as well. As we do that, we do it in union with the suffering Christ and in union with every other believer who has ever lived and suffered in His Name or is doing so presently. A Christian need not – and should not – look for crosses; but when they come, one must pray for the ability to deal with them lovingly and humanly, resulting in an increase in human dignity, an increase in love in the world, and an increase in glory in Heaven.

**6. Holiness consists in the desire to please God.** Much of what we do seems calculated to earn us a reward or to avoid a penalty, but that is a very stingy, selfish approach to the living of the Christian life. The traditional act of contrition puts words on our lips which call to mind that while, humanly speaking, we are sorry for our sins because we “dread the loss of Heaven and the pains of Hell,” we are urged to advance to a more perfect form of sorrow, that is, “because [my sins] offend Thee, my God, Who art all-good and deserving of all my love.” Our fear of the Lord as disciples of Jesus should not be a servile fear but a filial fear. What’s the difference? Servile fear moves a person to avoid certain acts because one is in terror of the chastisement of a monstrous master. Filial fear, on the other hand, moves one to avoid sin because he knows God as a loving Father, Whom he would never wish to displease. We desire to please Him in all things because, in humility, we know that He does know best; that He has our best interests at heart; that He is, in the words of Saint Augustine, “intimior intimo meo” [closer to me than I am to myself].

**7. Holiness consists in having a sense of humor.** The greatest saints, however, were not dour, depressing sorts. Saint Philip Neri was a practical jokester. Saint Teresa of Ávila often asked God to deliver her from would-be saints who made a career out of looking miserable. Good humor makes external various interior dispositions. Peacefulness, calmness, contentment, acceptance of God’s Will in one’s life – all make for genuine joy, which is not a cheap brand of hilarity or superficiality. Joy arises from the sure conviction that God is in charge, and that nothing will happen this day that He and I – together – will be unable to handle. Joy comes about because of

*(Continued on page 7)*

## Dear Spiritual Brothers and Sisters of Padre Pio

Hopefully, we will meet on August 1 at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church at 8am for our Prayer Gathering. I have heard from so many of you expressing your sadness of not seeing one another. They say absence makes the heart grow fonder and it is so true. There will be no social afterwards however. Spiritually we have been uniting in prayer to our Lord, Blessed Mother and the Angels and Saints. I pray for all of you each and every day.



Plans are developing for the Shrine. We continuously need prayers for this project.

I can't stop thinking with the Fourth of July the song God Bless America: "While the storm clouds gather far across the sea. Let us swear allegiance to a land that's free. Let us all be grateful for a land so fair. As we raise our voices in a solemn prayer."

[Song:] God bless America....Land that I love....Stand beside her and guide her....Thru the night with a light from above....From the mountains, to the prairies....To the oceans white with foam....God bless America!....My home, sweet home!....God bless America!....My home, sweet home!

Blessings and Gratitude,  
Cindy Russo, Group Leader

*I pray  
for all  
of you  
each  
and  
every  
day.*

### **LETTER FROM CENTRO GRUPPI DI PREGHIERA DI PADRE PIO San Giovanni Rotondo (In regards on the Anniversary of Padre Pio's Canonization)**

"To all the Padre Pio Prayer Groups, who together with their leaders and Spiritual Assistants, have joined in the Communal Prayer Initiative for, with the certainty that this union of prayer will be pleasing to St. Pio and will bestow abundant graces and blessings for all, in particular for the Pope, for the Church, for Peace, for Fr Franco Moscone, for the Casa Sollievo della Sofferenza [House for the Relief of Suffering] and its patients and all the St. Pio Prayer Groups. There were 539 prayer groups around the world participating. Thank you once again for your kind fraternal union in prayer. May Padre Pio always be with us and bless us all. Fraternal and warm greetings to all in the hope of hearing from you soon."

Padre Franco Moscone (General Director)  
Padre Luciano Lotti (General Secretary)

## Padre Pio Chose Me

Fr. John Paul Zeller MFVA is a friar with the Franciscan Missionaries of the Eternal Word and a Missionary of Mercy from Birmingham, Alabama. Fr. John Paul is the proud owner of a first-class relic of Padre Pio, and has witnessed several healings after praying through Padre Pio's intercession with the relic in his hand. Fr. John Paul said that while he initially had no specific devotion to Padre Pio, he developed one after taking a trip to San Giovanni Rotondo, where Padre Pio served as a priest for the majority of his life, after the 2014 canonization of St. John Paul II. After learning more about Padre Pio's life, he said he was moved, and worked up the courage to ask one of the superiors in San Giovanni for a relic. The superior agreed, and gave Fr. John Paul not one but two pieces of a blood-soaked bandage Padre Pio had wrapped around the wounds of his stigmata. Fr. John Paul said that after he received the relics, he gave one to his community, founded by Mother Angelica, and was granted permission to keep the other for himself. "I keep that relic on me at all times," he said, noting that in his role as Director of the Pilgrimage Department at EWTV's headquarters in Birmingham, "I have the opportunity to pray with a lot of people. I've prayed with people and there have been cases where there have been, I would say, some healings," the priest said, explaining that people will come up to him several months, even a year, after he prayed with them and recount experiences of healing.

One such experience happened only a few months ago during a healing service at the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament in Hanceville on the feast of Our Lady of Fatima, he said, recalling how during the service, he and two other priests prayed over people with the two blood-soaked bandages as well as a glove of Padre Pio's that belonged to Mother Angelica. As they were praying, a woman suffering from sciatica came up "and I prayed over her," Fr. John Paul said, noting that the woman approached him later and said that after she went back to her seat, she told her husband "I'm healed." Sciatica "is a very serious back condition that doesn't really go away and is very painful," the priest said, noting that "it totally went away" for this woman after he prayed over her with the relic.



In another instance, Fr. John Paul recalled how shortly after he received the relic he was talking with some friends and found out that their 12-year-old daughter had been suffering from an ear infection that "wouldn't seem to go away." He asked the girl if he could pray over her with his relic, and when she said yes, "I showed her mom and I showed her and I said 'which ear is it?'" He said that as soon as he put the relic to the girl's ear and began to pray, "she dropped to the ground. She totally slipped out of my hands. I should have caught her, but I didn't know what was happening, I was kind of scared that something happened to her, but she totally slipped out of my hands and fell on the ground," he said, noting that while he was anxious over the situation, the girl's mother was calm, saying "that would be 'Slain in the Spirit.' The ear infection was completely knocked out of her," he said, noting that from that point on, "from what I know she didn't have the ear infection."

In yet another case "there was a lady that had some kind of heart disease for 40 years that she'd suffered from in her life," he said, adding that while he didn't have time to get into the specifics, "she's totally healed" after having been prayed over with the relic of Padre Pio. "It's a longer story than that, but she's totally free from that," Fr. John Paul said, recalling how another woman recently came to him, saying she "had experienced some kind of physical healing" after being prayed over with the relic.

Referring to the healings, he stressed that "that's not me, that's the intercession of St. Padre Pio." Although he initially had no devotion to Padre Pio until just a few years ago, the priest said he feels like the sudden connection that came is because the saint chose him, rather than the other way around. "One of my professors at seminary used to say that we don't choose saints, saints choose us," he said, noting that while we may have "a particular liking of a saint, we may look at a saint's personality and be drawn to them...I think there is a truth to saints choosing us rather than us choosing them."

**Saint Pio of Pietrelcina pray for us! We ask for your intercession that within the next year we can take a pilgrimage to EWTV. Amen.**

*(Continued from page 5)*

the awareness that the greatest battles in life – against the world, the flesh and the Devil – have been fought – and won – by Jesus Christ; it but remains for us to claim the victory. This type of perspective on reality provides a person with a real sense of humor, which is a fitting and necessary pre-condition for entrance into a state of eternal joy.

The "door of faith" is always open for us, ushering us into the life of communion with God and offering entry into His Church. It is possible to cross that threshold when the Word of God is proclaimed and the heart allows itself to be shaped by transforming grace. To enter through that door is to set out on a journey that lasts a life-

time. Well, we have come to the end of our course in the making of a saint, and the one thing that should strike us is how incredibly easy – and enjoyable – it all should be. Of course, someone like Saint Thérèse set the goal of her life in childhood, as she mentioned so often: "I've always wished that I could be a saint." And then she gives a final piece of advice, advice all of us would do well to heed: "Believe me, don't wait until tomorrow to begin becoming a saint." As the Holy Father said, it's "a journey that lasts a lifetime," but we need to embark on that journey today. Saint Catherine of Siena put it very succinctly: "All the way to Heaven is Heaven."

**Most sweet Jesus, set on fire my love for You and transform me into Yourself. Oh, how greatly I desire you lead me on the path to Holiness. Amen.**

Lady  
Poverty

Holy  
Simplicity

Gracious  
Humility

## Perfect Joy

St. Francis was Padre Pio's Spiritual Father. G.K. Chesterton once wisely wrote that people who admire St. Francis often do so because they fixate on those aspects of his life that please them while ignoring the ones they find unsettling or even repugnant. Padre Pio did not as he lived the Franciscan spirituality. Scrubbing away anything about St. Francis that we find distasteful might leave us with a charming garden statue, but garden statues make poor spiritual directors.

One of the most disconcerting features of the real St. Francis and Padre Pio is their uncompromising commitment to Christ. They both shared the gift of the stigmata given by Christ. If we are honest, many Catholics practice Christianity watered down. Taken straight, it's simply too strong for our weak stomachs, so we sidestep all the scriptural injunctions calling us to make radical changes in our lifestyles—loving our enemies, turning the other cheek, pooling possessions for the common good, voluntary poverty, sacrificing ourselves for the sake of others. We either ignore messages like these altogether or interpret them to mean something much less radical than Christ intended. But St. Francis

and Padre Pio took Christ's teaching seriously. They

championed the radical notion that Christ meant what he said when he spoke of love and poverty and sacrifice. To presume otherwise is to conclude that

Christ was in the strange habit of always saying one thing but meaning something quite different, so their spiritual journey became the lifelong conversion of themselves to Christ.

As St. Paul might have said, St. Francis wished to "put on" Christ while simultaneously shucking off his old self, the Francis-centered ego (see Romans 13:14). To that end, he preached and practiced the three virtues he saw as most central to Christ's life and teaching: poverty, simplicity, and humility. Francis told his follow-

ers that when they wed Lady Poverty, they freed their bodies from the enslavement to possessions that breed violence. When they embraced Holy Simplicity, they liberated their minds and hearts from internal vanities and ambitions that distracted them from God. And when they embraced Gracious Humility, they released their spirit to acknowledge gratefully its utter dependence on the Creator of the universe.

On a grander scale, poverty, simplicity, and humility free us to love because they destroy fear, the single greatest impediment to love. And when we learn to love with something like the love God has for creation, we arrive at the end for which we are made. We grow into our Godlikeness. We live fully and richly. We also live joyfully. Poverty, as Francis and Padre Pio discovered, is frequently quite unpleasant; no one likes to go hungry or thirsty or unsheltered. Simplicity and humility are likewise often painful. It's so much easier to read theology than to live the Gospel, or to strike back than to turn the other cheek. But these pleasantries are just temporary reactions ultimately unable to override the deep happiness or perfect joy that comes when we fulfill our potentiality as loving images of God.

This is the incredible message that Francis brought to his world and Padre Pio lived—a world, much like our own, sunk in forgetfulness and indifference, a world that preferred its Christianity watered down. Their message, which was really Christ's message, revitalized the spiritual climate of his day. So many persons opened their hearts to what Francis had to say that he formed the secular Third Order for them so that they might continue their lives in the "ordinary" world while striving to prove worthy of perfect joy. Padre Pio developed Prayer Groups to live and lead us on the path of holiness. If we're unhappy, then, it's not because happiness is out of our reach; it's because we simply haven't stretched as high as we could and should. Francis of Assisi was someone who stretched as high as he could, and in doing so he found genuine happiness, or what he liked to call "perfect joy." Padre Pio lived it. With God's help, perfect joy is possible.



## The Story of Our Lady of Mount Carmel

Hermits lived on Mount Carmel near the Fountain of Elijah in northern Israel in the 12th century. They had a chapel dedicated to Our Lady. By the 13th century they became known as “Brothers of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.” They soon celebrated a special Mass and Office in honor of Mary. In 1726, it became a celebration of the universal Church under the title of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. For centuries the Carmelites have seen themselves as specially related to Mary. Their great saints and theologians have promoted devotion to her and often championed the mystery of her Immaculate Conception. Saint Teresa of Avila called Carmel “the Order of the Virgin.” Saint John of the Cross credited Mary with saving him from drowning as a child, leading him to Carmel, and helping him escape from prison. Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus believed that Mary cured her from illness. On her First Communion day, Thérèse dedicated her life to Mary. During the last days of her life she frequently spoke of Mary. There is a tradition that Mary appeared to Saint Simon Stock, a leader of the Carmelites, and gave him a scapular, telling him to promote devotion to it. The scapular is a modified version of Mary’s own garment. It symbolizes her special protection and calls the wearers to consecrate themselves to her in a special way. The scapular reminds us of the gospel call to prayer and penance—a call that Mary models in a splendid way. Our Prayer Group makes Rosary Scapulars (<https://www.padrepiocleveland.org/scapulars.html>). Our pilgrims had the honor of visiting Mount Carmel and purchasing the medallions we use on our rosary scapulars. It symbolizes two requests of the Blessed Mother: pray the rosary and wear the brown scapular. Feast Day is July 16th. Pray for us Our Lady of Mount Carmel!



### A Prayer to Our Lady of Mount Carmel (Novena Begins on July 7–July 15)

O most beautiful Flower of Mount Carmel, fruitful vine, splendor of Heaven, Blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in this my necessity. O Star of the Sea, help me and show me herein that you are my Mother.

O Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and earth, I humbly beseech you from the bottom of my heart, to succor me in this my necessity. There are none that can withstand your power. O show me herein that you are my Mother.

O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us that have recourse to thee. (Repeat three times)

Sweet Mother, I place this cause in your hands. (Repeat three times)

## How the Black Plague Changed the Hail Mary

The “Hail Mary” prayer is composed of two main parts. The first part of the prayer is derived from the Annunciation, when the angel Gabriel greeted Mary by saying, “Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you!” (Luke 1:28) The next part of



the prayer is taken from the Visitation, when Elizabeth greeted Mary with the words, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!” (Luke 1:42)

At first the prayer was known as the “Salutation of the Blessed Virgin,” and only consisted of the two verses joined together. However, during the Black Plague (or “Black Death”) the prayer was further developed and a second part was added to it.

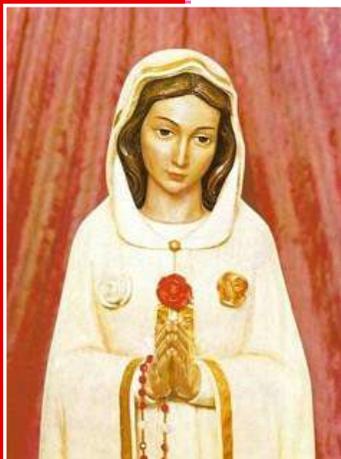
This second part (“Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of our death”) is believed by many to have been added during the plague to ask for the Blessed Mother’s protection from the fatal disease.

Venerable Fulton J. Sheen explains this origin in his book *The World’s First Love*: “Since it seizes upon the two decisive moments of life: “now” and “at the hour of our death,” it suggests the spontaneous outcry of people in a great calamity. The Black Death, which ravaged all Europe and wiped out one-third of its population, prompted the faithful to cry out to the Mother of Our Lord to protect them at a time when the present moment and death were almost one.”

The prayer took various forms during this bleak period in Europe, but was officially recognized after the publication of the Catechism of the Council of Trent and the full prayer was then included in the Roman Breviary of 1568.

# Prayers for Priests and Consecrated Religious

We honor the Blessed Mother on July 13th under the title of Mystical Rose — Rosa Mystica found in the Litany of Loreto. We especially call on her as we pray for our priests and those consecrated to the Lord.



## MARY, MYSTICAL ROSE

by A. M. Weigl

Mary, Mystical Rose,  
Mother of the Church,  
Help the Holy Father and  
all bishops, all priests and  
all religious.

Intercede for the sorely-  
pressed Church of our  
times.

Pray for our threatened world, into  
which Satan's hot breath is blowing.

Draw us all to your immaculate  
motherly heart.

You are the Mother of Pity. Amen.

--From *Maria, Rosa Mystica* (Published by  
Druckeri Burger in 1984)

## LORD, GRANT YOUR PRIESTS

Lord, grant your priests  
a pure heart, able to love only You;

a pure heart, that knows no evil,  
but is able to distinguish it,  
to fight against it and to flee it;

a pure heart, like that of a child,  
inspired and longing for God,

Lord, grant your servants a big heart,  
open to Your thoughts and closed for  
any malicious ambition, and for any  
regrettable human competition

Lord, grant your priests a strong heart,  
prepared to cope with every difficulty,

every temptation, every weakness,  
every boredom, every fatigue.

A heart, Lord, that is truly capable to  
love, to understand, to welcome, to  
serve, to sacrifice, blessed with a heart  
that palpitates for Your feelings and  
thoughts.

Because the world needs hearts  
who save and love souls like Christ  
does. Amen.

## CONSECRATION TO THE IMMACULATE VIRGIN MARY

O, Immaculate Virgin, Mother of  
Grace, Queen of heaven and earth,  
refuge for the sinners, Rosa Mystica,  
bringing God's wonderful fragrances,  
we consecrate ourselves to your  
Immaculate Heart.

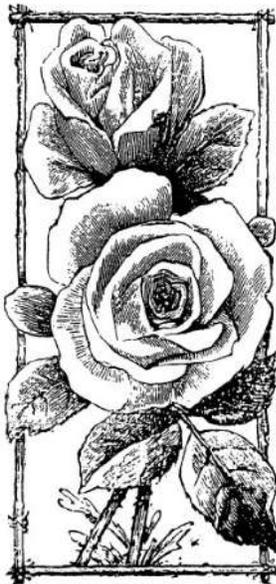
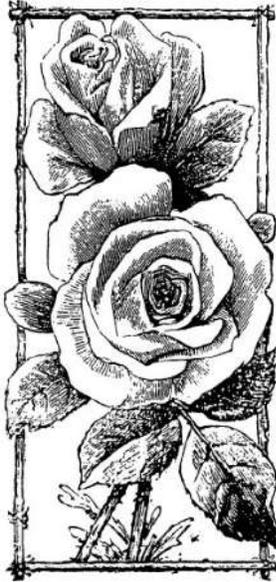
We consecrate our hearts to You,  
our souls, our families, all that we own.

To make this consecration effective  
and durable, we renew today our  
baptismal and confirmation promises  
and we commit ourselves to live like  
good Christians, faithful to God, to the  
Church and to the Pope.

We wish to pray the Holy Rosary, to  
participate in the Holy Eucharist, attach  
importance to the first Saturday of the  
month, to work for the conversion of the  
sinners, to pray for faithful priests of  
your Son Jesus and for all devoted  
souls to Him. Amen.



**Pray for  
our  
threatened  
world, into  
which  
Satan's hot  
breath is  
blowing.**



### ST. PADRE PIO'S FRAGRANCES

Aniseed	hope
Basil	do not miss the spiritual contact with God
Bitter	news of death
Blood	do the will of God
Boiled milk	need medical intervention
Burning rubber	forgiveness of sins
Burnt sugar	presence of the devil
Cake	Padre Pio's blessing
Camphor	boot to the recovery
Carnations	greater loyalty and sincerity
Chocolate	must sustain
Coffee	do not be anxious
Flour	arrival of Providence
Garlic	follow the road taken without remorse
Geraniums	no fatigue
Hawthorn	satisfaction of Padre Pio for his behavior
Incense	call to prayer
Jasmine	commitment to God
Lavender	harmony
Lilies	call to purity
Mint	devotion to Mary
Mixed flowers	submission
Olive	peace
Phenol	expected physical and mental suffering
Pine	to pray
Poppies	do not talk
Purple	humility
Roses	the presence of Padre Pio
Sage	health
Stable	invitation to St. Michael
Strawberries	receive the benefits of intercession
Sulfur	the presence of evil
Tar	straighten up spiritually and materially
Tobacco	conversion
Tuberous	good omen
Vanilla	help in a surgical operation
Vinegar	victory over sin and temptations
Wax	scent of the Faith
Wine	joy

The thought of breathing in fragrant Holy Beauty. How delightful, then, to know God as a beautiful fragrance that we breathe in until it permeates every part of our being. Breathe in...breathe in...breathe in. And then, of course, breathe out. Take the beauty of God's-scent everywhere. Let the God-fragrance of you attract all who come near. Let those around you breathe in your kindness, care of the poor, and compassion. Let them say of you: "She or he has 'the odor of sanctity'".

## KEEP OUR SICK SISTERS & BROTHERS IN YOUR DAILY PRAYERS

Call Helen Husky 440-232-3462 to add a member to the list.

Bobby	Kathy Hlad	Abbot C. Schwartz OSB
Jan Boczek	Kyle Hrabusa	
Mario Bruschi	Michael Hurley	
Jane Dahlhausen	Mark Magda	
Virginia DeJesus	Joe Morici	
Roy Evans	Eleanor Phillips	
Margie Ferfolia	Judy Purdy	
Michele Ferrara	Anthony Rossi	
Marty Franck	Richard Russelo	

**FOR ALL THE INTENTIONS IN OUR  
ONLINE PRAYER BASKET, LORD, HEAR  
OUR PRAYER.**



### † OUR CONDOLENCES TO THE FAMILIES OF OUR RECENTLY DECEASED †

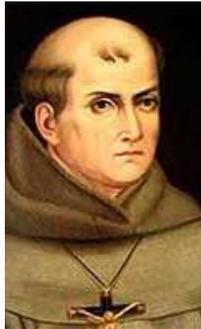
Richard Russelo  
Frank Russo

## Corner

### Jake's

For July, I am writing about a Saint that I greatly admire, Saint Junípero Serra. Also, I have a First-Class Relic

of him under my care. He was born on November 24, 1713 in Petra Majorca, Spain. His parents were Antonio Nadal Serra and Margarita Rosa Ferrer. He was Baptized the same day at Saint Peter's Church and they gave him the name of Miguel José. He received a good education from the Franciscan Friars.



Miguel José entered the Convento de Jesús, just outside of Palma on September 14, 1730, taking the name Junípero. At the Convento de San Francisco he studied philosophy and theology. The date of Friar Junípero's ordination is unknown, but it is believed to take place in December of 1738. He eventually was called to be a well-known professor at the Lullian University in Palma.

On April 13, 1749, Serra and a few other Friars set sail to America to become Missionaries. They landed at Veracruz, Mexico, on December 7, 1749. Even though horses were given to the Friars to travel to Mexico City, Serra opted to walk for 250 miles to Mexico City. They reached San Fernando College on January 1, 1750, and he previously spent the night at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City.

Shortly after their arrival, there was a call for volunteers in the Sierra Gorda Mission; Friar Serra was one of the volunteers. During his time at the Sierra Gorda Mission working with the Pame Indians, from 1750-1758, he oversaw the construction of a Church, and he helped to develop the Mission more spiritually and economically. Also, under his supervision, four new towns built Mission Churches.

Friar Serra learned the Otomí language and used visuals for teaching.

He was a zealous educator in teaching religion and an exemplary preacher. He successfully brought the Pame Indians to practice the Faith with extraordinary devotion. His Mission prospered economically by introducing domestic animals, setting up an agricultural system, and commerce. He was a great defender of Indian people's rights. He also helped with working on the Church.

In 1768, Friar Serra, with great joy, volunteered to minister in the Upper California region. On March 16, 1769, he arrived at San Diego after founding his first Mission at San Fernando de Velicatá. For the next 15 years of his life he worked at Missions in California; he successfully founded nine Missions all across California. Friar Junípero Serra died at the age of 70 at Mission San Carlos on August 28, 1784. By the end of the year of 1784, over 6,000 Indians were converted and over 4,000 Indians who became Christians lived in the Missions. The Cause for Beatification and Canonization of Friar Junípero Serra opened up in the Diocese of Monterey-Fresno in 1934, and the Diocesan phase of the Cause was finished in 1949. On September 25, 1988, His Holiness, Pope Saint John Paul II, Beatified Friar Junípero Serra and on September 23, 2015, at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Serra was Canonized by His Holiness, Pope Francis, making his Canonization the first to happen on US soil.

Saint Junípero Serra, has been called the Father of California, and rightly so, as he built over nine Missions and greatly defended the Indians. He was a Father to the Indians and cared for them greatly. Saint Junípero Serra was very optimistic, zealous and dynamic in character. He burned with love for evangelization and the American converts. During this month of July, may we become like Saint Junípero Serra and burn with love for our Faith and may our hearts burn with love for spreading the Good News, just as Saint Junípero Serra did.

SOURCE: <http://www.usccb.org/about/leadership/holy-see/franciscan-papal-visit-2015/junipero-serra-biography.cfm>

Written by: Jake Snyder

**BEST WISHES to our Spiritual Children celebrating birthdays and special occasions in the month of July, especially Cindy Russo, our Group Leader celebrating her birthday this month!**

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FACEBOOK: WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/PADREPIOCLEVELAND TWITTER: @PADREPIOCLEVELAND**