

# “Fast and Pray” Vigil for Lorelei Truett

Friday, Nov. 19, 2021 5:30 – 7:30pm

## Full Program

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### 5:30 Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

Songs led by the Jubilate Deo Youth Schola

O Salutaris Hostia

#497 Creator of the Stars of Night

#408 Adoro Te Devote

### Opening Prayer

Almighty God and Father, we come before you in prayer and fasting on behalf of our sister, Lorelei Truett. You know her illness, and you accompany her in the suffering she endures in this world, and your beloved Son, our Savior, has preceded her in His own Passion along the way of the Cross and on Calvary Hill. When Jesus walked amongst us in the flesh, he said to St. Philip, “He who sees me, sees the Father”. As we come before You in Eucharistic Adoration, we know we have a doorway into Your fatherly heart, through the Sacred Heart of Jesus. We ask that during this vigil, You may hear our prayers on Lorelei’s behalf. We pray that she be healed. We pray that her leukemia be put in remission. We pray that her body may be strengthened. In all these things, though, Lord, we pray that Lorelei’s soul might be ever in Your hands and eternally in your presence. And so, inspired by the many ways you have revealed yourself to us through Sacred Scripture and your Saints, we can confidently entrust this to your Divine Will, and pray as you taught us:

Our Father,...

This prayer vigil in the presence of God in the Blessed Sacrament includes

- **Spoken prayers and sacred silence**
- **Scriptures** – we will hear passages of healing, hope in the Lord, fasting
- **Inspirational figures in our history** – we will tell the story of these saints and pray for their intercession.
- *The worship aid lists the citations, and the full text is available on our website*

## **Reading: Mark 5:21-43 - Jairus's Daughter and the Woman with a Hemorrhage.**

When Jesus had crossed again [in the boat] to the other side, a large crowd gathered around him, and he stayed close to the sea.

One of the synagogue officials, named Jairus, came forward. Seeing him he fell at his feet

and pleaded earnestly with him, saying, "My daughter is at the point of death. Please, come lay your hands on her\* that she may get well and live."

He went off with him, and a large crowd followed him and pressed upon him.

There was a woman afflicted with hemorrhages for twelve years.

She had suffered greatly at the hands of many doctors and had spent all that she had. Yet she was not helped but only grew worse.

She had heard about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak.

She said, "If I but touch his clothes, I shall be cured."

Immediately her flow of blood dried up. She felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction.

Jesus, aware at once that power had gone out from him, turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who has touched my clothes?"

But his disciples said to him, "You see how the crowd is pressing upon you, and yet you ask, 'Who touched me?'"

And he looked around to see who had done it.

The woman, realizing what had happened to her, approached in fear and trembling. She fell down before Jesus and told him the whole truth.

He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has saved you. Go in peace and be cured of your affliction."

While he was still speaking, people from the synagogue official's house arrived and said, "Your daughter has died; why trouble the teacher any longer?"

Disregarding the message that was reported, Jesus said to the synagogue official, "Do not be afraid; just have faith."

He did not allow anyone to accompany him inside except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James.

When they arrived at the house of the synagogue official, he caught sight of a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly.

So he went in and said to them, "Why this commotion and weeping? The child is not dead but asleep."

And they ridiculed him. Then he put them all out. He took along the child's father and mother and those who were with him and entered the room where the child was.

He took the child by the hand and said to her, "Talitha koum," which means, "Little girl, I say to you, arise!"

The girl, a child of twelve, arose immediately and walked around. [At that] they were utterly astounded.

He gave strict orders that no one should know this and said that she should be given something to eat.

### **Saint Philomena Biography**

*St. Philomena, Virgin and Martyr, was martyred at the age of 13 and is a model of courage. She is also the patron of youth and of those suffering from leukemia.*

In 1802, the remains of a young woman were found in the catacombs of St. Priscilla at the Via Salaria, Italy. It was covered by stones, the symbols on which indicated that the body was a martyr named St. Philomena. The vial containing dry blood (as it was custom to bury a sample of the blood of the martyrs) and the bones were exhumed, catalogued, and effectively forgotten since there was so little known about the person.

(The sample of her blood made her the intercessors of those with blood related problems).

In 1805 Canon Francis de Lucia of Mugnano, Italy was in the Treasury of the Rare Collection of Christian Antiquity (Treasury of Relics) in the Vatican. When he reached the relics of St. Philomena he was suddenly struck with a spiritual joy, and requested that he be allowed to enshrine them in a chapel in Mugnano. After some disagreements, settled by the cure of Canon Francis following prayers to Philomena, he was allowed to transfer the relics to Mugnano. Miracles began to be reported at the shrine including cures of cancer and healing of wounds. Philomena became the only person recognized as a saint solely on the basis of

miraculous intercession as nothing historical was known of her except her name and the evidence of her martyrdom.

To shed some light regarding her life, we must look at her private revelations to her devotees. It was said that her parents were pagans who worshipped false gods. But after they were converted through the help of a doctor from Rome, Publius, who was a Catholic and now a Saint, they were blessed with a daughter who they named Lumena, or "Light" and was later baptized as Philomena meaning "Friend or Lover of the Light."

Her parents lavished every affection on her and she accompanied them to Rome in her 13th year, to plead for peace from war with the Emperor. The Emperor agreed to terms of peace but only if Philomena would be his wife. Her parents agreed but Philomena rejected the offer as she had already made a vow of chastity to Jesus Christ. The Emperor could not accept her decision and had her chained to a dungeon. On her 37th day in prison, the Blessed Mother appeared to her telling Philomena that she would be in the dungeon for three more days and she would leave on the 40th day of her sorrow only to undergo a most cruel torture for the love of Jesus Christ, her Son. Our Lady inspired her with courage and assured her that she is beloved by them both. Our Lady promised the Saint that at the time of her martyrdom, the Archangel Gabriel himself will be by her side to protect her against weakness.

She was bound to a pillar, and like Christ before her, was savagely scourged. The Emperor had her brought back to the prison to die. Two bright Angels appeared and poured Heavenly balm on her wounds and she was cured. The Emperor was astonished. Because she still refused his blandishments, he was enraged and gave orders that an iron anchor should be attached to her neck and that she be thrown into the Tiber to drown. But Christ, sent two more Angels to cut the cord of the anchor which fell to the bottom of the river and became embedded in the mud. Then the Angels brought her back to the bank without a single drop of water touching her garments. Several bystanders were converted. But the Emperor Diocletian became more obstinate than ever and declared her a witch and ordered her pierced with arrows. Again Heaven saved her from death. On hearing of this new miracle, the Emperor was so infuriated that he ordered the torture to be repeated until death came, but the arrows refused to leave the bow. So he had the arrows heated with flames from a furnace but to no avail for these last archers

were slain by Heaven. More conversions occurred and the people began to show serious signs of disaffection towards the Emperor and even reverence for the Holy Faith. She was beheaded at last and ascended to glory in Heaven. It was 3 PM in the afternoon, of a Friday.

### **Litany to Saint Philomena**

*Composed by Saint John Vianney*

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 Ghost, have mercy on us.

Holy Trinity one God, have mercy on us.

Holy Mary, Queen of Virgins, pray for us.

Saint Philomena, pray for us.

Saint Philomena, filled with the most abundant graces from the cradle, pray for us.

Saint Philomena, model of Virgins, pray for us.

Saint Philomena, temple of the most perfect humility, pray for us.

Saint Philomena, inflamed with zeal for the Glory of God, pray for us.

Saint Philomena, victim of the love of Jesus, pray for us.

Saint Philomena, example of strength and perseverance, pray for us.

Saint Philomena, invincible champion of chastity, pray for us.

Saint Philomena, mirror of the most heroic virtues, pray for us.

Saint Philomena, firm and intrepid in the face of torments, pray for us.

Saint Philomena, scourged like thy Divine Spouse, pray for us.

Saint Philomena, pierced by a shower of arrows, pray for us.

Saint Philomena, consoled by the Mother of God when in chains, pray for us.

Saint Philomena, cured miraculously in prison, pray for us.

Saint Philomena, comforted by Angels in thy torments, pray for us.

Saint Philomena, who preferred torments and death to the splendors of a throne, pray for us. Saint Philomena, who converted the witnesses of thy Martyrdom, pray for us.

Saint Philomena, who wore out the fury of thy executioners, pray for us.

Saint Philomena, protectress of the innocent, pray for us.

Saint Philomena, patron of youth, pray for us.

Saint Philomena, refuge of the unfortunate, pray for us.

Saint Philomena, health of the sick and the weak, pray for us.

Saint Philomena, new light of the Church Militant, pray for us.

Saint Philomena, who confounds the impiety of the world, pray for us.

Saint Philomena, who stimulates the faith and courage of the faithful, pray for us.

Saint Philomena, whose name is glorified in Heaven and feared in Hell, pray for us.

Saint Philomena, made illustrious by the most striking miracles, pray for us.

Saint Philomena, all powerful with God, pray for us.

Saint Philomena, who reigns in glory, pray for us.

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, graciously hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

V. Pray for us, Great Saint Philomena,

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray

We implore Thee, O Lord, by the intercession of Saint Philomena, Virgin and Martyr, who was ever most pleasing to Thine eyes by reason of her eminent purity and the practice of all the virtues, pardon us our sins and grant us all the graces we need especially the cure of Lorelei Truett. Amen.

6:00 Divine Mercy Chaplet – sung, led by Fr. Carter with Gloria Dei Schola

Music by Maria Smetkiewicz    Adapted by Archb. G. H. Pearce, S.M. and G. Farrell, M.M.

Begin with: *Our Father . . . , Hail Mary . . . , I believe in God . . .*

On the single beads, in place of the *Our Father*:

Leader:

E - ter - nal Fa - ther, I of - fer You the Bo - dy and Blood,  
Soul and Di - vi - ni - ty of Your dear - ly  
be - lov - ed Son, Our Lord, Je - sus Christ,

All:

in a-tone-ment for our sins, and those of the whole world.

On the ten beads, in place of the *Hail Mary*:

Leader:

For the sake of His sor - row - ful pas - sion,

Decades  
1, 3 & 5

All:

have mer - cy on us and on the whole world.

Leader:

For the sake of His sor - row - ful pas - sion,

Decades  
2 & 4

All:

have mer - cy on us and on the whole world.

After the five decades, *three times*:

All:

Ho - ly God. Ho - ly Might - y One,  
Ho - ly Im - mor - tal One, have mer - cy on us,  
(3rd time)  
and on the whole world. and on the whole world.

6:20pm Song: My Mercy – sung by Gloria Dei Schola ladies

## **Reading: Mark 2:1-12 – Healing of the paralytic**

When Jesus returned to Capernaum after some days, it became known that he was at home.

Many gathered together so that there was no longer room for them, not even around the door, and he preached the word to them.

They came bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men.

Unable to get near Jesus because of the crowd, they opened up the roof above him. After they had broken through, they let down the mat on which the paralytic was lying.

When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Child, your sins are forgiven."

Now some of the scribes were sitting there asking themselves,

Why does this man speak that way?\* He is blaspheming. Who but God alone can forgive sins?"

Jesus immediately knew in his mind what they were thinking to themselves, so he said, "Why are you thinking such things in your hearts?

Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, pick up your mat and walk'?

But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins on earth" —

he said to the paralytic, "I say to you, rise, pick up your mat, and go home."

He rose, picked up his mat at once, and went away in the sight of everyone. They were all astounded and glorified God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this."

## **Saint Therese of Lisieux "Little Flower" Biography**

From an early age, it was Therese's ambition and desire to be a saint. She was born into a pious and loving Catholic family. She remembers the ideal of her early childhood, spending time with her parents and five sisters in the un-spoilt French countryside. However, this early childhood ideal was broken by the early death of her Mother (from breast cancer). Aged only four years old, she felt the pain of separation and instinctively turned to the Virgin Mary for comfort and reassurance. The next couple of years of St Therese's' life was a period of inner



turmoil. She was unhappy at school, where her natural precociousness and piety made other school children jealous. Eventually, her father agreed for Therese to return home and be taught by her elder sister, Celine.

She enjoyed being taught at home; however, after a while, her eldest sister decided to leave home and enter the local Carmel Convent at Lisieux. This made Therese feel like she had lost her second mother. Shortly afterwards Therese experienced a painful illness, in which she suffered delusions. The doctors were at a loss as to the cause. For three weeks she suffered from a high fever. Eventually, Therese felt completely healed after her sister's placed a statue of the Virgin Mary at the foot of the bed. Therese felt her health and mental state returned to normal very quickly. Soon after on Christmas Eve 1884, she recounts having a remarkable conversion of spirit. She says she lost her inclination to please herself with her own desires. Instead, she felt a burning desire to pray for the souls of others and forget herself. She says that on this day, she lost her childhood immaturity and felt a very strong calling to enter the convent at the unprecedented early age of fifteen.

St Therese was drawn to pray for sinners. Although her father tried to keep newspapers out of the house, she became aware of the notorious – unrepentant killer Henri Pranzini, who was due to be executed in 1887. Therese prayed for his last-minute conversion and was able to read in the newspaper of his last-minute grab for a crucifix as he approached the scaffold. He kissed the wounds of Jesus three times before being guillotined.

#### *St Therese audience with the Pope*

Initially, the Church authorities refused to allow a girl, who was so young to enter holy orders. They advised her to come back when she was 21 and “grown up”. However Therese's mind was made up, she couldn't bear to wait; she felt God was calling her to enter the cloistered life. Therese was so determined she travelled to the Vatican to personally petition the Pope. Breaking protocol she spoke to the Pope asking for permission to enter a convent. Slightly taken aback Pope Leo XIII replied: “Well, my child, do what the superiors decide.” Soon after, her heart's desire was fulfilled, and she was able to join her two sisters in the Carmelite convent of Lisieux.

“Our fulcrum is God: our lever, prayer; prayer which burns with love. With that we can lift the world!” – St Therese

Convent life was not without its hardships; it was cold, and accommodation was basic. Not all sisters warmed to this 15-year-old girl. At times she became the subject of gossip, and one of her superiors took a very harsh attitude to this young “spoilt middle class” girl. However, Therese sought always to respond to criticism and gossip with the attitude of love. No matter what others said, Therese responded by denying her sense of ego. Eventually, the nun who had criticised Therese so much said. “why do you always smile at me, Why are you always so kind, even when I treat you badly?”

*“Love attracts love, mine rushes forth unto Thee, it would fain fill up the abyss which attracts it; but alas! it is not even as one drop of dew lost in the Ocean. To love Thee as Thou lovest me I must borrow Thy very Love – then only, can I find rest.” – St Therese*

This was the “little way” which Therese sought to follow. Her philosophy was that – what was important was not doing great works, but doing little things with the power of love. She believed that if we can maintain the right attitude, then nothing shall remain that can’t be accomplished.

Therese had the ambition to become a missionary and travel to Africa or China. However, ill health curtailed these plans, and she was forced to stay in the convent.

Towards the end of her life, when she was increasingly bed-ridden, St Therese was encouraged by the elder nuns to write down her way of spiritual practice. She wrote three books that explained her “little way” and included her personal spiritual autobiography ‘Story of a Soul’.

*“The good God does not need years to accomplish His work of love in a soul; one ray from His Heart can, in an instant, make His flower bloom for eternity...” – St Therese*

St Therese died tragically early at the age of 24 from tuberculosis. However after her death, the writings became avidly read by, first other nuns, and then the wider Catholic community. Although initially intended only for a small audience, her books have frequently been republished. In 1997, St Therese was declared one of the only three female Doctors of the Catholic Church (there are 33 doctors of the church in total). Thus after her death, she was able to achieve her intuitive feeling that she would be able to do something great and help save souls.

St Therese was canonized by Pope Pius XI on May 17, 1925, only 26 years after her death.

Pope Francis (elected 2013) has said St Therese is his favourite saint and keeps a picture of her on his bookcase. Explaining his choice for St Therese, Pope Francis remarked "Do not be afraid to depend solely on the tenderness of God as Saint Thérèse of Lisieux did, who, for this reason, is a beloved daughter of the Blessed Mother and a great missionary saint."

He has also remarked: "When I have a problem I ask the saint, not to solve it, but to take it in her hands and help me accept it."

## **Prayer**

Lord Jesus, we need Your healing touch! Our sister Lorelei has been weakened by leukemia, and her body is suffering greatly from this disease and its many complications.

The disease has caused her isolation and frailty. But T=today, Lord Jesus, we place her physical struggles and the hurt of family and friends before You, reaching out as young St. Therese, for the healing power and peace that only heaven can give. With tears of hope and gratitude we seek Your healing touch upon Lorelei. We ask You this, who teaches us confidence and trust in Your love.

**6:30pm Rosary** – Sorrowful Mysteries –led by Fr. Carter with Youth leading each decade.

## 6:50 Song - Here I Am, Lord – sung by Fr. Carter

I, the Lord of sea and sky  
I have heard my people cry  
All who dwell in dark and sin  
My hand will save

I, who made the stars of night  
I will make their darkness bright  
Who will bear my light to them?  
Whom shall I send?

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?  
I have heard you calling in the night  
I will go, Lord, if you lead me  
I will hold your people in my heart

I, the Lord of snow and rain  
I have borne my people's pain  
I have wept for love of them  
They turn away

I will break their hearts of stone  
Give them hearts for love alone  
Who will speak my word to them  
Whom shall I send?

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?  
I have heard you calling in the night  
I will go, Lord, if you lead me  
I will hold your people in my heart

I, the Lord of wind and flame  
I will tend the poor and lame  
I will set a feast for them  
My hand will save

Finest bread I will provide  
'Til their hearts be satisfied  
I will give my life to them  
Whom shall I send?

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?  
I have heard you calling in the night  
I will go, Lord, if you lead me  
I will hold your people in my heart

## **Reading: James 5:14-15 - The Power of Prayer, Anointing of the Sick.**

Is anyone among you suffering? He should pray. Is anyone in good spirits? He should sing praise.

Is anyone among you sick? He should summon the presbyters of the church, and they should pray over him and anoint [him] with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith will save the sick person, and the Lord will raise him up. If he has committed any sins, he will be forgiven.

## **Saint Peregrine Biography**

St. Peregrine is known as the patron saint of cancer patients, AIDS victims and others suffering from serious illnesses. Peregrine Laziosi was born in 1260 in Forli, Italy to a wealthy family. Although he was a member of an anti-papal party as a young man, he experienced a profound change of heart, much like St. Paul's conversion in its intensity.

He and some companions showed up one day to heckle and otherwise abuse St. Philip Benizi, the Prior General of the Servants of Mary, who was preaching in Forli. Peregrine went so far as to strike him in the face! St. Philip, seemingly following our Lord's advice in scripture (Matt 5:39, Luke 6:29), offered his other cheek in response.

This gesture so moved Peregrine that he quickly asked for Philip's forgiveness and soon thereafter converted to Catholicism, spending much time in prayer at the Chapel of Our Lady at the Cathedral. Mary appeared to him there in a vision asking him to join the Servite Order in Siena. He was received there by St. Philip!

Peregrine spent the rest of his life ministering to the poor and the sick, mainly in his hometown of Forli where he established a new house for the Servites. His dedication to the faith was such that, according to tradition, he would stand constantly instead of sitting down, as a form of penance.

He underwent a severe trial when he developed a cancerous sore on his leg as well as his feet. Doctors decided upon amputation as treatment.

The night before the operation, Peregrine spent the night in prayer before a crucifix in a hospital chapel. He dreamt at one point there that Christ came down from the cross and healed his leg. When he woke up, he and his doctors, made the joyful discovery that he was completely cured. God had truly performed a miracle on this holy man!

Peregrine himself performed numerous miracles in his life. After his death in 1345, there were countless others, especially in Spain. The Church attributed to him more than 300 cures of cancer and other illnesses from 1694 to 1726 in one city there alone!

It's no wonder that many Catholics refer to him as the "mighty" and the "wonder-worker!" He was canonized by Pope Benedict XIII in 1726.

### **Prayer for the Intercession of St. Peregrine**

O great St. Peregrine, you have been called "The Mighty," "The Wonder-Worker," because of the numerous miracles which you have obtained from God for those who have had recourse to you. For so many years you bore in your own flesh this cancerous disease that destroys the very fiber of our being, and who had recourse to the source of all grace when the power of man could do no more. You were favored with the vision of Jesus coming down from His Cross to heal your affliction. Ask of God and Our Lady, the cure of Lorelei Truett. Aided in this way by your powerful intercession, we shall sing to God, now and for all eternity, a song of gratitude for His great goodness and mercy. Amen.

### **On Fasting: Quote from Saint Thomas More (1478 – 1535)**

*The scripture is full of places that prove fasting to be not the invention of man but the institution of God, and to have many more profits than one. And that the fasting of one man may do good unto another, our Saviour shows himself where he says that some kinds of devils cannot be cast out of one man by another "without prayer and fasting." And therefore I marvel that they take this way against fasting and other bodily penance. [Sir Thomas More].*

## Reading: Mark 9:14-29 (Douay-Rheims) – Prayer and Fasting

And presently all the people, seeing Jesus, were astonished and struck with fear: and running to him, they saluted him.

And he asked them: What do you question about among you?

And one of the multitude, answering, said: Master, I have brought my son to thee, having a dumb spirit.

Who, wheresoever he takes him, dashes him: and he foams and gnashes with the teeth and pines away. And I spoke to thy disciples to cast him out: and they could not.

Who answering them, said: O incredulous generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I suffer you? Bring him unto me.

And they brought him. And when he had seen him, immediately the spirit troubled him and being thrown down upon the ground, he rolled about foaming.

And he asked his father: How long time is it since this has happened unto him?

But he said: From his infancy.

And oftentimes has he cast him into the fire and into the waters to destroy him.

But if thou can do anything, help us, having compassion on us.

And Jesus said to him: If thou can believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.

And immediately the father of the boy crying out, with tears said: I do believe, Lord. Help my unbelief.

And when Jesus saw the multitude running together, he threatened the unclean spirit, saying to him: Deaf and dumb spirit, I command thee, go out of him and enter not any more into him.

And crying out and greatly tearing him, he went out of him. And he became as dead, so that many said: He is dead.

But Jesus taking him by the hand, lifted him up. And he arose.

And when he was come into the house, his disciples secretly asked him: Why could not we cast him out?

And he said to them: **This kind can go out by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.**

And departing from there, they passed through Galilee: and he would not that any man should know it.

## **Saint Padre Pio Biography**

Padre Pio (Francesco Forgione) was born to Giuseppa and Grazio Forgione, in the small farming town of Pietrelcina, Italy on May 25, 1887. Although the Forgiones were poor in material goods, they were certainly rich in their faith life and in the love of God.

Even as a young boy, Francesco had already shown signs of extraordinary gifts of grace. At the age of five, he dedicated his life to God. From his early childhood, he showed a remarkable recollection of spirit and a love for the religious life. His mother described him as a quiet child who, from his earliest years, loved to go to church and to pray. As a young boy, he was able to see and communicate with his guardian angel. In his simplicity, Francesco assumed everyone had the same experiences. Once a woman who noticed his piety asked him, "When did you consecrate your life to God? Was it at your first Holy Communion?" and he answered, "Always, daughter, always."

When Francesco was fifteen years old, he was admitted to the novitiate of the Capuchin Order of the Friars Minor in Morcone, Italy. He was admired by his fellow-students as well as by his Superiors for his exemplary behavior and his deep spirituality. One of the novices stated, "There was something which distinguished him from the other students. Whenever I saw him, he was always humble, recollected, and silent. What struck me most about Brother Pio was his love of prayer."

On August 10, 1910, at the age of twenty-three, Padre Pio was ordained to the priesthood. The celebration of the Holy Mass was for Padre Pio, the center of his spirituality. Due to the long pauses of contemplative silence into which he entered at various parts of the Holy Sacrifice, his Mass could sometimes last several hours. Everything about him spoke of how intensely he was living the Passion of Christ. The parish priest in Pietrelcina called Padre Pio's Mass, "an incomprehensible mystery." When asked to shorten his Mass, Padre Pio replied, "God knows that I want to say Mass just like any other priest, but I cannot do it."

His parishioners were deeply impressed by his piety and one by one they began to come to him, seeking his counsel. For many, even a few moments in his presence, proved to be a life changing experience. As the years passed, pilgrims began to



come to him by the thousands, from every corner of the world, drawn by the spiritual riches which flowed so freely from his extraordinary ministry. To his spiritual children he would say, "It seems to me as if Jesus has no other concern but the sanctification of your soul."

Padre Pio is understood above all else as a man of prayer. Before he was thirty years old he had already reached the summit of the spiritual life known as the "unitive way" of transforming union with God. He prayed almost continuously. His prayers were usually very simple. He loved to pray the Rosary and recommended it to others. To someone who asked him what legacy he wished to leave to his spiritual children, his brief reply was, "My child, the Rosary." He had a special mission to the souls in Purgatory and encouraged everyone to pray for them. He used to say, "We must empty Purgatory with our prayers." Father Agostino Daniele, his confessor, director, and beloved friend said, "One admires in Padre Pio, his habitual union with God. When he speaks or is spoken to, we are aware that his heart and mind are not distracted from the thought and sentiment of God."

Padre Pio suffered from poor health his entire life, once saying that his health had been declining from the time he was nine years old. After his ordination to the priesthood, he remained in his hometown of Pietrelcina and was separated from his religious community for more than five years due to his precarious health. Although the cause of his prolonged and debilitating illnesses remained a mystery to his doctors, Padre Pio did not become discouraged. He offered all of his bodily sufferings to God as a sacrifice, for the conversion of souls. He experienced many spiritual sufferings as well. "I am fully convinced that my illness is due to a special permission of God," he said.

Shortly after his ordination, he wrote a letter to his spiritual director, Father Benedetto Nardella, in which he asked permission to offer his life as a victim for sinners. He wrote, "For a long time I have felt in myself a need to offer myself to the Lord as a victim for poor sinners and for the souls in Purgatory. This desire has been growing continually in my heart so that it has now become what I would call a strong passion. . .It seems to me that Jesus wants this." The marks of the stigmata, the wounds of Christ, appeared on Padre Pio's body, on Friday, September 20, 1918, while he was praying before a crucifix and making his thanksgiving after Mass. He was thirty-one years old and became the first

stigmatized priest in the history of the Church. With resignation and serenity, he bore the painful wounds in his hands, feet, and side for fifty years.

In addition, God endowed Padre Pio with many extraordinary spiritual gifts and charisms including the gift of healing, bilocation, prophecy, miracles, discernment of spirits, the ability to read hearts, the gift of tongues (the ability to speak and understand languages that he had never studied), the gift of conversions, the grace to see angelic beings in form, and the fragrance which emanated from his wounds and which frequently announced his invisible presence. When a friend once questioned him about these charisms, Padre Pio said, "You know, they are a mystery to me, too." Although he received more than his share of spiritual gifts, he never sought them, never felt worthy of them. He never put the gifts before the Giver. He always remained humble, constantly at the disposal of Almighty God.

His day began at 2:30 a.m. when he would rise to begin his prayers and to make his preparation for Mass. He was able to carry on a busy apostolate with only a few hours of sleep each night and an amount of food that was so small (300-400 calories a day) that his fellow priests stated that it was not enough food even to keep a small child alive. Between Mass and confessions, his workday lasted 19 hours. He very rarely left the monastery and never took even a day's vacation from his grueling schedule in 51 years. He never read a newspaper or listened to the radio. He cautioned his spiritual children against watching television.

In his monastery in San Giovanni Rotondo, he lived the Franciscan spirit of poverty with detachment from self, from possessions, and from comforts. He always had a great love for the virtue of chastity, and his behavior was modest in all situations and with all people. In his lifetime, Padre Pio reconciled thousands of men and women back to their faith.

The prayer groups that Padre Pio established have now spread throughout the world. He gave a new spirit to hospitals by founding one which he called "The Home for the Relief of Suffering." He saw the image of Christ in the poor, the suffering, and the sick and gave himself particularly to them. He once said, "Bring God to all those who are sick. This will help them more than any other remedy."

Serene and well prepared, he passed away on September 23, 1968 at the age of eighty-one. He died as he had lived, with his Rosary in his hands. His last words

were Gesù, Maria – Jesus, Mary – which he repeated over and over until he breathed his last. He had often declared, “After my death I will do more. My real mission will begin after my death.”

In 1971, Pope Paul VI, speaking to the superiors of the Capuchin order, said of Padre Pio, “What fame he had. How many followers from around the world. Why? Was it because he was a philosopher, a scholar, or because he had means at his disposal? No, it was because he said Mass humbly, heard confessions from morning until night and was a marked representative of the stigmata of Our Lord. He was truly a man of prayer and suffering.”

In one of the largest liturgies in the Vatican’s history, Pope John Paul II canonized Padre Pio on June 16, 2002. During his homily, Pope John Paul recalled how, in 1947, as a young priest he journeyed from Poland to make his confession to Padre Pio. “Prayer and charity–this is the most concrete synthesis of Padre Pio’s teaching,” the Pope said.

Drawing approximately eight million pilgrims each year, San Giovanni Rotondo, where St. Pio lived and is now buried, is second only to the shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico in its number of annual visitors.

St. Pio’s whole life might be summed up in the words of St. Paul to the Colossians, “Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the Church.”

St. Pio of Pietrelcina, pray for us.

## **Prayer to Padre Pio for Someone's Healing**

Padre Pio, during your earthly life you sanctified pain and suffering, and through you, the Lord performed miracles and works of healing. You always showed mercy and compassion for those who were ill, and you gave us a shining example of faith and obedience to the will of the Lord, our God. Beloved Padre Pio, we place our beloved Lorelei in your hands. We place in your care all those who are ill, who have no earthly hope, and we humbly ask you to perform a miraculous work of healing for them.

Glorious Padre Pio, dry Lorelei's tears. Give her faith and hope even when she feels afraid. Renew her faith so she may believe that everything is possible if it is God's will. Stay by her, every day, in weakness and pain. Encircle her with compassion, so she never lacks the strength and the courage to confront her illness with determination. Padre Pio, let our prayer for healing be worthy to be heard in the heavens. Through your intercession Padre Pio, may the power of God and of the Holy Spirit flow through every cell in her body, deep into her soul, to purify and heal her from any affliction.

Dearest Padre Pio, we know that to ask for the healing of a loved one my faith must be pure and sincere, and so we open our souls and our hearts to you. Fill us with glorious light and overcome my selfishness with your infinite goodness; make us more charitable and teach us to be more generous, with no thought for earthly compensation. Padre Pio, you are our guide, our heart's joy, our example of a life lived for Christ – Strengthen our hope that Lorelei may be healed. Loving Padre Pio, intercede for Lorelei, that her health may be restored, according to the Father's will. Show us your love and grant that our loved one may be healed for the glory of our Lord who lives and reigns forever. Amen.

### **Quote from St. Padre Pio**

*"The Lord sometimes makes you feel the weight of the cross. Although the weight seems intolerable, you are able to carry it, because the Lord, in his love and mercy, extends a hand to you and gives you strength." – St. Padre Pio*

## **7:20 Closing Prayer**

Almighty God and Father, as we have peered into your heart through the body of your Son, Jesus Christ, made present to us in the Sacrament of the Eucharist, spoken to us through the words of Sacred Scripture, exemplified for us in the witness of the saints who are the members of the Body of Your Son, Jesus Christ, we now glorify You and praise You. Let our vigil of prayer and fasting be pleasing to You, and we pray that through the ministry of the angels and holy ones, our supplication on behalf of Lorelei Truett may be brought to Your divine ear. We beg you to be pleased to answer our prayers on her behalf, even as we know you have a father's tender love for her and know what is best. Now, as we receive your Benediction through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, we confidently pray that Your will may be done.

## **Benediction**

Tantum Ergo  
The Divine Praises