

When Carlo walked back into the church where Lucia was waiting for him, his eyes were filled with tears. He felt that he had been, “conquered for life.” Suddenly he knew what he had to do. He presented the ticket his father-in-law had given him and waited in the confessional line to make his confession to Padre Pio. The following year, Padre Pio accepted Carlo as his spiritual son. From that time forward, Carlo was at Lucia’s side every Sunday at Mass.

Later, when Carlo became ill and confined to a wheelchair, attending daily Mass was his greatest consolation. As Carlo’s health continued to decline, Lucia cared for him with great devotion, seeing to his every need. They had been married for sixty-four years. At the end of his life, Carlo had the blessing of receiving the Last Rites of the Church and he died a peaceful and holy death.

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Padre Pio and Lucia and Carlo Barocchi



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As a married couple, Lucia and Carlo Barocchi were blessed to have enjoyed many happy years together. They seemed to be of like mind and like heart in almost every way but one – that of religion. Lucia was a devout Catholic while Carlo had no religious affiliation whatsoever. Lucia accepted the fact that her husband was not a person of faith and it proved to be no obstacle to their deep love and commitment to each other.

Lucia had a great devotion to Padre Pio. She had met him for the first time in 1950 and in 1951 he accepted her as his spiritual daughter. Every year she made a trip to San Giovanni Rotondo and looked forward to it with great anticipation. She used to repeat, “In San Giovanni Rotondo, even the air one breathes is holy.” Sometimes her father accompanied her, but Carlo would not go with her, feeling no attraction or interest in making the trip.

In 1959, Lucia was in San Giovanni Rotondo waiting to make her confession to Padre Pio. The number of people who had signed up for confession turned out to be much larger than usual and Lucia realized that she probably would not be able to get home in time to spend Easter with her family. She wrote to Carlo and to her father, explaining that they would need to travel to San Giovanni Rotondo if they wanted to spend Easter with her. They wrote back to her and said that they would be arriving soon.

Shortly after they arrived in San Giovanni Rotondo, Carlo’s father-in-law went to the booking office to get a ticket for Padre Pio’s confessional. When he returned, he said to Carlo, “I took the liberty of getting two tickets for the confessional. I signed your name to one of the tickets even though I know that, strictly speaking, I am not supposed to sign any one’s name but my own. I am hoping that you will want to take advantage of this wonderful opportunity.” “I am not going to make my confession,” Carlo said. “I do not believe in it. Besides, I would be afraid to have a face-to-face encounter with Padre Pio.”

The next morning Carlo’s father-in-law insisted that they go to the monastery to greet Padre Pio but Carlo was resistant to the idea. He had come to San Giovanni Rotondo in order to spend Easter with his wife, and nothing more. Carlo’s father-in-law did not want to take “no” for an answer and finally persuaded Carlo to accompany him. “I will go with you but I would like to remain at a distance from Padre Pio. I do not want to get too close to him,” Carlo said.

Along with many other men, Carlo and his father-in-law waited for Padre Pio in the St. Francis room. Carlo stood as close to the wall as he could, trying in his own way to remain hidden. In the tightly packed crowd, he was very glad to be inconspicuous. Carlo’s father-in-law had been able to position himself in the very front of the group of men. When Padre Pio walked into the room, his father-in-law was so close to Padre Pio that he was able to take his hand and kiss it. Padre Pio then turned and looked directly at Carlo. “Son, you cannot be without God,” he said to Carlo. Carlo couldn’t believe it. He was stunned. Even though they had never met, Padre Pio obviously knew the disposition of his heart. It was a tremendous moment for Carlo.