

Because he had resources at his disposal? Because he said Mass humbly, heard confessions from dawn to dusk and was--it is not easy to say it-- one who bore the wounds of our Lord. He was a man of prayer and suffering. Padre Pio like Saint Francis, allows people to glimpse the beauty of holiness, which is a reflection of God's beauty... Padre Pio is a Saint of God's mercy in the confessional. How powerful a spiritual experience to say in Christ's name "I absolve you of your sins" and to raise a wounded hand to bless and console a sinner. Padre Pio's whole life announces to the world that God loves sinners and rejoices over the one lost sheep that is found...

The greatest heresy of the modern age is the denial of sin. We have lost a sense of sin, a sense of the offense it causes to God, the destruction it does to ourselves and our loved ones, the poisonous effects it has on the fabric of society... Padre Pio was the great physician of peoples' souls, like the Cure of Ars and other great confessors of the Church. He was a living witness of God's unfailing mercy, of the power the risen Lord gave to His Church when on Easter Sunday he breathed on His Apostles and said: "Receive the Holy Spirit, Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them."

No cures are as dramatic as the ones Padre Pio performed in the sacristy and confessional in the sacrament of God's mercy... Padre Pio helped people to look at the crucified Christ with faith and love and experience the healing power of the cross.



Saint Pio's compassion for sinners also extended to the sick and suffering, and the Home for the Relief of Suffering shows his concern for them... The sick and the sinners are special objects of Jesus' love. The ministry of Padre Pio is to manifest God's unfailing love and mercy of His People, especially for the little ones, the sick and suffering and for poor sinners.

\*(excerpted from: [www.padrepiodevotions.org](http://www.padrepiodevotions.org),  
[www.piercedhearts.org](http://www.piercedhearts.org); [www.peacethroughmercy.com](http://www.peacethroughmercy.com))

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## ***Padre Pio***

### ***Divine Mercy AND The Priesthood***



## Padre Pio and Divine Mercy

\*In his June 16, 2002 homily at the canonization of Padre Pio, Pope John Paul II, quoting Jer. 9: 23 (*I am the Lord who acts with mercy*), stated that Padre Pio was a generous dispenser of divine mercy, making himself available to all by welcoming them, by spiritual direction and, especially, by the administration of the sacrament of penance.... The ministry of the confessional, which is one of the distinctive traits of Padre Pio's apostolate, attracted great crowds of the faithful to the monastery of San Giovanni Rotondo. Even when that unusual confessor treated pilgrims with apparent severity, the latter, becoming conscience of the gravity of sins and sincerely repentant, almost always came back for the peaceful embrace of sacramental forgiveness. May his example encourage priests to carry out with joy and zeal this ministry which is so important today...

As Father Joseph Pius Martin, O.F.M., Cap. wrote, a merciful God gave His Mother at the foot of the Cross to Padre Po and to all priests as a fortress in the battle against Satan. "The woman clothed with the sun, with the moon beneath her feet," gave Padre Pio her weapon, the Rosary, which he prayed continuously as he assisted her in plucking souls from the edge of the abyss. For as Padre Pio said, "Love the Madonna and pray the Rosary, for her Rosary is the weapon against the evil of the world."

A merciful God gave us a priest who would be a sign of contradiction in the "Culture of Death." By living out the passion of Christ in his body. His hands, feet, and side were pierced for fifty years in a continuous shedding of his blood as a living holocaust. By his life and witness this saintly priest brings renewal to the Church and healing and restoration to his brother priests, who, like him, are ministers of divine mercy.

Through his living martyrdom, he cut through the darkness that sought to destroy the Eucharist, Priesthood, and confession. Through his living martyrdom, he gave life to souls through the Eucharist and confession. Through his witness, he taught his brother priests to stand against "principalities and powers" of this dark age in the power of their priesthood, instituted on Holy Thursday night by Jesus Christ,

## Priest and Victim.

Padre Pio's life spanned more than half the twentieth century. He died in San Giovanni Rotondo on September 23, 1968 at the age of eighty-one. There is no doubt that the stigmata and his amazing charismas, which included spiritual and physical healing, brought instant fame to the humble capuchin. And like Jesus, they also brought the cross and persecution. God's purpose in raising up the mystic and stigmatic of the Gargano transcends our ability to comprehend. We do know, however, that in Padre Pio we see the mystery of the priesthood, which cannot be fathomed.

What is easier to understand is that Padre Pio inspires in priests and laity, a renewal of heart and mind with respect to the ministerial priesthood. Possibly one of the key reasons he has been given to the Church in these times is to define the priesthood for those whose image has been shattered by the world, the enemies of God and the Church. For this reason, Saint Padre Pio's priesthood is a gift to the Church for the renewal of priests and the renewal of families.

In living out the Passion of Christ, the humble friar drew the attention of the world to the events that occurred on the first Holy Thursday and Good Friday, when mankind received the gift of Divine Mercy flowing from the pierced heart of Jesus on the Cross. At his beatification in 1999, Pope John Paul II, called Padre Pio's stigmata "a sign of divine mercy."

In a homily delivered by Cardinal Seán P. O'Malley, O. F. M., Cap. of the Archdiocese of Boston, at the anniversary Mass that took place September 23, 2006 at San Giovanni Rotondo, Italy, he stated that the saints are the masterpieces of God's grace. Many saints are hidden from view and remain unknown, but some saints are placed in the world to capture the attention of a society that has forgotten about God... Today the world is obsessed with celebrities, but as Pope Paul VI said to the Capuchin superiors concerning Padre Pio: "Look what fame he had, what a worldwide following gathered around him! But why? Perhaps because he was a philosopher? Because he was wise?"