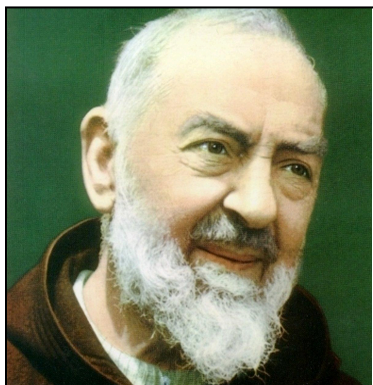


Saint Padre Pio



Date of birth: May 25, 1887
Birthplace: Pietrelcina, Italy
Date of death: September 23, 1968
Canonization: June 16, 2002 by Pope St. John Paul II
Feast Day: September 23

Patron Saint of: Civil Defense Volunteers, Stress Relief, and Adolescents

About Padre Pio:

Born Francesco Forgioni to devout Catholic peasant farmers in rural Italy, the future saint had one older brother and three younger sisters. After disclosing to his parents his interest in joining the Capuchin Order, Francesco's father went to the United States in search for a well-paying job to pay for a good education for Francesco, a stipulation given to them to join the Order. Upon passing the stipulated academic requirements, 15-year-old Francesco entered the novitiate in Marcone. He took his Franciscan habit and the name Friar Pio soon after.

During his priesthood study, Pio became very ill, only able to digest milk and cheese. Despite experiencing serious physical ailments, Pio was said to be in ecstasy while in prayer. A fellow friar even witnessed Friar Pio levitating off the ground during one such prayer session. Though still ill, Friar Pio professed his vows and entered the priesthood in 1910. After a 6 year stay back with his family in Pietrelcina, Padre Pio was moved to San Giovanni Rotondo where he was known for his love of the sacrament of reconciliation, describing it as "the soul's bath". From 1915 to 1918, Pio was repeatedly called to service in World War I and discharged for poor health. In September of 1918, *stigmata* began to appear on the hands and feet of the holy priest. He is also reported to have had the spiritual gifts of healing, *bilocation*, levitation, prophecy, miracles, and abstinence from sleep and nourishment, among many others. He became very well-known and people traveled from afar to receive the sacrament of reconciliation from Padre Pio.

After years of illness, Padre Pio died with his rosary in his hands on September 23, 1968. His stigmata disappeared days before his death. 40 years after his death, Padre Pio's body was exhumed and found to be in good condition. He is considered an *incorruptible* saint.

A word from Padre Pio:

"The most beautiful act of faith is the one made in darkness, in sacrifice, and with extreme effort."

Find out more:

Books: *Wounds of Love* by Phillip Campbell
Formed.org: Padre Pio: Between Heaven and Earth
Podcast: Saint Padre Pio from Saints Alive



Glossary

Stigmata: The stigmata is the spontaneous appearance of the wound marks of our crucified Lord on a person's body. These marks include the nail wounds at the feet and the hands, the lance wound at the side, the head wounds from the crown of thorns, and the scourge marks over the entire body, particularly the back.

Bilocation: a phenomenon in which an individual is believed to be present in two different locations simultaneously.

Incorruptible: saints whose mortal bodies have not decayed after significant periods of time, giving witness to the resurrection of the body.

