



# ST PIO OF PIETRELCINA

Pray,  
Hope and  
Don't worry!  
Padre Pio



## EARLY LIFE

Padre Pio (originally called Francesco Forgione) was born in Pietrelcina, southern Italy on May 25, 1887. His childhood was steeped in an atmosphere of faith, from his grandparents' love of telling the children Bible stories to his village's deep devotion to Our Lady and the saints. From his early childhood it was obvious he had a deep desire for holiness, and even solemnly consecrated himself to Jesus at the age of just five! As an adult, he spoke about how in his younger years he had spoken with Jesus, Our Lady, his Guardian Angel and had even suffered attacks by the devil - something he would encounter later in life in a dramatic way. He suffered ill-health all his life. At the age of just 16, he entered a branch of the Franciscan order known as the Capuchins, in 1903. He was ordained a priest in 1910, and eventually settled at the monastery at San Giovanni Rotondo.

## HIS EXTRAORDINARY LIFE



A normal day for Padre Pio was a busy nineteen hours: Mass, hearing confessions, handling correspondence from all over the world, and meeting the many visitors who would come in search of his increasingly famous priest. He usually slept for less than two hours each night.

**STIGMATA:** As a young priest, Jesus gave Padre Pio the supernatural gift of the Stigmata. Padre Pio found the attention they attracted "an annoyance" although he was more than willing to suffer the agony of the wounds in secret. Padre Pio's visible Stigmata, the wounds of Christ, would stay with him for 50 years, a phenomenon which continued to baffle doctors and scientists even after his death when they disappeared as miraculously as they had appeared. He carried the bleeding wounds of Christ in his hands, his feet, his side, an invisible crown of thorns, and a deep wound on his shoulder also. The wounds bled daily, yet never got infected. Padre Pio accepted them as a gift from God, though he would have preferred to suffer the pains of Christ's passion in secret so as not to draw attention to himself. Eye witnesses reported seeing Padre Pio struggle to move during Mass, clearly in visible agony. At times he could remain lost in the intense prayer, experiencing the phenomenon known as spiritual ecstasy, completely unaware of his surroundings: profoundly moving for those who witnessed this.



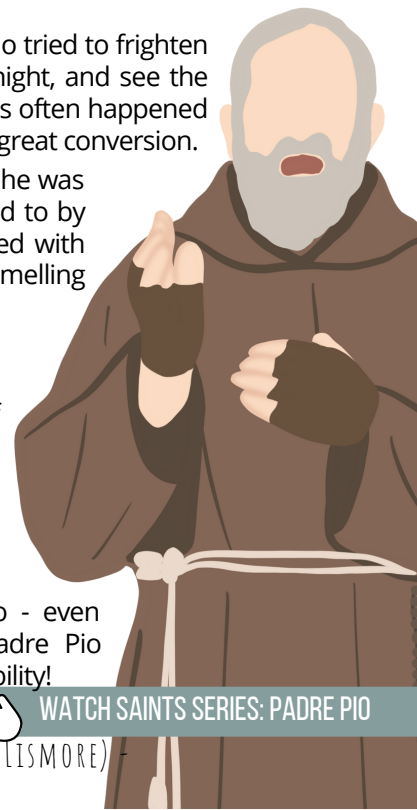
**READING SOULS:** Padre Pio also had an ability to read souls: this meant he knew if someone was lying or deliberately hiding something in confession, or had just simply forgotten a serious sin. He was able to tell that person exactly what they did and when, and any other relevant circumstances: facts he could never have known without supernatural aid. Through this gift, he was able to help many souls reconcile with God. Sometimes people came fascinated by the gift, but without any desire to change their lives. Padre Pio was often harsh with this type of visitor. In the end, they often repented, made a sincere confession and changed their lives! Once his reputation spread, his confession lines grew until the average waiting time was ten days and the Capuchins had to introduce a ticketing system!

**DEMONIC ATTACKS:** Padre Pio reportedly was also visited by the devil and other demons who tried to frighten him and often physically attacked him, something the other friars could hear in his cell at night, and see the evidence of in Padre Pio's bruised and bleeding body and furniture strewn around his cell. This often happened before a visit from someone who was about to make a profound confession and experience a great conversion.

**BILOCATION** is one of the most incredible supernatural gifts associated with Padre Pio - that he was able to be in two places at the one time. His appearances on different continents as attested to by numerous witnesses - either seeing him directly, or smelling the odour of sanctity associated with him, an odour which was especially strong from the blood from his wounds, a sweet smelling fragrance that could not be produced by any explainable source.

Among the more unusual of the documented cases of bilocation was Padre Pio's appearance in the air over San Giovanni Rotondo where he was stationed during World War II. American bombers were given the job of attacking the city, however, as they flew over the city, and prepared to drop their munitions, a brown-robed friar appeared before their aircraft. All attempts to release the bombs failed. Later, when an American base was established at Foggia a few miles away, one of the pilots involved visited the friary and discovered there the little friar he had seen in the air that day!

**MIRACULOUS CURES:** Padre Pio is attributed with countless cures too - even Gemma di Giorgi, born without pupils, who was able to see after Padre Pio interceded for her, despite the fact she still had no pupils: a medical impossibility!

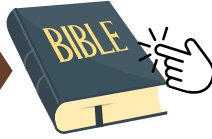


WATCH SAINTS SERIES: PADRE PIO

# ST PIO OF PIETRELCINA / PADRE PIO

**HIS MOTTO** "Pray, hope and don't worry": a simple summary of how to live our lives with faith!

LOOK UP PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7 - HOW DOES THIS QUOTE RELATE TO THE MOTTO OF PADRE PIO?




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## INTERNET TREASURE HUNT! SEE WHO CAN ANSWER THE FASTEST!



1. What did Padre Pio's parents work at? Were they wealthy?
2. Where did the Capuccino coffee drink get its name from?
3. What attracted Padre Pio to become a Capuchin friar?
4. Who was the first priest in the Catholic Church to receive stigmata?
5. Which saint received the first reported stigmata in Church history?
6. What did Padre Pio wear on his hands to hide his stigmata?
7. How much blood is it estimated Padre Pio lost each day?
8. Which wound did Padre Pio admit to a young Fr Karol Woytyla he found most painful?
9. Padre Pio told another friar to hold onto the letters from Fr Karol Woytyla, which he said would be important one day. Why was this significant?
10. When was Padre Pio canonised (declared a saint)? Who canonised him?



QUESTIONS TO REFLECT ON:

• **WHAT IS YOUR INITIAL RESPONSE TO THE LIFE OF PADRE PIO?**

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• **IF YOU COULD ASK HIM ONE QUESTION, WHAT WOULD IT BE?**

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• **WHY DO YOU THINK GOD GAVE PADRE PIO THE STIGMATA?**

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• **WHAT DO YOU THINK THE LORD WANTS YOU TO DO WITH YOUR LIFE? PADRE PIO WAS VERY CERTAIN FROM AN EARLY AGE, BUT FOR MANY PEOPLE, IT TAKES TIME TO DISCOVER THEIR VOCATION IN LIFE.**

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## DOODLE PRAYER

*"MY PAST, O LORD,  
TO YOUR MERCY;  
MY PRESENT,  
TO YOUR LOVE;  
MY FUTURE TO YOUR  
PROVIDENCE."*

## YOU CAN BE A GAME CHANGER LIKE PADRE PIO! WHAT CAN YOU APPLY TO YOUR LIFE FROM HIS QUOTES?

- "It would be easier for the world to survive without the sun than to do without the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass." - can you make a decision to go to Mass each Sunday (or Saturday evening)? Think of how blessed your life will be!
- "God will never permit anything to happen to us that is not for our greater good." Can you look for the good in difficult situations?
- "Serve the Lord with laughter." How can you be more joyful in your faith?
- "Pray, hope and don't worry!" How can you trust God more in your life?
- Obedience and humility marked Padre Pio's life: how could you practice these more in your life?
- Padre Pio had 5 rules as a spiritual director. Which of these (weekly confession, daily communion, spiritual reading, meditation, and an examination of conscience) could you benefit from the most and why?



Did you know that the actor Shia LaBeouf had a life-changing experience while playing the role of Padre Pio?

- Every Little Thing: Hillsong Young & Free
- Stay with Me Lord (hymn)
- Stay with me Lord (prayer)
- From the Inside Out (Hillsong)

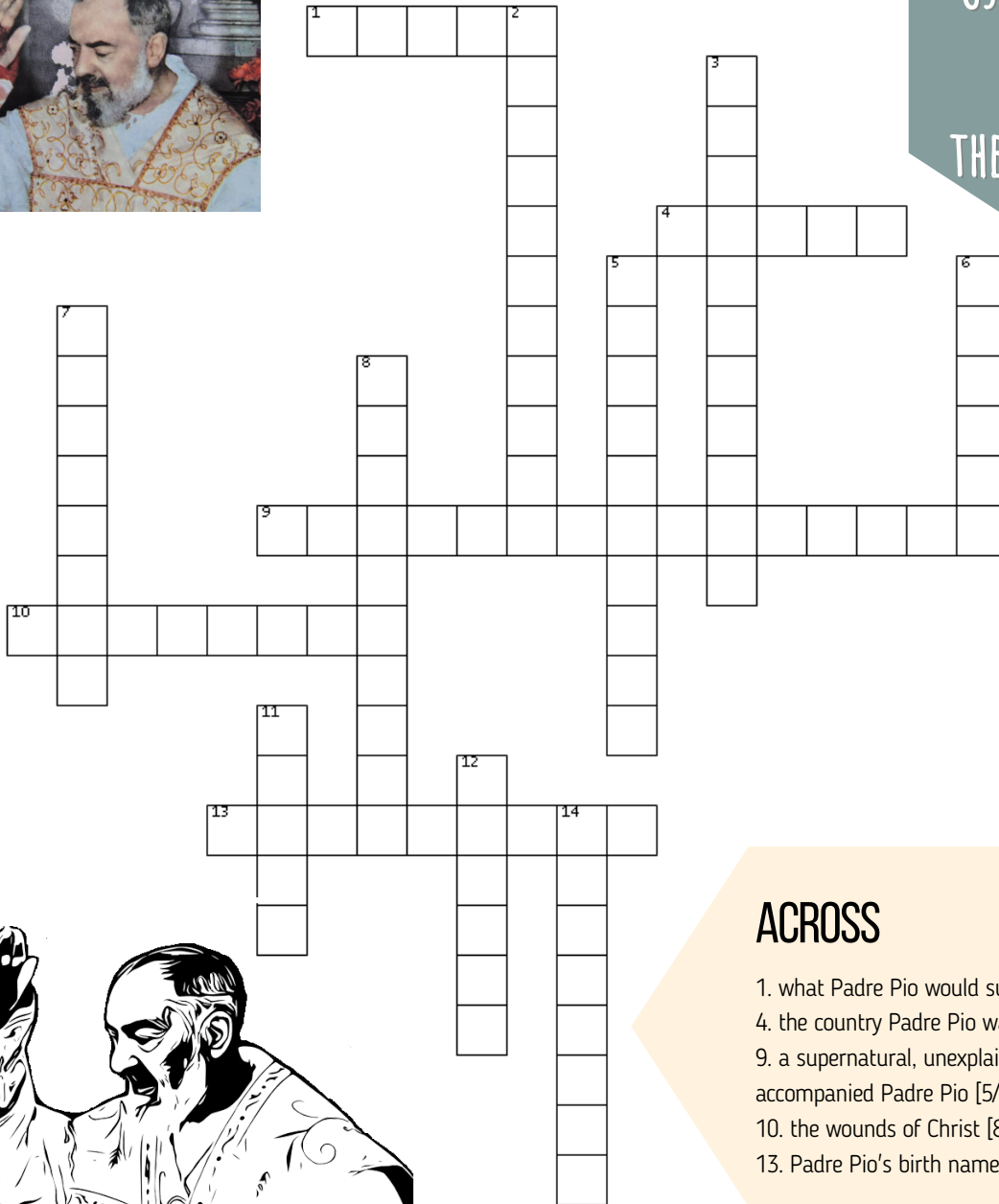


**Game-Changer Playlist!**

# PADRE PIO PUZZLE!



USE THE CLUES BELOW  
TO FILL IN  
THE CROSSWORD PUZZLE



## ACROSS

1. what Padre Pio would supernaturally read [5]
4. the country Padre Pio was born in [5]
9. a supernatural, unexplained fragrance that accompanied Padre Pio [5/2/8]
10. the wounds of Christ [8]
13. Padre Pio's birth name [9]

## DOWN

2. \_\_\_\_\_ Rotondo - the place where Padre Pio lived [3/8]
3. the place Padre Pio was born [11]
5. Padre Pio spent many hours hearing this sacrament [10]
6. Padre Pio said this is the most important weapon for these times [6]
7. obedience and \_\_\_\_\_ characterised his life [8]
8. appearing in two places at one time [10]
11. "Pray, hope and don't....." (his motto) [5]
12. Padre Pio was attacked by these [6]
14. the religious order Padre Pio joined [8]



Pray, hope  
and don't worry

- Padre Pio -

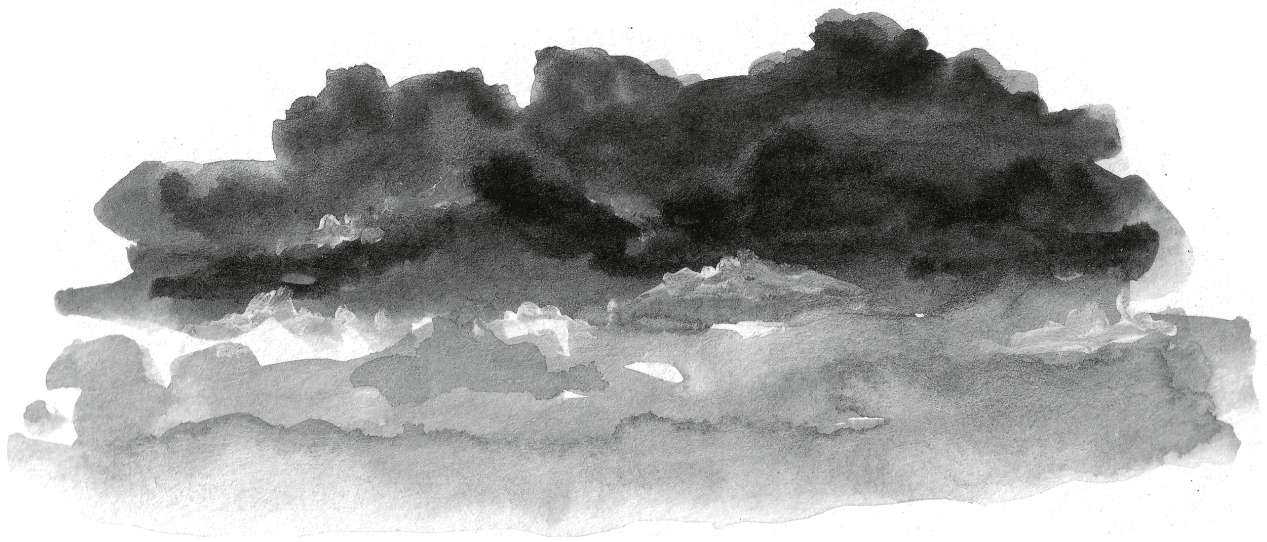




*The rosary is  
the weapon  
for these times.*

- Padre Pio -





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

- Padre Pio -

*“My past, O Lord,  
to Your mercy;  
my present,  
to Your love;  
my future  
to Your providence.”*



- Padre Pio -