



 THROUGH THE YEAR WITH PADRE PIO

~ 92. Freedom to Be Real ~

*Live as free men, yet without using your freedom as a pretext for evil;
but live as servants of God.*

1 PETER 2:16

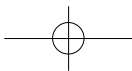
Let nature resent suffering because, when there is no sin, there is nothing more natural than this. With divine help, your will, will always be superior to it [your feelings of repugnance and resentment], and divine love will never diminish in your soul if you do not cease to pray.

Letters, Vol. 3, 82

How consoling that Padre Pio understood human nature! He is not seeking to form repressed plaster "saints" who cannot own that they feel resentment in suffering. A feeling, I remind myself, Lord, is never a sin. Sin enters when my feeling of anger or resentment is expressed in a deliberate malicious act. I do not want to sin, Lord, but I want to always have an honest dialogue with you, free to be angry, free to be frightened, free to be the complex mix of feelings that is ME.

~ 93. Lord, Save Me! ~

But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear. But immediately he spoke to them, saying, "Take heart, it is I; have no fear." And Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, bid me come to you on the water." He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus; but when he saw the wind,



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he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, "Lord, save me." Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "O man of little faith, why did you doubt?"

MATTHEW 14:26-31

O daughter of little faith, I also repeat to you with the divine Master, Why are you afraid? No, do not fear; you are walking on the sea amid the wind and waves, but be sure that you are with Jesus. What is there to fear? But if fear takes you by surprise, you too shout loudly: "O Lord, save me!" He will stretch out his hand to you; and this hand is precisely that tenuous ray of trust in him which you feel in the depths of your soul. Squeeze his hand tightly and walk joyfully, at least in the apex of your soul.

Letters, Vol. 3, 178

Tonight I am afraid, Lord. Take my childlike hand, and lead me through this dark hour. Jesus, I trust in you! Help my lack of trust!

~ 94. Jesus My Hope ~

Therefore we must pay the closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. For if the message declared by angels was valid and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard him, while God also bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his own will.

HEBREWS 2:1-4

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Keep Jesus Crucified present to your imagination; in your arms and on your breast, and kissing his side, say a thousand times: "This is my hope, the living source of my happiness; this is the heart of my soul; nothing will ever separate me from his love. I possess him and will not leave him, until he places me in a safe place."

Often say to him: "What can I have on earth, or what can I expect in heaven, if not you, O my Jesus? You are the God of my heart and the inheritance I desire for all eternity."

Letters, Vol. 3, 508

Lord, I see you in the garden in your agony. I am too poor and weak to support you. Like your disciples, I fall asleep rather than let myself truly enter into your sufferings. But I will to be with you, Lord, and offer you my mite of understanding, love, and appreciation. Accept my will, Lord, and increase my ability to love you, since on my own I can do nothing to stretch my narrow heart beyond its self-centeredness.

~ 95. When Heaven Is Silent ~

Being in an agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down upon the ground.

LUKE 22:44

Listen, dear daughters, don't waste time. Tell Jesus that it is by now time he came to my aid. I truly cannot bear it any longer. May he grant me what I have been asking of him for some time now, and quickly; otherwise I will inevitably be overwhelmed by the enemies. I am suffering the most atrocious agony. Tear from him, quickly, what I am asking; otherwise it will be too late. I deserve nothing more from

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divine mercy, I know, but I am waiting for my prayers to be granted through the merits of Jesus and the prayers of good souls. Will I not be heard even for this? If not, I will be lost.... Dear God, I feel I am dying under this heavy weight!

Letters, Vol. 3, 390–91

Dear God, how good to know that even a saint like Padre Pio at times experienced the feeling that he could not take any more suffering. I know he was young at the time he wrote those words to some of his spiritual daughters. I am much older and should be much more accepting of my crosses. But I too am asking you to take away my trouble through the merits of your Son, your saints like Pio, and all those good people who are praying for me. Divine Mercy, I am waiting for your healing touch!

~ 96. Walk Humbly Without Rancor ~

Have this mind among yourselves, which you have in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped.

PHILIPPIANS 2:5-6

I beg you not to take to heart the incident that took place yesterday. I did what I did not because I took your complaint badly—that is to say, because I held some rancor against whomsoever. May God protect me from that! He is a witness to what I am doing. And my intention was always upright before him. But I withdrew from you and everybody because they are matters that hurt my soul deeply, and I am unable to quell a certain interior sadness, which hurt me precisely in the most delicate and sensitive part, in the center of my heart.



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Don't hold anything against me, because I bear nobody any rancor. On the contrary, all are very dear to me, and I love them as I love my own soul.

Letters, Vol. 3, 525

Oh dear Lord, you know I was pretty crisp and full of myself when I got that third telemarketing call in two days from the same company, just as I was pondering those words from Philippians about your emptying yourself. You do have a way of gently pointing out how poorly I follow your example. Sorry! Help me be more charitable to the least of your children, among whom telephone sales folk surely qualify.

~ 97. Cling to Hope ~

Why so downcast, my soul, why do you sigh within me? Put your hope in God: I shall praise him yet, my savior, my God.

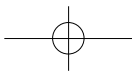
PSALM 42:5, JB

I cannot go on any longer. My eyes are becoming veiled with tears, and my heart is crushed under this heavy weight.... If you want to give me a word of encouragement, and if Jesus still permits you to have dealings with this person who is dead among the living, I will be grateful to you.

Letters, Vol. 3, 391

Lord, things look pretty black just now. But however unrealistic it seems at this point to hope, I WILL HOPE! Jesus, I trust in you.

Pray for me, Padre Pio, that when cast down I may still reach out, as you did, to God and friends for help and encouragement.





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~ 98. Do Good Whenever You Can ~

Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to do it. Do not say to your neighbor, "Go, and come again, tomorrow I will give it"—when you have it with you.

PROVERBS 3:27-28

Each one loves according to his own tastes; few, however, live according to their duty and the will of the Lord. From this there arises that tearful state whereby many start out on the path to perfection but few arrive at the summit.

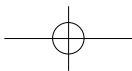
Letters, Vol. 3, 289

Lord, help me not to hold back from loving with all my heart EVERYONE you put in my path, those who wish me good and those who wish me ill. Help me also to never fear to give my material goods to others. Surely by now I should know that the more I give, the more you see I receive. I am ashamed that still sometimes I feel hemmed in by caution or by fear masquerading as "prudence." Give me a holy "foolishness" in your regard, that in the way I relate to others I may become a Christian in deed as well as name.

~ 99. Flowers ~

For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land.

SONG OF SONGS 2:11-12





T H R O U G H T H E Y E A R W I T H P A D R E P I O

One day a friar whose birthday it was heard a small noise outside the closed door of his cell. Curious, he opened the door and caught Padre Pio, who was shyly leaving the flower he had picked to wish his confrere a happy feast day.

Patricia Treece

(Padre Gerardo of Deliceto's remembrance of Pio's feast day gift can be found in *The Voice of Padre*, Vol. 27, Summer Number, 1997, 5.)

Oh, the flowers, Lord! You place beauty everywhere, from the daffodils of spring to the roses of summer, from chrysanthemums of autumn to the primroses in winter. You did not have to create the world in color; you did not have to give us flowers. Thank you, Lord! Thank you!

~ 100. *Living in God's Love* ~

Charity never fails.

1 CORINTHIANS 13:8, Challoner-Rheims

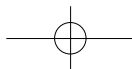
May Jesus fill you with his holy love, and may he transform you totally in him!

Letters, Vol. 3, 827

May our most sweet Savior extirpate your heart, as he did with his servant St. Catherine of Siena, in order to grant you his most divine heart, through which you can then live totally of his holy love.

Letters, Vol. 3, 824

Lord, I know that the transformation you offer me and that I long for is all about love. Giving up revenge, giving up even justice sometimes in



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order to “cover” enemies’ misdeeds—such aspects of true forgiveness are the strongest proof of love that is not cheap words but the real thing. How hard it is to love like you, to truly let the rain of one’s mercy fall upon the just and the unjust. I cannot do this unless you totally transformme, Lord. Do it soon!

~ 101. *Paying Our Debts in Prayer* ~

I remember you constantly in my prayers.... I long night and day to see you, that I may be filled with joy.

2 TIMOTHY 1:3-4

My dear daughter, write to me always with the confidence of a daughter.... In order that you be directed well, it is not sufficient for me to know only the general state of your soul; I also want to know of new events that take place and also accidentals. If you were more greatly convinced of the holy affection I have for you in the Lord, and knew of the fire with which my soul burns for your sanctification, I would not have thought it necessary to request this of you, to encourage you to do what I say.

How can I repay—I don’t say you—but your family, for what you and they have done for me. I do my best to repay this debt in some way with my assiduous prayers before the Lord, and for this reason I offered the Mass I sang last Saturday to the heavenly Father for you and your family.

... How happy I would be if I could personally thank you and your family.

Letters, Vol. 3, 866–67