



Padre Pio's "Go-To" Intercessory Prayer

By Mary Ann Collett

During the past month on September 23rd, we celebrated Padre Pio's Feast Day and this month on October 16th, we celebrated St. Margaret Mary Alacoque Feast Day. While reflecting and praying to them, I discovered an article written by Philip Kosloski about Padre Pio's "go-to" prayer. I became curious and continued to read more about the prayer.

I have a devotion to both of them, especially Padre Pio. I will share with you a little later about my special experience while visiting his shrine in Italy.

Every day, during his ministry Padre Pio was asked by numerous people, whether in person or by letter, to pray for a specific intention and many times this intention was miraculously answered by God. It is actually a prayer composed by St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, called; *"Efficacious Novena to the Sacred Heart of Jesus"* (a copy will be at the end of this reflection).

Many believe this is a powerful prayer because it calls upon the heart of Jesus to have mercy on us and our petitions. Above all things, it must be prayed with sincere faith. Jesus's heart is indeed full of love and compassion and this prayer trusts in that love, believing that He is tender enough to generously grant our petition if it is His holy will.

If you are not familiar with Padre Pio or St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, let me introduce them to you; Padre Pio's original name was Francesco Forgione, also called St. Pio of Pietrelcina, (born May 25, 1887, Pietrelcina, Italy—died September 23, 1968, San Giovanni Rotondo; canonized June 16, 2002; feast day September 23), Italian priest and saint of the Roman Catholic Church. Padre Pio was said to have had the gift of reading souls, the ability to bilocate (according to eyewitness accounts), among other supernatural phenomena. He was said to communicate with angels and worked favors and healings before they were requested of him. The reports of supernatural phenomena surrounding Padre Pio attracted fame and legend.

St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, born July 22, 1647 and died on October 17, 1690. She was a French Roman Catholic Visitation nun and mystic, who promoted devotion to the *Sacred Heart of Jesus* in its modern form. Jesus appeared to Margaret Mary Alacoque multiple times during her lifetime and showed her His Sacred Heart.

As promised, I will share with you what I experienced on my two pilgrimage trips to San Giovanni Rotondo, Italy. My first trip to visit Padre Pio's Shrine was in 1985 and as I recall, it was a day trip into a small town with a hospital that Padre Pio had built across the street from the church. We toured the church and had Mass with the Capuchin Friars and then they brought us upstairs to see his blocked off Cell (Bedroom). They showed us where Padre Pio stood to pray and greet the people at a window in the hall right outside of his cell. We could only see it from a distance. It was a day filled with prayer and graces.

I could not believe that our 2002 pilgrimage was going to take a day trip to San Giovanni Rotondo, Italy. I was delighted to be able to return to the shrine. But, to my amazement when we arrived everything had changed in the 17 years since my last visit. They had built a new 6,000 seated church that would accommodate up to 10,000 standing room only. Plus, many other amenities were added. Once again, we celebrated Mass in the church and was led upstairs to his cell. However, this time they were renovating the building and his cell was open. I took advantage of the situation and entered into his bedroom and walked around and even touched his chair and desk.

But the best was yet to come! Outside of his cell in the hall was the window that we were able to freely go to this time and look out into the garden. There was a pair of green shutters on the inside of the window where Padre Pio stood to pray and greet the people. As I turned to leave after looking out the window, I noticed what looked like dried blood stains on the shutters from where he had placed his hands (due to his stigmata). I showed it to a couple of people and they agreed with me. We then took some of our religious articles and touched the stained spots. What a special blessing we all received (third class relics).



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An Efficacious Novena to the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Attributed to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque

Saint Padre Pio recited this novena every day for all those who requested his prayers. This novena can be prayed any time of year or, as did Padre Pio, perpetually throughout the year. However, it is traditionally prayed for nine days prior to the Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart.

Prayer One:

O my Jesus, you have said:

“Truly I say to you, ask and you will receive, seek and you will find, knock and it will be opened to you.”

Behold I knock, I seek and ask for the grace of...

(name your request here)

Our Father...

Hail Mary...

Glory Be to the Father...

Sacred Heart of Jesus, I place all my trust in you.

Amen.

Prayer Two:

O my Jesus, you have said:

“Truly I say to you, if you ask anything of the Father in my name, he will give it to you.”

Behold, in your name, I ask the Father for the grace of...

(name your request here)

Our Father...

Hail Mary...

Glory Be To the Father...

Sacred Heart of Jesus, I place all my trust in you.

Amen.

Prayer Three:

O my Jesus, you have said:

“Truly I say to you, heaven and earth will pass away but my words will not pass away.”

Encouraged by your infallible words I now ask for the grace of...

(name your request here)

Our Father...

Hail Mary...

Glory Be to the Father...

Sacred Heart of Jesus, I place all my trust in you. Amen.

Concluding Prayer:

O Sacred Heart of Jesus,
for whom it is impossible not to have compassion on the afflicted,
have pity on us miserable sinners
and grant us the grace which we ask of you,
through the Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary,
your tender Mother and ours. Amen