

THE PADRE PIO PRAYER GROUP of Cleveland

Spiritual Director:
Fr. Edward J. Janoch

Chaplains:
Fr. William E. Browne
Fr. Michael Petkosek
Fr. Kevin C. Shemuga

Group Leader:
Cindy Russo

MISSION & VISION:

To carry out the works, words and devotion of St. Padre Pio through prayer and charitable works where we can touch lives and change souls.

Our vision is to create more Spiritual Children and lead souls to heaven.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Apr 4 -

Live streaming Mass for our Padre Pio Prayer Group on our Facebook page at 8:30 AM (<https://www.facebook.com/padrepioofcleveland/>).

May 2 -

Padre Pio Prayer Group Gathering beginning with Rosary at 8:00 AM and Mass at 8:30 AM, Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, 9080 Shepard Rd, Macedonia



St. Padre Pio Prayer Group Newsletter

APRIL 2020

VOLUME 8, ISSUE 4

Make This Holy Week Holy

Holy week is just that – the holiest time in the year. Even though we can't physically attend, we can meditate on these holiest of days. So, don't waste the opportunity to saturate yourself in God's graces! Pray hard, love others, serve, give, and spend much time with Jesus in prayer! Here are some insights into Holy Week and the Triduum.

Jesus experiences on the Cross the mysterious abandonment of the Father in order to be totally in solidarity with us. In His abandonment, however, He prays and entrusts Himself: **"Father, into your hands I commit my spirit" (Lk 23:46)**. Hanging from the wood of the cross, besides disrespect and humiliation, He now confronts the last temptation: to come down from the Cross, to conquer evil by might and to show the face of a powerful and invincible God. Jesus, however, even here at the height of His annihilation, reveals the true face of God, which is mercy. He forgives those who are crucifying him, He opens the gates of paradise to the repentant thief, and He touches the heart of the centurion. If the mystery of evil is unfathomable, then the reality of Love poured out through Him is infinite, reaching even to the tomb and to hell. He takes upon himself all our pain that He may redeem it, bringing light to darkness, life to death, love to hatred. God's way of acting may seem so far removed from our own, that He was annihilated for our sake, while it seems difficult for us to even forget ourselves a little. He comes to save us; we are called to choose his way: the way of service, of giving, of forgetfulness of ourselves.

Let us walk this path, pausing in these days to gaze upon the Crucifix; it is the "royal seat of God". During the week, gaze often upon the "royal seat of God", to learn about the humble love which saves

and gives life, so that we may give up all selfishness, and the seeking of power and fame. By humbling Himself, Jesus invites us to walk on His path. Let us turn our faces to Him, ask for the grace to understand at least something of the mystery of his obliteration for our sake; and then, in silence, contemplate the mystery of this Week.

The Triduum is made up of the three days before Easter – Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday. It is a single prayer of final preparation where we enter into the redemption of humanity and the salvation of the world made present in the Resurrection of our Lord. This is the holiest part of the year and makes present the mystery of Jesus' passion and death before He rises again.

Holy Thursday – The Mass of the Lord's Supper. This is the celebration of the first Eucharist in the upper room.

Good Friday – Celebration of the Lord's Passion. Pray and meditate on the Stations of the Cross. Venerate in your home the Cross and read the entire Passion of Christ.

Easter Vigil – This is the high-point of the Church's year. During this celebration of Christ's death and Resurrection, we have the RCIA candidates and elect receive the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist). Pray for the candidates who will not be able to do this at this time this year.

Prayerfully enter into the coming Holy Week in preparation for Christ's rising from the dead. This is a Lent, Holy Week, and Easter that will be like no other. Christ have mercy on us all!



“Unless there is a Good Friday in your life, there can be no Easter Sunday.”
—Venerable Fulton J. Sheen



REFLECTIONS FROM OUR
SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR

It is said that God will always turn a bad/evil situation to show us the good/holy that exists. In this period of the coronavirus pandemic, we have been in a time of “Good Friday.” With the loss of the public expressions of the Sacraments at our parish churches, we are “without” our sacrament presence of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Many are saddened and are mourning this loss of Christ’s presence. But Venerable Fulton J. Sheen said that we must go through a Good Friday before we can reach Easter Sunday in our lives. Our desire for Jesus in Holy Communion has been elevated to a higher level since we have been asked/told that the public worship of the Mass, Confession, Eucharistic Adoration, etc. be suppressed during this pandemic. We are being asked to sacrifice our public worship and gatherings so that the spread of the virus can be controlled at a pace that allows our health facilities and governmental agencies to be ahead of the virus.

One area that has been of concern is the availability for the Sacrament of Penance. I found the following information on the website for *America Needs Fatima*. It gives information on how someone can make a perfect act of contrition for the forgiveness of sins when a priest is not available for the Sacrament.

Shortly before the outbreak of World War II, Saint Maximilian Kolbe wrote a letter to his followers. The purpose of this letter was to exhort his disciples to prepare themselves for the approaching feast of the Immaculate Conception, December 8. But it also showed them how to receive forgiveness for sin in the coming war, where priests were scarce and it was hard to receive sacramental confession. He wrote:

"Whoever can, should receive the Sacrament of Penance. Whoever cannot, because of prohibiting circumstances, should cleanse his soul by acts of perfect contrition: i.e., the sorrow of a loving child who does not consider so much the pain or reward as he does the pardon from his father and mother to whom he has brought displeasure."

This is a magnificent formula and lesson on how to make an act of perfect contrition.

As most people know, there are two types of contrition:

- **perfect:** out of love of God;
- **imperfect:** out of fear of Hell.

Catholic teaching distinguishes a twofold hatred of sin; one, perfect contrition, rises from the love of God Who has been grievously offended; the other, imperfect contrition, arises principally from some other motives, such as loss of heaven, fear of hell, the heinousness of sin, etc. (Council of Trent, Sess. XIV, ch. iv de Contritione). (The Catholic Encyclopedia, "Contrition")

When we go to confession, imperfect contrition is sufficient to receive the pardon of our sins. However, in extraordinary circumstances where [when] we cannot get to confession, we can make an act of perfect contrition, which is sufficient to have our sins forgiven.

Important: The act of perfect contrition includes the desire for the sacrament of Penance (or Reconciliation) and the intention to receive sacramental confession at the very first opportunity.

NOTE: One who is conscious of mortal sin may not receive the Holy Eucharist with-

(Continued on page 4)

Coronavirus Lessons

St. John Paul II is known as the “Fatima Pope”. Our Lady of Fatima told the children that if people did not repent, a worse war would happen. It did --World War II. John Paul lived through it and its aftereffects, --the communist occupation of Poland. He studied the Fatima appearances and prophecies and spared no effort to warn the church and world about its implications. He stated that the church is currently involved in the biggest showdown between the Gospel and the anti-Gospel since the beginning of the Church but very few people are aware of it. He himself was in many ways a prophet. He called upon us to heed the Fatima warnings and the signs of the times.

We are witnessing the showdown as we experience the collapse of morality, militant atheism, heresy, false teaching, etc. We are experiencing the signs of the times much like the tribulation Jesus spoke about in Mark Chapter 13 and the Book of the Apocalypse with natural calamities. This is called the apocalyptic genre of scripture which can apply to the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD, the current time, as well as the end times. We all have a deep sense of the unrest, both the physical world as well as the moral world. Credible modern prophets have foretold what we are experiencing. Fr. Joseph Esper, priest, writer and speaker who lives in Michigan, has spoken about this on EWTN.

Recent Marian apparitions of Garabandal and Medjugorje while still under investigation, seem to have a lot of credibility as do the recent locutions of Mary to now deceased Fr. Stephano Gobbi of the Marian Movement of Priests. Contained in all of these prophecies and apparitions are strong references to a chastisement that is a “punishment” brought about by sinful living with the purpose of motivating people to purification, repentance and a return to faith and morality. God does not like to chastise, but he does it for our own good so that evil will stop flourishing. (Hebrews Chapter 12)

Is the coronavirus still another sign God is sending us along with the recent floods, fires, droughts, earthquakes, etc. to get our attention?

Jesus told St. Faustina that we are currently in a time of mercy, but if people don’t repent, God will unfortunately have to

apply his justice.

In light of all of this, we need to develop the gift of “fear of the Lord”, one of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit given to us at our confirmation. Fear of the Lord is not to be taken in the common usage of ordinary, human fear which is the trepidation our weak humanity feels when we are afraid of suffering something we do not want to happen. This kind of fear is not taught. It happens because we are weak. We do not have to learn what we should fear. Objects of fear bring their own terror with them. But of the fear of the Lord, this is what is written in scripture: “Come, my children, listen to me, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord.” This is something that can be taught. It does not arise from the fearfulness of our nature. It has to be acquired by obedience to the commandments, by holiness of life and by knowledge of the truth. It consists wholly in love, and perfect love of God brings our fear and respect of Him to its perfection. Deuteronomy states: “and now Israel, what does the Lord your God ask of you except to fear the Lord your God and walk in all his ways and love Him and keep His commandments with your whole heart and your whole soul, so that it may be well with you.” To sum up—unbelievers worry, believers are concerned in the context of God’s love for us. God is our safety net.



THOUGHTS FOR REFLECTION:

- People pay much more attention to fearful news in order to find out how it is going to play out. March is one of the three months in which the media undergoes its ratings. They pounce on the fear of people to keep people tuned in. The Dali Lama once said that the media is part of the problem. Are we wary of the media? Do I prefer Catholic and Christian media over secular media?
- We have been gifted with the understanding of the content of Marian apparitions, prophecies and their warnings and promises. The seers of Medjugorje still under investigation said that that during the chastisement believers will suffer, but in the context of hope. The apostles in the boat during the storm on the lake suffered the effects of the storm, but Jesus chastised them for their lack of faith. They were safe the whole time and so are we. Do I focus more on the storm than on Jesus?

(Continued on page 7)

A NOTE FROM
OUR CHAPLAIN

My Dear Members and Friends of the Padre Pio Prayer Group:

These certainly are challenging times. I think of the times of persecution in Ireland when attending Mass could cost you your life or your livelihood. I think of the times in France when John Vianney, "The Curé of Ars", spoke of his parents harboring priests who risked their lives to bring the Eucharist to people spiritually starving for its benefits. I think of being able to celebrate Mass daily, but being prohibited from celebrating public Mass. I pray that these times of separation from the sacraments will bring about a greater hunger (longing) for the sacraments. I pray that we have a much greater appreciation for all these gifts from God that we have often taken for granted. When "absence makes the heart grow fonder," takes on divine assistance, it can grow to astonishing heights. Know that your presence is so important to we who try to serve you and that we are "starving to death" from the greatly reduced Christian interaction. Let us all pray that we emerge much closer to God when we get to the other side of this virus.

Your Chaplin,

Rev. Bill Browne

(Continued from page 2)

out prior sacramental confession. The fact that we can always make an act of perfect contrition, in any circumstance, and at any time, is very consoling and very important to remember. Especially when we think of our troops who are in harm's way. They may not have a chaplain in their battalion before entering battle. In that case, they should always say an act of perfect contrition. Actually, not only in extraordinary circumstances should we make acts of perfect contrition. At any time, if we have the misfortune of committing a mortal sin, we should seek to reconcile ourselves with God as soon as possible by an act of perfect contrition, before going to confession.

Furthermore, even not being guilty of serious sin, we should make frequent acts of perfect contrition to ask forgiveness for the serious sins of the past, and for the venial sins of the present.

In doing so, we show our love for God. And we prove our aversion to sin, which offends Him. In doing so, we surely receive more abundant graces to sin no more. A highly recommended practice is to include an act of contrition in our "before bed" prayers.

Act of Contrition

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins, because I dread the loss of heaven, and the pains of hell; but most of all because they offend Thee, my God, Who are all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy grace, to confess my sins, to do penance, and to amend my life. Amen.

We will persevere during this pandemic. We must. We know that the Victory of the Cross is in Christ, but we must do our part to profess the truth of the Cross and live a life reflective of our Risen Lord and His Holy Ones; the Saints. I continue to pray for you and I ask that you pray for me. I hope that we will be able to meet in May, but it will be up to God's mercy if we are to gather next month. As St. Padre Pio said: "Pray, Hope and Don't Worry."

A Blessed Easter to All!



Holy Helpers, Pray for Us

By this time in the coronavirus outbreak, you may have cruised the empty toilet paper aisles at your local grocery store and could have had moments of panic, or at least heightened anxiety. With many U.S. states having declared a state of emergency over COVID-19, what was once an overseas worry is now stateside. And for the general population, being a part of something like this is a new, and disconcerting, experience. The plague is not new in the life of the Church though. In the middle of the 14th century, the plague was “The Greatest Catastrophe Ever”, ravaging Europe and killing 50 million people, or about 60% of the population (a vastly higher death rate than coronavirus), within a few years. Lacking the advances of today’s modern medicine, and layering dead bodies in pits, the people had no choice but to cling to their faith. It is time to call in Holy Helpers – Catholic saints – who invoked spiritual hope against the plague and other misfortunes.



St. Corona: She’s being called on now in Northern Italy where her remains are. She was a teenager and was in a married relationship. She and her brother-in-law, St. Victor (they kind of go hand-in-hand), were martyred. As Roman soldiers gouged out St. Victor’s eyes, she cried out to encourage him to not give up. He kept the faith and boldly proclaimed it. He was martyred and then they cap-

tured her, and essentially, tied her to two bent-over palm trees and they ripped her from limb-to-limb. She was definitely sought after from that period of time on because of how many miracles came from her intercession, as well as St. Victor, as it relates to epidemics and pandemics. St. Corona is a very, very powerful witness.

St. Roch (or Rocco): Born of a noble family, tradition says St. Roch was miraculously born with a red cross on his breast. He gave all of his fortune to the poor at age 20 after his parents died. In 1315, he assisted plague victims in several Italian cities, miraculously curing people with the sign of the cross. While helping the sick, he also contracted the disease. However, the saint survived after a dog helped him in the forest. The dog brought him food and licked his wounds. He was later mistaken for a spy and spent the rest of his life in prison. An angel appeared in St. Roch’s cell after his death. The angel said that those who invoked his intercession would be cured of the plague.



St. Rosalie: The Church knows little about St. Rosalie’s life. Her story begins 500 years after her death. In 1625, the city of Palermo in Sicily, Italy suffered a terrible plague. She appeared to a hunter, telling him to find her remains in a cave. She asked him to bring her remains into the city. Citizens processed three times with her relics through Palermo. The plague then miraculously ended. She became the patroness of Palermo. A sanctuary stands where the hunter found her remains.

St. Michael the Archangel: Have you heard this miraculous story about the Castel Sant’Angelo? The Castel Sant’Angelo is a large fortress near Vatican City with a gigantic St. Michael the Archangel statue on top. This statue signifies a magnificent story of God’s love and care for his people through the angels. Around 590 A.D., Rome suffered a terrible plague causing many deaths. Pope St. Gregory the Great pleaded for the angels’ help to fight this epidemic. The pontiff celebrated Masses and tirelessly processed through Rome with prayers and incense. St. Michael later appeared on top of the castle with his sword. In the book, *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints*, author Jacobus de Voragine writes: “The plague was still ravaging Rome, and St. Gregory ordered the procession to continue to make the circuit of the city with the marchers chanting litanies. An image of the Blessed Virgin Mary was carried in the procession. And lo and behold! The poisonous uncleanness of the air yielded to the image as if fleeing from it and being unable to withstand its presence: the passage of the picture brought about a wonderful serenity and purity in the air. We are also told that the voices of the angels were heard around the image, singing. Then the pope saw an angel of the Lord standing atop the castle of Crescentius, wiping a bloody sword and sheathing it. Gregory understood that that put an end to the plague, as, indeed, happened. Thereafter the castle was called the Castle of the Holy Angel.” Pope St. Gregory the Great then built the St. Michael statue on top of the castle, representing his protection over Rome and the Church.



Let us turn to St. Corona, St. Roch, St. Rosalie and St. Michael the Archangel in defeating the coronavirus pandemic! Please defend us in these days of battle! Amen.

Daily Reflections for April 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Prayer to St. Rocco (Patron of contagion, epidemics, illness) O great St. Rocco, deliver us, we beseech you, from contagious diseases, and the contagion of sin. Obtain, for us, a purity of heart which will assist us to make good use of health, and to bear sufferings with patience. Teach us to follow your example in the practice of penance and charity, so that we may, one day enjoy the happiness of being with Christ, Our Savior, in Heaven. Amen.						
5 Lord Jesus, the crowd cried out "Hosanna," which means "Lord save us." I also cry out today with my voice and my heart, "Hosanna, Son of David."	6 "Only say the Word and I shall be healed." Jesus, I believe. I am open to Your healing in a spiritual Holy Communion.	7 Lord Jesus, enlighten me to see how much You love me and want me to be blessed. Touch my greatest difficulty or need today.	8 Lord Jesus, if I can image Your face over the faces of all I meet today, I can begin to heal my relationships with them. Give me the strength to see You in every person I meet.	9 Lord, make me willing to wash the feet of those who need my love.	10 Dear Jesus, there are no words to express my gratitude for Your love. Help me to see that the Cross is merely a means to an end. Teach me that joy is the end of all revelation.	11 This day is filled with silence, Lord, as we await the out-pouring of joy with which we will celebrate Your Resurrection. Help me to prepare diligently for that great event.
PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD 12 Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God Almighty. We joyfully proclaim Your Resurrection! Alleluia!	13 Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God Almighty. We joyfully proclaim Your Resurrection! Alleluia!	14 Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God Almighty. We joyfully proclaim Your Resurrection! Alleluia!	15 Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God Almighty. We joyfully proclaim Your Resurrection! Alleluia!	16 Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God Almighty. We joyfully proclaim Your Resurrection! Alleluia!	17 Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God Almighty. We joyfully proclaim Your Resurrection! Alleluia!	18 Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God Almighty. We joyfully proclaim Your Resurrection! Alleluia!
THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD [EASTER] 19 Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the whole world. Jesus, I trust in You!	MONDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF EASTER 20 Lord, our God, fill us with Your Spirit so that we may hear Your Good News. Touch our hearts with Your love so that we in turn may love one another.	TUESDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF EASTER 21 Lord, help me to understand the astounding love that You expressed on the Cross, and enable me to respond to that love with all my heart.	WEDNESDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF EASTER 22 Dear Jesus, comfort me, console me, and inspire me so that I may comfort and console and inspire those who need me.	THURSDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF EASTER 23 Father, I am repelled by the cross. Help me to say the words Jesus said the night before He died: "Not my will but Yours be done."	FRIDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF EASTER 24 Jesus, my Lord, I really do not know what I am doing half the time. Give me the grace to be strong enough to put a halt to this way of life. I deserve better life, and with Your help, I am going to claim it.	SATURDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF EASTER 25 "Come away with Me, by yourselves, to a deserted place and rest for a while." [Mk 6:31] Our Father . . .
2ND SUNDAY OF EASTER, SUNDAY OF DIVINE MERCY 26 How blessed and privileged we are, O Lord, to recognize You in the breaking of the Holy Bread, and to be nourished by You.	27 Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we rejoice in Your joy and we live in Your love. Help me to reach out to someone in need today.	28 Holy Spirit, soul of my soul, live in me and give me the courage to proclaim the glory of Your Name.	29 O Lord, grant me the courage to take up my cross and follow You. Make me understand that it is through the cross that I learn how to die with You so that I may also rise with You.	Easter Weekday <i>St. George</i> <i>St. Adalbert</i>	Easter Weekday <i>St. Fidelis of Sigmaringen</i>	"Come away with Me, by yourselves, to a deserted place and rest for a while." [Mk 6:31] Our Father . . .
3RD SUNDAY OF EASTER	Easter Weekday	Easter Weekday <i>St. Peter Chanel</i> <i>St. Louis Grignion de Montfort</i>	St. Catherine of Siena	Easter Weekday <i>St. Plus V</i>	Prayer for Spiritual Communion [EWTN] <i>My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.</i>	ST. MARK

The ABC's of Divine Mercy

God is Love and Mercy itself. The message of mercy is that God loves us – all of us, no matter how great our sins. He wants us to recognize that His mercy is greater than our sins, so that we will call upon Him with trust, receive His mercy, and let it flow through us to others. Thus, all will come to share His joy. It is a message we can call to mind simply by remembering ABC.

Ask For His Mercy. God wants us to approach Him in prayer constantly, repenting of our sins and asking Him to pour His mercy out upon us and upon the whole world. Ask for His Mercy. Through the passion and death of Jesus, an infinite ocean of mercy was made available for all of us. But God, who created us free, will not force anything on us, not even His mercy. He must wait for us to turn from our sinfulness and ask: **"Ask and it will be given to you ... for everyone who asks receives" (Mt 7:7, 8).**

Be Merciful To Others. God wants us to receive His mercy and let it flow through us to others. He wants us to extend love and forgiveness to others just as He does to us. Mercy is love that seeks to relieve the misery of others. It is an active love, poured out upon others to heal, to comfort, to console, to forgive, to remove pain. It is the love that God offers us, and it is the love He demands from us for each other: **"I give you a new commandment. ... As I**

have loved you, so you must love one another" (Jn 13:34). "Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful" (Lk 6:36).

Completely Trust In Jesus. God wants us to know that the graces of His mercy are dependent upon our trust. The more we trust in Jesus, the more we will receive. Trust in Jesus is the essence of the message of mercy. When we go to a public fountain, we can draw water from it as long as we have a vessel or container of some kind to put the water in. If our vessel is small, we can only bring back a little water; if it's large, we can bring back a lot. And anyone with a vessel can draw water from the fountain. The water is there for us, and no one is excluded. All we need is a vessel. So it is with God's mercy. In repeated revelations to St. Faustina, Our Divine Savior makes it clear that the fountain is His Heart, the water is His mercy, and the vessel is trust. **"I have opened My Heart as a living fountain of mercy. Let all souls draw life from it. Let them approach this sea of mercy with great trust" (Diary, 1520).**



How do we exercise mercy? Through our actions, our words, and our prayers, by performing the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy, and by developing an attitude of mercy in our daily lives. Every day we can choose to respond to the people and events we encounter by immersing them in the ocean of God's mercy. Instead of "cursing the darkness" and despairing over the condition of the world, we bless the world with God's mercy, thus allowing Him to heal it.

(Continued from page 3)

- The seers of Medjugorje said that believers can lessen the effect of the chastisement by our prayer and penance. What am I doing as prayer and penance?
- Mary calls for reparation not only for our own sins but for the sins of others. Do I simply complain and criticize bad politicians, militant atheists, abortionists, etc. or do I make reparations for their sins?
- Years ago, the people in a certain area of France were warned that they would be chastised if they didn't keep the Sabbath Holy. They didn't and they were punished. The precautions for the coronavirus are an enforced Sabbath—lockdowns, quarantines, etc. Is God trying to get my attention? Do I shop and do unnecessary work on Sunday? Do I regularly attend Mass, visit the sick, etc.?
- An important condition of Fatima for peace is the practice of the first Saturdays of the month—Mass, Communion, the Rosary, 15 minutes of meditation on a mystery of the

Rosary, and confession about eight days before or after the Saturday. People must do this to bring about peace. Do I practice this?

- Our churches have been closed and the Sacraments suspended. Might this be God's way of telling me that I need to appreciate the Eucharist and the Sacraments and not to have a mere casual approach to them?
- Jesus said, "What you have heard in secret, shout from the roof tops", and "Don't put your light under a bushel basket, but on the lampstand". Jesus desperately wants his message to be preached on the highways and the byways so that we don't have to suffer a chastisement or at least that it will be lessened. Everyone is talking about the virus. Do I tactfully mention the faith aspect? Am I aware that people are more open to the Gospel message in times of crisis?

Jesus is certainly our only Savior, but in many ways, our salvation is in our own hands. Mary and Joseph, Pray for us!



Fondazione Casa Sollievo della Sofferenza
Centro Gruppi di Preghiera di Padre Pio

SUPPLICATION TO PADRE PIO IN TIME OF THE CORONAVIRUS

O glorious Padre Pio,

when you set up Prayer Groups you *"placed us alongside Casa Sollievo, at the forefront of this little Citadel of Charity"*, and you assured us that our vocation is to be *"nurseries of faith and centres of love in which Christ Himself is present"*.

In this time of Pandemic it is impossible to unite physically as Prayer Groups, but each of us knows that we are a person of prayer in communion with many others – many of whom we know the names and faces.

In this tragic time, o glorious Padre Pio, let us feel that we are truly united as *one large Group* which embraces the whole world and is the voice of all the *Citadels of Charity* which struggle, suffer and pay with their professionalism to overcome this evil of the Coronavirus.

O glorious Padre Pio, be a mediator of our prayer to Christ Crucified, from whom you became a Cyrene for humanity.

Through your mediation we wish to intercede:

- for *people affected* by the virus - and for those who have left this world through this scourge;
- for *the families of the deceased and the sick*, marked through intimate bonds "unarmed victims" of an enemy who came as a thief to modify things and relationships;
- for *those in forced isolation in quarantine*, almost an experience of "house arrest" not for any crime they have committed but touched by an incomprehensible event, perhaps infected whilst carrying out their professional duty;
- for *family doctors and first aiders*: "in the trench" with little safety and without the means to fight an invisible enemy;
- for *doctors, nurses, health workers and all workers* of hospital wards: "battle fields" without hours, shifts and with forces that seem to diminish;
- for those responsible for civil life, *rulers and administrators*: leaders in times of calamity, obliged to make decisions which appear bitter and unpopular;
- for the world economy, for *workers, entrepreneurs* of all categories, who see their work activities weakened and fear resistance in having to rebuild their businesses themselves: at the end of this "war" so that creativity and good will be strengthened in them;
- for the *forgotten*: the *elderly* and *people who live alone*, *beggars* and the *homeless*, all categories who have remained as "excluded" by social circles which were already suffering and weak;
- for those who are no longer mentioned in journalistic or televised news: *migrants*, the *refugees* who risk their lives crossing "our sea" on boats. All these still exist as before and continue their calvary;
- for each one of us, who live with a wounded heart at this time but who know in a situation like this, that we must be even more a *nursery of faith and centre of love*.

Help us o glorious Padre Pio, to intercede for all these people: they are the *flesh of Christ*, they are the Eucharist which we cannot receive these days: they are the living Eucharist, made up of weak and suffering people.....the face of the Son of God shines on their faces. *"Sweet Jesus Crucified and Risen"*.
Amen!

† **Franco MOSCONE** *crs*
Archbishop Manfredonia-Vieste-San Giovanni Rotondo
General Director for Padre Pio Prayer Groups

Seal the Doorposts!

Participate in a simple but incredibly powerful act of faith. To protect you and your family, post an Image of the Divine Mercy on your front doors.

The Marian Fathers invite all Catholics to “seal the doorposts” with this Image for protection during the coronavirus pandemic. If you don’t have an Image of Divine Mercy, you can visit TheDivineMercy.org/DivineMercyImage and download it for free and print it out. If you are unable to have it blessed by a priest, the Church allows you to invoke a blessing yourself. *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1669) teaches that lay people, on account of their baptismal priesthood, may administer certain blessings. To invoke such a blessing upon the Image of Divine Mercy:

While making the Sign of the Cross over the Image, say:

“Oh, Lord, I seek your blessing upon this image, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.”

Why is this Image so important?

The Image represents the Lord, the Lamb sacrificed for us, from whose Heart flows Blood and Water, the streams of God’s mercy upon the whole world. The Lord promises us through St. Faustina “that the soul that will venerate [honor] this image will not perish” (*Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska*, 48).

He also promises: “victory over [our] enemies already here on earth, especially at the hour of death” and to “defend [us] as [His] own glory” (*Diary*, 48).

The Lord said, “By means of this Image I shall be granting many graces to souls; so, let every soul have access to it” (*Diary*, 570).

Saint Faustina’s confessor, Blessed Michael Sopocko, recalled additional promises our Lord made through St. Faustina regarding the Image:

“When chastisements for sins come upon the world and your own country will experience utter degradation, the only refuge will be trust in My mercy. I will protect the cities and

homes in which The Divine Mercy Image is found; I will protect the persons who will venerate [honor] this Image. The only refuge will be trust in My Mercy.”

Father Sopocko recalled that Jesus also said:

“Let everyone procure for their homes this Image because there will yet come trials. And those homes, and entire families, and everyone individually who will hold this image of mercy in deep reverence, I will preserve from every sort of misfortune. The time will come when all those who do so will give witness to the miraculous efficacy and to the special protection of mercy flowing from this Image.

What does this mean for us today?

Recently, as the repercussions of the coronavirus became crystal clear, we prayed at Mass, “Let us seal the doorposts

of our inner thoughts with the protective Word of God ...” This is a reference to Exodus 12, where God commanded the Israelites to “seal the doorposts” with the blood of the lamb so that the angel of death may pass over those houses that have been marked.

Jesus is the sacrificial Lamb of God.

By offering Himself as atonement for our sins and those of the whole world, by the outpouring of His Blood and Water, He freed us from eternal death and sealed us for eternal life.

So, you are urged to put the Image of the Divine Mercy with the inscription “Jesus, I trust in You” upon your doors, as many have done in times of calamity. Remember, it is Jesus whom we worship in this Image.

Also, while this act of faith may not guarantee your family won’t be physically affected by the virus, it will guarantee that, by your trust in Jesus, you will obtain His promises of love and mercy, which will surround you and remain in you forever.



Dear Spiritual Brothers and Sisters of Padre Pio

I first would like to thank Fr. Matt Jordan for celebrating the Mass and then giving us a powerful presentation of St. Joseph and his journey on the path to Holiness. He truly is a spiritual son of St. Padre Pio. Fr. Bill Browne blessed the El Salvador missionaries during the Mass. The amount of medicine that was donated from all of you for them to take and fill the clinic's closet was astonishing. Two carts full! You are fulfilling our Lenten promise. Unfortunately they had to postpone their trip due to the Corona Virus. We pray that this pandemic will be gone soon.



I want to congratulate all who consecrated themselves to St. Joseph on his feast day. Studying St. Joseph through Fr. Calloway's book has helped us grow in knowledge of St. Joseph. So much information that we have never known was revealed. We are in times where we have to unite ourselves spiritually rather than physically. When we have our next meeting, we will formally renew our consecration.

This springtime is preparing our soul for more life and vigor. Hopefully it has you examining yourself, purging and growing in holiness and wisdom.

This Lent has been like no other Lent we have had before. Who would ever think that we would be fasting from our Sacraments? Not being able to attend Holy Mass and receive the Holy Eucharist gives me new meaning of the words Jesus said before He died: "I Thirst." Never will we ever take our sacraments for granted again. Most of us are blessed with electronic devices so we can live stream Masses and prayer services, or watch on EWTN. Pray for those who can't. Ask Jesus for Spiritual Communion throughout the day. Remember the harder the struggle, the bigger the prize. Pray for our priests. One priest told me as hard as it is for us not to receive the Eucharist, it is so difficult for the priests to not have his congregation. The building is not the church, the people are.

For the April 4th "gathering", our Chaplain Fr. Michael Petkosek will be live streaming a Mass for our Padre Pio Prayer Group on our Facebook page at 8:30 AM. Go to **Facebook - The Padre Pio Prayer Group of Cleveland** (<https://www.facebook.com/padrepioleveland/>).

I wish you a Blessed Holy Week and a Blessed Easter! Bare your crosses more patiently. Padre Pio would say, "Everybody in life has a cross. Are you the good thief or the bad thief? The good thief used his cross to make him better. He asked for forgiveness. The bad thief became bitter and angry."

May our Blessed Mother calm your fears and anxieties during this time of testing and anxiety. Remember to pray for all our healthcare workers!

Pray, Hope and Don't Worry,

Cindy Russo

*So much
has
happened
since our
March
gathering.*



How to Make a Spiritual Communion

Saints often made an act of spiritual communion when they couldn't receive the Eucharist at Mass. Since we are prevented from attending Mass at this time, the Church encourages us to make an act of "spiritual communion," where we unite ourselves to God through prayer. It is a beautiful way to express to God our desire to be united with Him when we are unable to complete that union in the reception of Holy Communion. During this Lent we are living Jesus's words "I thirst."

A spiritual communion is different from an actual or sacramental communion, in which we receive the Real Presence in the consecrated Host and Precious

Blood. A spiritual communion is a devotion that we can initiate on our own, either inside or outside of holy Mass. We can make a spiritual communion at any time and in any place, as long as we approach the devotion with "renewed faith, reverence, humility and in complete trust in the goodness of the divine Redeemer" and are "united to him in the spirit of the most ardent charity," according to Pope Pius XII's encyclical *Mediator Dei* (The Sacred Liturgy). In spiritual communion, we embrace Our Lord as if we had actually received him in the Eucharist.

Countless saints incorporated this type of prayer into their daily lives, not being satisfied with receiving Jesus in the Eucharist once a week or even once a day. Making an act of spiritual communion for them was an essential part of life and drew them closer to God on a

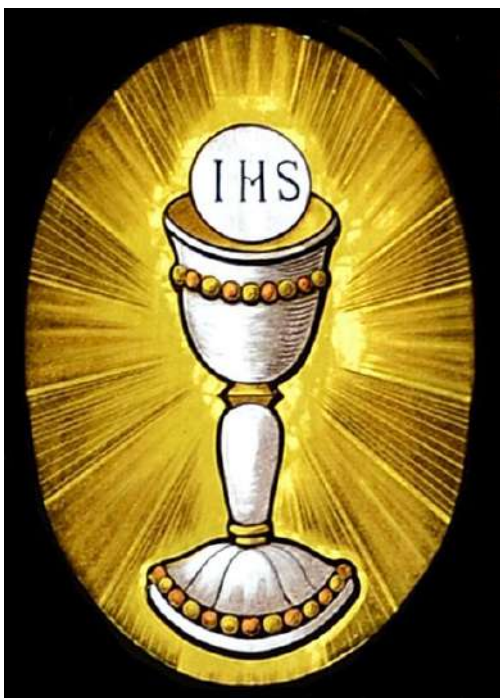
daily basis. St. Josemaria Escriva encouraged everyone to make a spiritual communion as often as they could, "What a source of grace there is in spiritual communion! Practice it frequently and you'll have greater presence of God and closer union with him in all your actions." Padre Pio also had a habit of making a spiritual communion throughout the day outside of the celebration of Mass. He desired to be always united with Jesus Christ in everything he did.

Below is a traditional prayer of spiritual communion that many saints have prayed over the years. It can be prayed if you find yourself at Mass unable to receive the Eucharist, or even in the midst of your daily work, lifting up your thoughts to God. The ultimate goal of our lives should be communion with God and an act of spiritual communion can help a person draw closer to that goal.

The Act of Spiritual Communion:

The key here is to express to the Lord our faith in His merciful love and His real presence in the Eucharist.

- Make an act of faith.
- Make an act of love.
- Express your desire to receive him.
- Invite Jesus to come into your heart spiritually.



"O Lord God, I love you above all things. My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You in my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen."

Prayers for Priests



We cherish our faith and the Holy Roman Catholic Church. Let us pray fervently for our priests and the Church.

PRAYER FOR PRIESTS

O Almighty Eternal God, look up-on the face of thy Christ, and for love of Him who is the eternal High Priest, have pity on Thy priests. Remember, O most compassionate God, that they are but weak and frail human beings. Stir up in them the grace of their vocation which is in them by the imposition of the Bishop's hands.

Keep them close to Thee, lest the enemy prevail against them, so that they may never do anything in the slightest degree unworthy of their sublime vocation.

O Jesus, I pray Thee for Thy faithful and fervent priests; for Thy unfaithful and tepid priests; for Thy priests laboring at home or abroad in distant mission fields; for Thy tempted priests; for Thy lonely and desolate priests; for Thy young priests; for Thy aged priests; for Thy sick priests; for Thy dying priests; for the souls of Thy priests in purgatory.

But above all I commend to Thee the priests dearest to me: the priest who baptized me; the priests who absolved me from my sins; the priests at whose Masses I assisted and who gave me Thy Body and Blood in Holy Communion; the priests who taught and instructed me

or helped me and encouraged me; all the priests to whom I am indebted in any other way, particularly [name].

O Jesus, keep them all close to Thy heart, and bless them abundantly in time and in eternity. Amen.

O Mary, Queen of the Clergy, pray for us and send us many and holy priests.

O Mary, Queen of the Clergy, pray for us and send us many and holy priests.

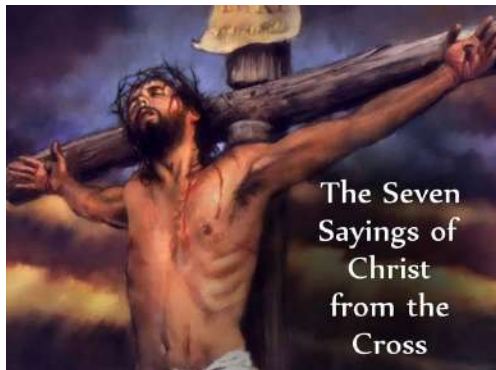
O Mary, Queen of the Clergy, pray for us and send us many and holy priests.

ST. FAUSTINA'S PRAYER FOR PRIESTS AND THE CHURCH

"O my Jesus, I beg You on behalf of the whole Church: Grant it love and the light of Your Spirit, and give power to the words of Priests so that hardened hearts might be brought to repentance and return to You, O Lord. Lord, give us holy Priests; You yourself maintain them in holiness. O Divine and Great High Priest, may the power of Your mercy accompany them everywhere and protect them from the devil's traps and snares which are continually being set for the souls of Priests. May the power of Your mercy, O Lord, shatter and bring to naught all that might tarnish the sanctity of Priests, for You can do all things."

—(St. Faustina's Diary #1052)

Protect them from the devil's traps and snares



The Seven Sayings of Christ from the Cross

Holy Week Meditation

1. Luke 23:34 "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."
2. Luke 23:43 "You will be in heaven with me today."
3. John 19:26-27 "Woman, Behold Your Son...Behold Your Mother."
4. Matthew 27:46 "My God, My God, Why Have You Forsaken Me?"
5. John 19:28 "I thirst."
6. John 19:30 "It is finished."
7. Luke 23:46 "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit."

Jake's Corner

Written by: Jake Snyder

For April, I am writing about one of my dearest and favorite Saints, she is Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska. I have a very special devotion to Saint Faustina and I was born on her feast day. Saint Faustina was born on August 25, 1905 in Glogowiec, Poland to Marianna and Stanisław Kowalski. She was the third of ten children. The next day she was Baptized and given the name Helena. At nine years old she received Holy Communion. She had very little education, but she was pious. At a very young age she felt the call to the religious life after experiencing a vision of the Suffering Christ. Her parents did not allow her to enter the religious life though. When she was old enough, she left her house and worked a little while in the world, then on August 1, 1925 she entered the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy taking the name of Sister Maria Faustina of the Blessed Sacrament.



Soon after she entered the Congregation, she began to experience mystical visions and mystical experience. Externally, Sister Faustina did not appear to have mystical experiences, but it was highly noticed how well she followed the Rule of her Congregation. Jesus appeared to her and gave her the mission of telling the whole world about His unfathomable Mercy. Jesus also told Sister Faustina to have an image made and call it the Image of the Divine Mercy. At first, many people did not really believe Sister Faustina, but with the help of her Saintly Confessor, Blessed Michael Sopoćko, the Divine Mercy devotion was spread all around the world. Jesus told

Sister Faustina to encourage people to go to Confession more often and to trust in His unfathomable Mercy. At the age of thirty-three on October 5, 1938, Sister Maria Faustina of the Blessed Sacrament died. On April 18, 1993, His Holiness, Pope Saint John Paul II Beatified Sister Maria Faustina and the same Pope Canonized her on April 30, 2000.

Saint Faustina is one of the greatest Saints of modern times. She was the Secretary of God's Mercy and she was faithful to Our Lord and His commands. The Divine Mercy Devotion is one of my favorite Devotions and it has brought me comfort. Saint Faustina's whole life was made up of trust in God's Mercy. She went day by day, not knowing what would come next, but she always trusted that God in His unfathomable Mercy would be there to protect and comfort her. May we be like Saint Faustina and always trust in God's Mercy each day, and learn to trust in Him a little more day by day. Additionally, during this time of uncertainty because of the coronavirus outbreak, may we take this as an opportunity to learn to place our trust and hope in God and not the things of this world. Furthermore, may we learn to become more merciful; I believe, if we learn to become more merciful people, the world would be a better place. God Bless you and have a blessed Holy Week and a blessed Easter Sunday.

SOURCES:

"Biography: Mercy - Saint Faustina - Diary - Jesus, I Trust in You - Congregation." *The Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy*, The Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy, www.faustyna.pl/zmbm/en/biography/. Accessed 28 Mar. 2020

"St. Maria Faustina Kowalski - Biography." *The Divine Mercy*, Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception of the B.V.M., 29 May 2019, www.thedivinemercy.org/message/stfaustina/bio. Accessed 28 Mar. 2020

Prayer for a Pandemic

May we who are merely inconvenienced
Remember those whose lives are at stake.

May we who have no risk factors
Remember those most vulnerable.

May we who have the luxury of working from home
Remember those who must choose between preserving their health or making their rent.

May we who have the flexibility to care for our children when their schools close
Remember those who have no options.

May we who have to cancel our trips
Remember those that have no place to go.

May we who are losing our
margin money in the tumult of
the economic market
Remember those who have no
margin at all.

May we who settle in for a
quarantine at home
Remember those who have no
home.

During this time when we cannot physically wrap our arms
around each other,
Let us yet find ways to be the loving embrace of God to our
neighbors.

Amen.



KEEP OUR SICK SISTERS & BROTHERS IN YOUR DAILY PRAYERS

Call Helen Husky 440-232-3462 to add a member to the list.

Bobby
Jan Boczek
Virginia DeJesus
Roy Evans
Margie Ferfolia
Marty Franck

Kathy Hlad
Mark Magda
Joe Morici
Eleanor Phillips
Judy Purdy
Abbot C. Schwartz OSB

**FOR ALL THE INTENTIONS IN OUR ONLINE PRAYER
BASKET, LORD, HEAR OUR PRAYER.**

† OUR CONDOLENCES TO THE FAMILIES OF OUR RECENTLY DECEASED †

Cathy Castro (aunt of Jake Snyder)
Michael Pappadakis, husband of Joan (Prayer Group member)
Dominic Rizzo



**“THE
ROSARY
IS THE
WEAPON
FOR
THESE
TIMES.”**

-SAINT PADRE PIO



BEST WISHES to our *Spiritual Children* celebrating birthdays and special occasions in the month of April!

WEBSITE: WWW.PADREPIOCLEVELAND.ORG **CONTACT US:** INFO@PADREPIOCLEVELAND.ORG
FACEBOOK: WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/PADREPIOCLEVELAND **TWITTER:** [@PADREPIOCLEVEOH](https://twitter.com/PADREPIOCLEVEOH)