

*Lenten
Meditations
With
Saint Pio of Pietrelcina*

Compiled by Anthony F. Chiffolo



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***A complete list of the works quoted
in this booklet appears on page 48.***

Epigraph

Most Divine Spirit, enlighten and inflame me in meditating on the Passion of Jesus, help me to penetrate this mystery of love and suffering of a God, Who, clothed with our humanity, suffers, agonizes and dies for the love of the creature!

THE AGONY OF JESUS

Introduction

Perhaps the saint most closely associated with the Lenten season, Padre Pio bore the bleeding stigmata (the wounds of Christ in his hands, feet, and side) for more than fifty years. Throughout his life, he also endured prolonged periods of utter despair, feeling plunged into deepest darkness and spiritual combat, cut off from God's light and love and aid. Pio accepted his victimhood, offering his torments as a sacrifice for the salvation of souls everywhere, but particularly for those in purgatory. Indeed, his greatest desire was to emulate his beloved Jesus as closely as humanly possible.

The quotations herein, taken from Pio's letters, allow us to accompany him on his Lenten journey, which encapsulates the very essence of his life. We experience his wandering, share his suffering, feel his unworthiness, cry out with his despair, yearn with his longing,

hope with his courage, and believe with his certainty. Perhaps, with God's grace, we may also glimpse the ecstasy of his love.

Day 1

I am oppressed by the uncertainty of my future, but I cherish the lively hope of seeing my dreams fulfilled, because the Lord cannot place thoughts and desires in a person's soul if he does not really intend to fulfill them, to gratify these longings which he alone has caused.

LETTER TO P. AGOSTINO

OCTOBER 4, 1915

*O Lord, all my longing is known to you;
my sighing is not hidden from you.*

PSALM 38:9

Day 2

Dear God, I am rowing and sailing for you;
be my pilot and my oarsman yourself.

LETTER TO P. AGOSTINO

NOVEMBER 19, 1916

*Make me to know your ways, O LORD;
teach me your paths.*

*Lead me in your truth, and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation;
for you I wait all day long.*

PSALM 25:4-5

Day 3

Where on earth am I wandering? ...Where on earth am I rushing headlong? I am on no path, I am completely and perhaps irreparably lost. I know no means, I receive no least ray of light, not a glimmer; no rule, no life or truth to be learned which could sustain and revive me and enable me to hope against hope....

LETTER TO P. BENEDETTO

AUGUST 21, 1918

*The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases,
his mercies never come to an end;
they are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.
“The Lord is my portion,” says my soul,
“therefore I will hope in him.”*

LAMENTATIONS 3:22-24