

# Saint Pio of Pietrelcina

Part 3

1887 - 1968

PURGATORY

Padre Pio of Pietrelcina reported to his spiritual director some experiences with the Souls of Purgatory. In a letter to Padre Agostino on April 7, 1913 he wrote: "My dearest Father, Friday morning I was still in bed, when Jesus appeared to me. He was completely battered and disfigured. He showed me a large multitude of priests, among whom were various ecclesiastical dignitaries, of these some were celebrating Mass, some were vesting and some were removing their sacred vestments. The sight of Jesus in distress brought me a lot of pain, thus I wanted to ask him why he was suffering so much.

"I received no answer. However his glance led me towards those Priests; but shortly after, almost horrified and as if he were tired of looking, he withdrew his glance and when he raised it towards me, with great consternation; I observed two tears furrowing his cheeks. He distanced himself from that crowd of Priests with a profound expression of disgust on his face, screaming: 'Butchers! And directed to me, he said': 'My son, do not think that my agony lasted only three hours, no; due to the souls who had been more privileged by me, I shall be in agony until the end of the world. During the time of agony, my son, we must not rest. My soul goes to search for any drop of human devotion, but alas they desert me alone under the weight of indifference.

"The ingratitude and the lethargy of my ministers render much more burdensome my agony. How they reciprocate badly to my love! What afflicts me most

is that they add contempt and unbelief to their indifference. Many times I was ready to strike them, if I were not restrained by the angels and the souls in love with me... Write to your Father and recount to him what you have seen and heard from me this morning. Tell him to show your letter to the Father Provincial ...? Jesus continued but what he said I will never be able to reveal to anyone of this world."

There were other episodes regarding the presence of the Souls of Purgatory in the life of the Saint. A spiritual daughter of Padre Pio, Cleonice Morcaldi at the end of a confession received from the Saint this revelation: "This morning your mother flew to Heaven, I saw her while I was celebrating Mass".

Saint Pio was born in Pietrelcina, in the province of Benevento, on May 25, 1887. On January 22, 1903, at the age of sixteen, he entered a Capuchin friary. He was ordained a priest seven years later, on August 10, 1910. In 1916 his superiors decided to transfer him to San Giovanni Rotondo, on the Gargano mountain, and here, in the friary of Santa Maria delle Grazie (Our Lady of Grace), an extraordinary adventure had begun for Padre Pio as miracle worker and apostle of the confessional. On September 20, 1918 he received the stigmata. He died on September 23, 1968, at the age of 81. He was declared venerable in 1997 and beatified in 1999. He was canonized in 2002.

