

September 2008

An Experience of a lifetime regarding a Saint, Padre Pio.

A little background of my life that is needed to understand the depth of my spiritual experience. I was born to an unwed 24 year old school teacher, in 1930, and named Myrl McLaughlin. These were the years that to have a child when not married was a disgrace to the mother, her family and all of society. During this time a lot of children were adopted. Today, of course, we have the dreaded abortion.

I was therefore adopted to my fantastic parents, who gave me a cotton candy childhood, sprinkled with love, kindness, honor and love of life. I was raised in the Christian Scientist Church, whose total belief is healing of any medical disease, through God and Jesus Christ. My father was a pharmacist, who believed in medicine as the healer, he was also a Presbyterian.. therefore I had a mixed view of religion, medical versus God doing the practice of healing. I converted to Catholicism at a late age, in my early 40's. This was done after many years of soul searching and reading on all religions. I felt I kept being guided to the Catholic Religion.

I am now 78 years old and recently *given* a diagnosis of lung cancer. Two nodules showed on an X-ray. The reason for the X-ray was symptoms of a lingering cough with daily blood show. The one nodule was verified as cancer with a modern PET scan.

This scan has a 70% ratio of accuracy and 30% chance of false reading. I was referred to both a Pulmonary Physician and then a surgeon to do a biopsy. The surgeon wanted me to wait for a few months to repeat the PET scan to see if the nodule had grown, as he felt it was too small to do a biopsy because of the location of the nodule. He felt that it was too dangerous for me as I could have possible complications with my heart, lung and possibly of coming home on oxygen, maybe even permanently. Therefore I waited, with the trauma of thinking how will I handle this serious illness and hopefully with God's help I could overcome any fear of death I might have. During this time, somehow Padre Pio's name kept surfacing in my thoughts. I knew hardly anything about Padre Pio, except that my husband's cousin in Canada, his family had come from the very town in Italy where Father Pio practiced his faith. One of their sons was even named Pio and later he became a priest. Their confessor in Italy had been Father Pio. There is an American Shrine here in Barto, Pennsylvania, only about 1 and 1/2 hour drive from our home. I mentioned it to my husband that I thought I would like to go to the Shrine. This was undertaken, along with two cousins that wanted to accompany us.

When we came to the Shrine, not knowing of course what to do with regard to any requests we might have. We watched a lot of people going to the front of a small chapel, where the Rosary was being repeated over and over again. I took the lead and went to the front of the Chapel, where a woman was holding an object under glass. This object I recognized as a part of a glove that Father Pio had worn to cover the stigmata's he endured during his lifetime. I asked the woman holding this relic, "What do I do?" She told me to place my hand on the relic and ask for a blessing or request. I did this but did not ask for healing for myself, only to help me have the strength to endure what illness that may be in my future and to show my husband and those around me that I could be strong and to help them in what they might also endure. After this we went into the main church where there was a large wooden statue of Father Pio behind the altar. Visitors were going behind the Altar to view this Statue. I too went to look at the Statue of Father Pio.

While looking at the almost perfect likeness of the Father. I found his left eye was somehow fixed on me with this strange feeling I was having.. I didn't know what to do so I asked him to help my son, who is waiting for a liver transplant. With this request I turned and left to join my husband. I told him I wanted him to come and look at the statue and particularly the eyes. Prior to that time, unknown to me, both my husband and our cousins were placing written requests for Padre Pio for my healing. He went to the altar and with me we looked at the eyes... I still felt this sensation of such piercing intentness in this left eye, almost like it was real and could see my soul and read all my thoughts. Unknown to me that during Padre Pio's lifetime his eyes were reported to be able to see into one's thoughts and future.

A month later I underwent a follow up Pet Scan and not only was there no cancer but both nodules were completely gone, the cough went away and no more blood shows...Only one of the nodules had been positive for cancer, but they were both gone. The doctors had no reasonable medical explanation for this occurrence.

I have never been a confirmed believer of the healing power of Saints, even with my background of healing in my early religion. This was different, after my doctor told me of the results, I asked him how could this be what could the explanation be? He said he didn't know and my husband said in the background, Padre Pio....he was right that is the only explanation for the disappearance of the signs of cancer. I am writing this for others in testimony for Father Pio and all the Saints that I completely believe in their powers through their special access to God.

I feel compelled to write a follow up regarding my second visit to the Shrine of Saint Padre Pio. This 2nd visit took place on November 3, 2008.

After my healing both my husband and I both felt I needed to thank Padre Pio in person at the Shrine. Of course I had thanked him so many times in prayers, but the effort of traveling over an hour to the Shrine just to say thank you would have more meaning.

I had sent my testimony to the Shrine to be recorded in their book of people receiving a grace. In return the sister, that was actually given a new vital organ to save her life when she was a child through Padre Pio, answered me in thanks for my testimony. She asked me to introduce myself when I made another visit. Of course I wrote and thanked her for the present of the Shrine. The Shrine came into being mostly due to the work of her family and is only a few years old and the largest Shrine to Padre Pio outside of Italy.

My friend wanted to see the Shrine so we went together. It was a picture perfect fall day with the colors of bright autumn in a vista of colors all along the drive to the Shrine. The Shrine is placed at the top of a wide hill with a panoramic view of the countryside in all its glory. Being early Monday morning there was only one visitor at the Shrine. It gave us such quiet time for many reflections and thoughts both in the Chapel and the Church area. The whole persona seemed so holy to me this day and I even felt closer to the spirit of Padre Pio. When there before a lot of people were present and an on wing chant of the rosary was being said in the Chapel. It was also inspiring but nothing like I felt on this visit. I was so moved in the quiet of all who had been there before me with so many prayers, requests for the dying, the sick and the needy. Also it was filled with Thanksgiving of those past and present.

I had the privilege of standing in front of the life like statue of Padre Pio again, but not to ask for strength to battle a life threatening cancer but to thank him for choosing me to heal. Why I do not know, as I am 78 years old and so many more with a life ahead of them he could have given this

grace, but mine is not to question. I do believe I was given this grace for a reason. I believe it is to share his desire for me, in my small way; to help spread the word of belief in God's power through Christ and the Saints. Therefore I am keeping a diary of my visits to the Shrine and the effect it has on me. I wanted to communicate how blessed I feel I am in the grace I have received. I only pray that somehow sharing it with my friends and others you too will feel a presence of Padre Pio and hope for any problems in your life.

As we toured the Museum on the grounds, a few nuns came through and a priest. Everyone was in a silent respect of Padre Pio's presence. When we left the Shrine the parking lot was half filled by then and we basked in the beautiful day of reflections of orange, yellow and red color and a world made by God. Thank you for letting me share my thoughts with you....Love you all.....

*YOUR FRIEND GLORIA*