

St. Anthony of Padua R.C. Church

160 Court Street, Buffalo, New York

TRADITIONALLY SPEAKING by S. Casarotto, CS 11/9/08

The Stigmata of Fr. Pio

Visions and other spiritual phenomena are not part of the Revelation which ended with the death of the last Apostle and is entrusted to the Church's Magisterium. To believe in apparitions is not necessary for salvation and they are object only of human faith. In addition, we should remember that several apparitions have been declared to be false by the Church.

A new book, which contains the first complete version of the report penned by Bishop Raffaele Rossi of Volterra, (later Cardinal), apostolic visitor sent by the Holy See to secretly investigate Padre Pio, clarifies that on the occasion of the reception of the stigmata the saint had a conversation with the crucified Christ.

Asked by Bishop Rossi to swear on the Gospel, Padre Pio revealed the identity of the one from whom he received the wounds. He said: "On Sept. 20, 1918, I was in the choir of the church after celebrating Mass, making the thanksgiving when I was suddenly overtaken by powerful trembling and then there came calm and I saw Our Lord in his crucified form. He was lamenting the ingratitude of men, especially those consecrated to Him and favored by Him."

"Then," Padre Pio continued, "his suffering was apparent as was his desire to join souls to his Passion. He invited me to let his pains enter into me and to meditate on them and at the same time concern myself with the salvation of others. Following this, I felt full of compassion for the Lord's pains and I asked him what I could do.

"I heard this voice: 'I will unite you with my Passion.'" After this, the vision disappeared, I came back to myself, my reason returned and I saw these signs here from which blood flowed. Before this I did not have these."

Padre Pio then said that the stigmata were not the result of a personal request of his own but came from an invitation of the Lord who conferred on Padre Pio a mission as the culmination of an interior mystical journey.

HE KNEW - Several years ago, one of our parishioners, after hearing about the extraordinary gifts of Padre Pio, went to San Giovanni Rotondo to see him. Padre Pio was always busy with long lines of people going to confession to him. So, our parishioner lined up with others and eventually went inside the confessional. As soon as she knelt down, Padre Pio told her, "What are you doing here? You are wasting my time." He gave her a quick blessing and dismissed her.