

When he saw that she was at the end of her life, he administered the sacrament of the sick and remained at her bedside. When he saw that she would soon draw her last breath, he could not remain any longer. He kissed her on the forehead, uttered a loud sob and left. He had to be led away by two doctors.

Padre Raffaele took his place at the bedside, and the humble woman breathed her last and returned her soul to God. It was 6:25 in the afternoon on January 3, 1929.

In a neighboring room, Padre Pio abandoned himself to uncontrolled heart-rending weeping. His tears caused all the others to weep as well. He soaked a pile of handkerchiefs with his tears and kept repeating: "Mamma mia! Mamma mia bella. Mamma mia!"

One of his spiritual sons, in an effort to comfort him, said: "Padre, you taught us that sorrow is nothing else but an expression of the love offered to God. So why do you weep like this?"

He answered: "But these are precisely tears of love. Nothing but love."

Countless people wanted to pray at the mortal remains of Mamma Peppa, dressed in the habit of a Franciscan tertiary. The funeral on the following day was impressive.

Sorrow had physically prostrated Padre Pio, and at the advice of the doctors, he remained in the home of Mary Pyle for several days. But his confreres did not leave him alone; they took turns staying with him. At night Padre Raffaele slept in a bed that had been put up in the same room.

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## ***Padre Pio's Mother's Death***



***Giuseppa Forgione***

***Other than his love for the Blessed Virgin Mother,  
Padre Pio's greatest love was for his earthly mother.***

***His deepest suffering and sorrow was the  
loss of his beloved mother on January 3, 1929.***

## **PADRE PIO'S MOTHER'S DEATH**

*from The Life of Padre Pio  
by Gennaro Prezioso*

The sufferings of Padre Pio had been increasing, but in the early days of 1929 he suffered a sorrow that was truly insupportable: the loss of his beloved mother.

Ever since her son had returned to San Giovanni Rotondo to remain permanently in the cloister, Giuseppa had kept to herself in Pietrelcina. She kept her distance from the events that were occurring around her Francesco, only getting information from friends and relatives. Her heart always trembled with fear and anxiety.

### **A CHRISTMAS INVITATION**

On December 5, 1928, she was invited by Mary Adelia Pyle, a spiritual daughter of Padre Pio whom everybody called Maria L'americana, to spend Christmas at San Giovanni Rotondo. Delighted at the opportunity to be a little closer to her son, Mamma Peppa accepted the invitation and was a guest at Mary's home, which was very close to the friary.

Her meeting with Padre Pio took place in the square in front of the church. This is the way Mary Pyle described it:

Hiding her great joy under an apparent calm, Peppa took the hand of her son, and before he could pull away, she said: "Padre Pio, I kiss your hand for Aunt Libera (first kiss), and for Aunt Pellegrina (second kiss), for Aunt Filomena (third kiss)," and so on, until she had kissed his hand ten times for aunts and godmothers. Then she ended by saying: "And now, Padre Pio, I kiss your hand for me."

She tried to do so but did not succeed, because as she bent to kiss his hand, Padre Pio suddenly lifted his hands in the air and, holding them aloft, he said: "Never! The son should kiss the hand of the mamma, not the mamma the hand of the son!"

After that, Mamma Peppa did not try to kiss Padre Pio's hand, but every morning after receiving Communion from his hand, without letting anyone see her, she bent down and kissed the ground where the wounded feet of her son had stood.

She was confused by the things she heard about him. She had wished to do something, but she was not allowed to do anything. When she saw the superior, Padre Raffaele, in the sacristy, she approached him and, in all simplicity, she said: "Father Guardian, love my son, Padre Pio!"

Padre Raffaele, deeply moved by that "recommendation," which was an expression of all the love and tenderness of a mother, responded: "Mamma Peppa, do not worry; do not be afraid. But take care of yourself because it is very cold."

Actually, she was wearing clothes that were too light for that season of the year. She had refused a heavier garment that Mary Pyle had offered her because she felt it was more proper for a great lady.

### **DOUBLE PNEUMONIA!**

After attending the Mass celebrated by Padre Pio on Christmas Eve, she returned home shivering. They put her to bed and took her temperature. It was very high!

The next day the doctor made an examination and the diagnosis was double pneumonia! Accompanied by Padre Raffaele, Padre Pio went to see his mother several times.