



Dr. Andrea Cardone from Pietrelcina, who was friend and physician of Padre Pio for many years, testified in 1968: "In both hands exist holes a bit larger than half inch, passing through the palm of the hands to the other side; so that one could see light passing through. And with pressure the fingertips of my thumb and pointer touched each other."

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## Padre Pio and Dr. Andrea Cardone



Padre Pio and his life-long friend, Dr. Andrea Cardone  
at the time of their last visit.

*With my whole heart I cry; answer me, O Lord . . . I rise before  
dawn and cry for help; I hope in thy words. My eyes are awake  
before the watches of the night, that I may meditate upon thy  
promise. Hear my voice in thy steadfast love; O Lord, in thy  
justice preserve my life.*

*Psalm 119:145-149*

# Padre Pio and Dr. Andrea Cardone

In 1910, Padre Pio received the first signs of the stigmata on his hands. He told the parish priest of Pietrelcina, Father Salvatore Pannullo that he became aware of the painful wounds on his hands at the moment when Jesus and Mary had appeared to him. At that time, it was referred to as the “invisible stigmata,” because the marks would alternately appear and then disappear. Dr. Cardone was one of the few people who saw the red, puncture-like wounds of the stigmata on Padre Pio’s hands before they became permanent. In 1918, when Padre Pio was thirty-one years old, the wounds became permanent. Dr. Cardone also examined Padre Pio’s stigmata after it became permanent and left a written statement regarding it. He wrote that the wounds “pierced the palms of his hands completely through, so much so that one could see light through them.” Shortly after obtaining his license to practice medicine, Dr. Andrea Cardone of Pietrelcina became the family doctor for Francesco Forgione (Padre Pio) as well as the entire Forgione family. In the early days, Dr. Cardone had no idea of the worldwide fame that Francesco would one day receive.

Dr. Cardone remembered that as a boy, Francesco would go to the parish church in Pietrelcina every day. Dr. Cardone sometimes watched young Francesco as he climbed the stairs that led to the church. Even before entering the church, Francesco was already recollected in prayer. He always kept his eyes lowered when he walked through the streets of Pietrelcina on his way to school. Some of the local children were without parental supervision and frequently used bad language. Dr. Cardone remembered that little Francesco would cry whenever he heard their profanities and would run away.

When Padre Pio was a young Capuchin monk in Pietrelcina, Dr. Cardone treated him for his many ailments. Often, Dr. Cardone was at a loss as to how to help him. Padre Pio had a chronic cough and was extremely thin. Many people in the town believed that he had tuberculosis. For this reason, some people avoided him, thinking that his condition was contagious. Dr. Cardone tested him on numerous occasions and was relieved to find out that he did not have tuberculosis. He accompanied Padre Pio to Naples in order to consult with Dr. Castellino, the leading physician of that time. But no matter what remedies were given, Francesco’s health did not improve. His frequent fevers too, were mysterious. Dr. Cardone confided to a friend that he believed that his fevers were of a supernatural origin.

Dr. Cardone remembered that just before Easter, Padre Pio used to gather the youth of Pietrelcina together at his home. He instructed them in the Mass readings of Good Friday and taught them the songs to be sung at intervals between the Passion prayers.

On one occasion, Dr. Cardone was very ill and burning with a high fever. Padre Pio appeared in bilocation at his bedside. He took Dr. Cardone’s wrist in his hand, as though checking his pulse. Dr. Cardone was instantly healed. After that, Dr. Cardone often said, “Padre Pio is a patient who heals the doctor.”

Through the years, Dr. Cardone always felt the beautiful impression of Padre Pio’s goodness, his sweetness, his superhuman modesty, and his many other virtues. Like a number of the other citizens of Pietrelcina, Dr. Cardone said that he felt honored to have Padre Pio as a personal friend. He also felt it a great privilege to be his doctor. “We of Pietrelcina are proud of the divine grace which works through Padre Pio and spreads so much good throughout the world,” Dr. Cardone said.