

Saint Pio of Pietrelcina was canonized by Pope John Paul II on June 16, 2002.

Francesco Forgione grew up in a family of farmers in southern Italy. Twice his father worked in Jamaica, New York, to provide the family income.

At the age of 15, Francesco joined the Capuchins and took the name of Pio. He was ordained in 1910 and was drafted during World War I. After he was discovered to have tuberculosis, he was discharged. In 1917, he was assigned to the friary in San Giovanni Rotondo, 75 miles from the city of Bari on the Adriatic.

On September 20, 1918, as he was making his thanksgiving after Mass, Padre Pio had a vision of Jesus. When the vision ended, he had the stigmata in his hands, feet, and side. Medical doctors, Church authorities, and curiosity seekers came to see Padre Pio. In 1924, and again in 1931, the authenticity of the stigmata was questioned; Padre Pio was not permitted to celebrate Mass publicly or to hear confessions. He did not complain of these decisions, which were soon reversed.

The life and work of Padre Pio is available at a website in his honor. Click [HERE](#) to access it.