

# *Gifts of Grace Ministry Newsletter*

## *September - October, 2015*



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### Greetings Friends & Saints:

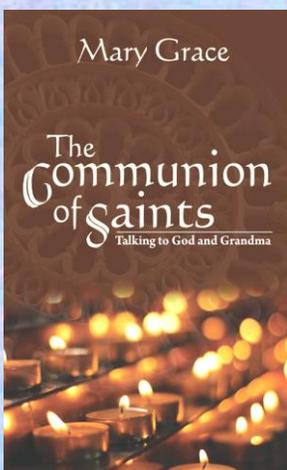
Summer is winding down and soon fall will be upon us. I actually look forward to the slower pace of autumn after three months of non-stop summer activities. I'm already starting to feel a shift taking place within me, as well as outside, with the cooler temperatures and shorter days.

In the northeast United States, fall is a special time when the trees put on a spectacular display of colorful leaves in myriad shades of red, orange and yellow. It's as if they are dressed in their finest designer clothes for the grand finale of the year; their ultimate runway appearance.

Fall is also an enjoyable time because it brings Halloween, one of the most entertaining and strangest holidays. It's a bizarre exhibition of human behavior where adults and children alike dress up in all sorts of grotesque and funny costumes. It's a time to make-believe, let our hair down, carve pumpkins, go trick or treating, and gorge on candy, sugar donuts and cider. What's not to love! This pagan holiday has become beloved by people of all faiths and has lost its religious meaning for most.

Halloween originated from the ancient Celtic festival known as "Samhain" (pronounced sah-win); it marked the end of harvest season. On October 31<sup>st</sup>, it is believed that the veil between this world and the next is thinnest and the dead could come back to life to cause havoc. Dressing up in creepy costumes was a way to scare the undead back into their graves. In addition, the fine line between worlds makes it easier to communicate with spirits on this day.

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In order to convert the pagans, around the 8<sup>th</sup> century the Catholic Church declared November 1 “All Hallows Day” or “All Saints Day.” (“All Hallows Eve” is the origin of the word “Halloween”). It’s a time to honor and remember all those in heaven in the fundamental belief that there is a spiritual bond between the living and the dead. November 2 is “All Souls Day,” which is in memory of all those who died, including the unwanted, the unborn, the undesirable and the forgotten.

We owe these holy days to the doctrine known as the “communion of saints.” Through this teaching Catholics may communicate with their deceased loved ones. At the same time, the Church forbids the practice of spiritualism (talking with the dead), which is a major contradiction. Because of this, most people still fear death and contact with our dearly departed.

Fortunately, there are many cultures around the world that have a much healthier attitude towards death and the deceased. For example, the “Day of the Dead” is celebrated by Hispanic cultures on All Saints and All Souls Day. People all over the globe may be found in cemeteries visiting with their loved ones. Gravesites are decorated with marigolds, candles, Catrina dolls, pictures and other memorabilia. Prayers and offerings of food, such as pan de muerto (bread of the dead), sugar skulls and tequila, are made to their family in heaven. On this festival of the dead, parades, as well as picnics in the cemetery, are common ways to remember everlasting relationships.

During this harvest season, as the days grow shorter and the trees are shedding their colorful clothes, let us take time to celebrate our loved ones in heaven. Perhaps you could carve a pumpkin for the ones you are missing this fall, or buy their favorite candy to pass out to trick or treaters. You may want to visit the cemetery or a special place that brings fond memories. These are ways in which we can stay connected to our family and friends in spirit and remind us that love never dies and life is eternal. May the saints be with you.

Have an awesome autumn!  
Love, Mary Grace



Day of the Dead Catrina Dolls

**Mary Grace Book Signing Event**  
**Paranormal Symposium**  
**The 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the C2D1 Haunting**  
**Saturday, October 17 / 11:00am – 6:00pm**  
**Bailey Hall: Room 203 / SUNY Geneseo; Geneseo, NY**  
**Also, Presentation by Mary Grace: Time TBA**  
**Free to the public**

*“C2D1” is the number of a possessed dorm room at the State University of New York at Geneseo. In 1985 Chris Di Cesare was the student at the center of a horrifying ordeal that forever changed his life. Chris wrote about the experience in his book “Surviving Evidence; Memoir of an Extreme Haunting.” Meet Chris and join us for a day of ghost hunts, lectures, interviews, authors, vendors and music. For more information go to:*

<http://www.c2d1haunting.com/>

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**Testimonials Wanted**

I am applying to be a member of the *American Program Bureau (APB) Speakers International*. This will put me on a register to be available to speak at universities, conferences and seminars. It will provide me with more opportunities to share my stories and help those who are grieving the loss of a loved one. As part of the process, testimonials from people who have attended any of my talks or workshops are required.

I would greatly appreciate anyone who is willing to write two or three sentences of positive feedback regarding a presentation I did for your organization or group. Everyone who responds will have his or her testimonial posted on my website and next Newsletter. This may include your business or organization’s website link, as well as a mention of your particular service or book you wish to advertise. Please e-mail me with your endorsement at: [mgrace-888@outlook.com](mailto:mgrace-888@outlook.com). A big thanks in advance to all you angels and fellow members of the communion of saints.

Love, Mary Grace

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**Publishing News: Amazon & Kindle**

***The Communion of Saints, Talking to God and Grandma* is now available on Kindle. Both the e-book and hard copy versions can be purchased through Amazon.**

**In Memory of Dr. Wayne Dyer  
(May 10, 1940 – August 30, 2015)**

Although I was saddened by the recent news of Wayne Dyer's passing, I was certainly happy for him. His mission was accomplished, and he fulfilled it with grace, greatness and gratitude. Along the way, he just happened to touch the lives of millions of people; one of them was mine.

All the work I am now doing is because of Dr. Dyer. I discovered him shortly after my near-death experience, which was the beginning of my spiritual path. My sister, Kathy, gave me a copy of *Manifesting Your Destiny*; I have read almost every one of his books since. After reading *The Power of Intention*, I set out to write a book. I went to Lily Dale with the hopes of getting interviews with mediums who were former Catholics. I knew not a soul, but I was equipped with a tape recorder and "intention." By the end of the week I had ten interviews and a good start on my book. A year later my passion was fueled further when I met my guru in person following one of his presentations.

By putting all of Wayne Dyer's techniques to use, I was able to see my dream of becoming a published author come true. I was then able to see my dream of becoming a spiritual teacher and public speaker fulfilled. My intention now is to continue on that path and touch as many lives as I can before my mission is accomplished. I am asking for your help with "Testimonials" (see page 3).

Wayne Dyer lives on in each of us who has ever read his work or seen him speak in person or on PBS. Let us all carry out his legacy by practicing at least one of his spiritual principles. My favorite is: "It's better to be kind, than to be right." Although Wayne is in heaven, he can continue his spiritual work, among us all, in the communion of saints.

**Spiritual Quotes**

***There is no scarcity of opportunity to make a living at what you love; there's only scarcity of resolve to make it happen.***

**Dr. Wayne Dyer**

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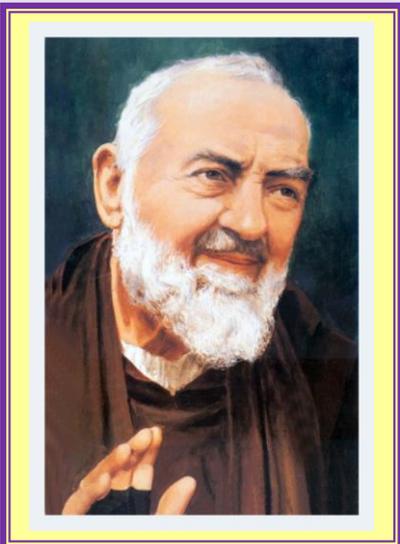
***The most beautiful act of faith is the one made in darkness, in sacrifice, and with extreme effort.***

**St. Padre Pio of Pietrelcina**

## Featured Saint: Padre Pio (1887-1968)

Feast Day: September 23

Patron Saint of Angels, Adolescents,  
Stress Relief & Civil Defense Volunteers



Padre Pio was gifted with mediumistic abilities from childhood. He had visions of Jesus and the Blessed Mother, as well as conversations with the saints and his guardian angel. He had the gifts of clairvoyance, telepathy, precognition, as well as bilocation. For this Franciscan friar and mystic, paranormal occurrences were a normal part of his life.

Francesco Forgione was born on May 25, 1887 in Petrelcina, Italy. He was one of five children and his parents made a living as peasant farmers. His mother said that her son was able to see and speak with spiritual beings as a child; he assumed that all people could do so. Due to his visions and religious upbringing, from a very young age Francesco decided to devote his life to God; he wanted to be a priest.

In 1910, Brother Pio was ordained in the Capuchin Franciscan Order. In 1916 he was appointed to a friary in San Giovanni Rotundo, a town located in the Gargano Mountains of Italy. It was at this site, on September 20, 1918, that the monk first experienced the wounds of Christ known as “stigmata.” The blood flowing from his body smelled of roses, a phenomenon known as the “ordour of sanctity.” The lesions caused him much pain and embarrassment throughout the rest of his life; they lasted over 50 years!

Among the most remarkable cases of Padre Pio’s bilocation occurred during World War II, after the priest made a promise to the citizens that their town would be spared. American bombers were given the task of attacking the city of San Giovanni Rotundo because it had fallen to the Nazis. However, when the pilots arrived over their target, and prepared to unload their munitions, a brown-robed friar appeared before their airplane; he was floating in mid-air over his home town.

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All attempts to release the bombs failed. A few weeks later, one of the pilots visited the friary and found to his surprise the little monk he had seen hovering in front of his plane on that extraordinary day.

Besides his ability to bilocate, Padre Pio also had the gift of healing. In one case, he restored sight to a man who was born without pupils. In another incident, he cured a man who had walked on crutches his entire life because of a birth defect. News of Padre Pio's miraculous gifts spread and thousands of people made pilgrimages to San Giovanni in the hopes of being cured by the living saint. But not everyone appreciated the padre's talents. The mysterious priest was analyzed by Church authorities who accused him of being a charlatan, a fake, of practicing sorcery and consorting with the devil. In order to suppress his paranormal powers, Pio was banned from saying Mass, hearing confessions, and was held prisoner in his own monastery for eleven years.

The Papal punishment, however, did not deter the thousands of believers who thought Pio was a great mystic. Throngs of people continued to converge on San Giovanni to be near his friary. Eventually the Church caved to the monk's popularity and freed the priest to serve the public. By this time, the mountain village was overcrowded and did not have the means to support the multitude of sick devotees. In response, Padre Pio raised the funds to have a hospital built for those in need; it continues to operate today.

After making his last confession and renewing his Franciscan vows, Padre Pio died on the morning of September 23, 1968. He was canonized by Pope John Paul II on June 16, 2002.

The most remarkable aspect of this saint is that he lived in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. His paranormal abilities were scrutinized by modern day physicians and scientists. Even the most ardent skeptics could not explain the mysteries surrounding this beloved member of the communion of saints. In the end, it was his spiritual gifts that led millions to seek out Padre Pio, thereby furthering the cause for Christianity.



San Giovanni Monastery