



Editorial



THEY BEAR FORTH FRUIT...

by Bro Mariano Di Vito, OFM Cap

The righteous flourish like the palm tree, their roots are planted by the running waters, they give shade and repose to the traveller and fruit to sustain the pilgrim on his journey.

Psalms 1 and 92 describe in sombre and at the same time vivid language the character and mission of those who follow the Lord: the fount and origin of life. True life!

Not so the unrighteous, their opposite, who are described like the dust, which the wind drives from the face of the earth. Like dust they are bothersome and useless, destined to be driven away!

Padre Pio, and all the saints whom we venerate, belong to that immeasurable forest of trees whose leaves are always green and that bear forth fruit of every kind. Both during his life and after his death, he drew and continues to draw by his example courageous and generous men and women who say "yes" to the Lord who calls them to plant their roots in the living water of His love and to thus become to their fellow travellers an encouragement and support.

The venerables Giacomo Gaglione and Genoveffa De Troia, the Servants of God Mother Maria Gargani and Enrico Medi, Raffaelina Cerase, Mary Pyle, Cleonice Morcaldi, Giuseppina Morgera, Brother Daniele Na-

tale..., are just a few of those who learnt from Padre Pio to give themselves to the Lord and to give our Lord to their brothers and sisters. Then there are Padre Pio's apostolic works, his "Good Samaritan Havens": the hospital of the "Home for the Relief of Suffering," the Handicap Centres, the schools, the retirement homes and the soup kitchens for the poor as well as his serious commitment in the extraordinary world of the media and communications.

Certainly, miracles are one of the many signs of God's powerful action that He brings about and continues to bring about through his faithful servants. However, no one can deny that the greatest miracle is the vitality of this immense tree that continues to grow and to extend its branches and in whose shade plants and flowers of every colour and perfume sprout forth.

It is always a cause of wonder to contemplate the marvels that the Lord is able to bring about, even in times that are so difficult as our own, when He finds people who are lovingly and willingly disposed to Him, and not in search of evasion in who knows what illusions to bring peace to their souls and to others formulas of happiness that are free and undemanding.

Padre Pio planted his roots and

many others following his example and sure guidance continue to plant their own, in that inexhaustible stream of living water, Christ the Lord, who flows through and irrigates the valleys and mountains of human history. Often, it is true, the presence of this living water, as in those alpine streams, seems almost inaudible to us. It is necessary to pause for a while and to open and free ourselves from those countless protective defences or from just that resigned fatigue, so that the gentle and mighty force of the Spirit, like a river in a barren and arid land, may give back vitality and strength to all that has been dulled and forgotten and that, despite everything, dwells in the deepest recesses of our souls.

In September we recall three anniversaries of Padre Pio: his receiving what has come to be known as his "invisible" stigmata in Pietrelcina (1910), his visible stigmata that he received at San Giovanni Rotondo (1918), and his death (1968), which is now his feast day on the liturgical calendar. Let us remember him as that splendid palm tree and surrounded by other trees equally imposing and strong. Trees that are full of fruit and planted by a stream flowing with limpid clear water.

There is room for everyone!