



WELCOME BACK!...

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Last 13 September, we recalled the 25th anniversary of Mother Teresa's visit to San Giovanni Rotondo with a solemn celebrated Mass. For the occasion, the Archbishop of Manfredonia-Vieste-San Giovanni Rotondo, Michele Castoro blessed a new mosaic of Mother Teresa, the mother of the poorest of the poor, with her gentle caring smile.

A similar ceremony took place last 23 May, to commemorate Blessed John Paul II's visit.

At the foot of their respective mosaics, relics have been placed, and so making these two modern saints of our times present in a very concrete way in Our Lady of Grace Church.

These "three friends," we can now say, are close to each other not only in the celestial city of Jerusalem but also here on this holy land of the Gargano Mountain. Three friends, Pio, Teresa and John Paul! Yes, three guiding lights who illumined and continue to illumine our lives and spiritual journey. Three stars, each different to the other, that abound

with the only light that can incite hearts and enlighten minds: Christ the Lord the origin and exemplar of all holiness.

Mother Teresa had come as a pilgrim to Padre Pio's tomb, and John Paul II too, who had a long-standing relationship with Padre Pio, and remained long in prayer with his hand on that block of marble that closed and protected the glorious tomb of the stigmatic friar. 25 years later, they have returned with relics, small but nevertheless significant signs, that testify to the spiritual affinity of their lives dedicated to the service of their brothers and sisters, as well as to the infinite goodness of the Holy Spirit who never ceases to offer us, still pilgrims, role models and intercessors.

"Open wide the doors to Christ!" words of John Paul II;... *"Keep the joy of loving God in your heart and share this joy with all you meet"* words of Mother Teresa; *"I belong to everyone!"* words of Padre Pio. These words that we inseparably associate with them are

more than simple slogans. They sum up the existences of these heroes of ours and indicate to us not so much how we should act in the different circumstances of our lives, but unveil and open to us, from our own unique and irreplaceable perspectives, new and limitless horizons that inspire and draw us and with the knowledge and confidence that we have expert, loving and patient companions at our sides guiding and very often encouraging us on. This month of September, "Padre Pio's month," has been a month of intense emotion. It is with great pleasure that with this number of our journal we can come in your homes not only with the 'voice' of Padre Pio but also with the melodic accompaniment of his 'old friends,' who now sing to the glory of God in heaven and who can teach us how to uplift and make more melodic our own song. Welcome back! And 'buon lavoro'!

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