



50 years of existence

by Bro FRANCESCO DILEO OFM Cap.

It was the month of July of 1970, that the first number of the "Voce di Padre Pio" ("The Voice of Padre Pio") the official journal of "the Postulation for the Cause of Beatification and Canonisation of Padre Pio of Pietrelcina" was printed by the "Leone" publishing house in Foggia.

And so this month of July we celebrated the 50th anniversary, of the beginning, or in other words of the 'birthday' of this journal. An English version would soon follow (January 1971) as well as in other languages: French, German and Spanish.

A 50th anniversary is something special, a Golden Jubilee and calls for gratitude, celebration and reflection.

On the very first page introducing this new journal was a short article with the title: "The Voice Continues..." The article was written by Father Bernardino of Siena, the Postulator General of the Order of the Capuchin Friars Minor. The choice of this friar to write the first editorial for the journal's debut was more than simple deference to the friar in charge of the Causes of Beatification and Canonisation of the whole Capuchin Friar's Minor Order. The choice was also, more than

likely, influenced by the fact that Padre Pio's process in that July of 1970, had not even commenced – only a few simple preliminary steps had so far been taken, and Father Bernardino was the friar who could most likely get things moving.

This magazine owes its actual existence, in fact, to the effort of two friars both originally from San Giovanni Rotondo. It came into existence thanks to the work and fervour of the Vicar of the friary Father Silvestro Mischitelli and the know how of the Bursar Father Michele Placentino, and not forgetting the valuable assistance of Father Pellegrino Funicelli of Sant'Elia a Pianisi who was the Guardian of the friary and Father Vincenzo Frezza of Casacalenda. The name of the magazine was chosen by Mgr. Valentino Vailati, who was at the time the Bishop of San Severo, but already promoted Archbishop of Manfredonia.


Then in October of the same year Father Lino Barbati the new Guardian and Father Gerardo Di Flumeri, the New Vicar of the friary of San Giovanni Rotondo were nominated "special delegates" to the Postulator General for the Cause of Padre Pio.

And by the November issue of the Voice of Padre Pio, Father

Lino was already writing articles for the journal and Father Gerardo had been appointed the Editor in Chief.

"This journal," Father Bernardino explained in the first editorial, "is published by the Capuchin Friary at San Giovanni Rotondo" in order "to give information on the Cause of Beatification and Canonisation" of Padre Pio of Pietrelcina. This goal was clearly achieved when Saint John Paul II enrolled the name, on 16 June 2002, of our venerated fellow friar in the "Book of Saints."

There were however, also other goals outlined in the editorial of this magazine, that is "to describe the life of the shrine of Our Lady of Grace" and to continue "to make resonate Padre Pio's voice and his message in all its clarity," in a world "submerged in activity and the tumult of human passions" and to purify it from "information from alien sources" that can "easily diminish, distort and falsify not only his authentic figure as a man and a friar but also his spirituality, work and thought."

These last intentions still constitute, 50 years on, the fundamental mission of this magazine and that it seeks to fulfil in the best possible way. 

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