A free guide for parish groups, prayer circles and friends



Praying Together

Six meetings with the
Padre Pio Healing Prayer Book

✦

Patrick Ignatius Sullivan

You may print and copy this guide freely for your group.

For the leader

How to use this guide

You can lead this group even if you have never done anything like it before. No one needs you to give a lesson or answer every question. Welcome people and allow time for prayer and listening. God can receive what you cannot put into words.

What you need. Meetings follow the daily entries in the Padre Pio Healing Prayer Book, so each person will want their own copy for prayer at home and reading together. Bring this guide and choose a quiet place where you can meet for an hour each week. With six to ten people, there is room for everyone to speak.

How it works. There are six meetings, with six of the book's thirty daily entries to pray at home between meetings, one each day. When you gather, pray together and read a short reflection aloud before talking about that week's entries. By the final meeting, everyone will have had time to pray all thirty days.

Shorter season? Meet weekly for Sessions 1, 2, 4 and 6. Between meetings, pray Days 1 to 10, then 11 to 20, then 21 to 30, praying two entries on some days. Use these ranges in place of the At home this week line printed in Sessions 1, 2 and 4.

Before your first meeting. Tell your parish office or pastor about your plans. Read through Session 1 and ask everyone to bring their own book. You do not need to prepare a lesson.

At every meeting, say this once. What is shared here stays private, unless someone's safety is at risk. Everyone is free to pass on a question.

Every week

The shape of each meeting

Use this order each week, allowing 45 to 60 minutes.

Welcome and settle

5 minutes

Give everyone time to find a seat, then make the Sign of the Cross.

Opening prayer

5 minutes

Pray the session's opening prayer together, or invite someone to read it for the group.

Read aloud

5 minutes

Ask someone to read the named reflection from their own book. Pause briefly when they finish.

Share

20 to 30 minutes

Begin with the questions and leave room for conversation. There is no need to get through them all. You may spend the time on just one.

Quiet minute

1 to 2 minutes

Allow a full minute without speaking. The silence may feel long at first. There is no need to fill it.

Intentions and close

5 to 10 minutes

Invite brief spoken intentions from anyone who wishes to offer one. Pray the Our Father together, then the closing prayer.

At home this week

1 minute

Tell everyone which days to pray before the next meeting.

At a glance

Your weeks together

Advent 2026: order books by Nov 20.

Six meetings

	Meeting	*Pray at home before the next one*
1	**Coming as You Are**	Days 1 to 6
2	**Fear, Waiting, and the Hour You Are In**	Days 7 to 12
3	**When God Seems Quiet**	Days 13 to 18
4	**Grief, Weak Faith, and Small Hope**	Days 19 to 24
5	**Mercy for Ourselves and Each Other**	Days 25 to 30
6	**Into Your Hands**	The novena in Part IV, if you like

Four meetings, for a shorter season

	Meeting	*Pray at home before the next one*	*In Advent 2026*
1	**Session 1: Coming as You Are**	Days 1 to 10	Nov 29 to Dec 5
2	**Session 2: Fear, Waiting, and the Hour You Are In**	Days 11 to 20	Dec 6 to 12
3	**Session 4: Grief, Weak Faith, and Small Hope**	Days 21 to 30	Dec 13 to 19
4	**Session 6: Into Your Hands**	The novena in Part IV, if you like	Dec 20 to 24

With four meetings, some days you will pray two entries. The home days in this table replace the line printed at the end of Sessions 1, 2 and 4.

Session 1 of 6

Coming as You Are

From the book: How to Use This Book in Hard Seasons, Brief Life of Saint Padre Pio, and How to Pray When You Have No Words.

Opening prayer

Lord Jesus, we gather with tired hearts. Some of us are afraid or unsure how to begin praying. We come to You now. You know our burdens before we speak, and You are near even when words fail us. Through the prayers of Saint Padre Pio, teach us to welcome one another with the care that leaves room for honest words. We entrust our time together and the weeks ahead to You. Amen.

Read aloud. Turn to the short page near the beginning, How to Use This Book in Hard Seasons, and read it together.

Share *Anyone may pass on any question.*

1. In How to Use This Book in Hard Seasons, we read, "God is not measuring eloquence. He receives trust." How might those words change what you expect of yourself when you pray?
2. What led you to come today? You are welcome to say a little, or simply listen.
3. Read the Brief Life of Saint Padre Pio together. What would you like to learn more about as we spend these weeks in prayer?
4. Turn to How to Pray When You Have No Words. Which of the five steps feels most natural? Where do you struggle?
5. The same page says, "If you can do only this, you have prayed well." Can you recall a time when you had only a few words to offer God?

Quiet minute. Allow a little silence. Then lead the group slowly through the five steps once, leaving time for each person to name their burden silently.

Close. Intentions, the Our Father, and the closing prayer.

At home this week. Work through Days 1 to 6 in prayer, one day at a time. Mark a line from each day to bring to the next meeting.

Session 2 of 6

Fear, Waiting, and the Hour You Are In

From the book: Days 1 to 6.

Opening prayer

Lord Jesus, waiting for news has been hard this week. Some of us have lost sleep over fears we cannot yet speak about. We turn to You with what troubles us. You are here, and Your care reaches beyond all we can see. Through the prayers of Saint Padre Pio, settle our thoughts enough to attend to You and to one another in this hour. We leave the news we await and the fears we carry in Your hands. Amen.

Read aloud. Turn to Day 1, "When Fear Takes Over," and read the reflection together.

Share *Anyone may pass on any question.*

1. These words appear in Day 1: "Fear can make tomorrow feel like it is already happening now." Where have you noticed this in your own life?
2. Which of Days 1 to 6 spoke most closely to your week? You may read a line you marked.
3. Day 2 tells us, "Waiting is its own suffering". How do you pass the hours when you are waiting? What does prayer look like then?
4. From Day 3: "You do not need to perform strength. You need to receive grace." When do you find yourself hiding how hard things really are?
5. Day 6 reads, "You may be surrounded by people and still feel alone inside." Think of someone who was there for you during a hard season. What did their care look like?

Quiet minute. Leave room for silence. Afterward, invite anyone who would like to read one "Tonight's Intention" from Days 1 to 6 aloud.

Close. Intentions, the Our Father, and the closing prayer.

At home this week. Continue with Days 7 to 12 in prayer.

Session 3 of 6

When God Seems Quiet

From the book: Days 7 to 12.

Opening prayer

Lord Jesus, we have brought You prayers for which we still see no answer. Some of us struggle to feel anything when we pray. Yet we turn to You again. You hear us, and You remain near when we cannot sense Your presence. Through the prayers of Saint Padre Pio, lead us into the next faithful step with hearts still open to You. We entrust the prayers we have carried so long to Your mercy. Amen.

Read aloud. Read the reflection in Day 8, "When You Feel Spiritually Dry," together.

Share *Anyone may pass on any question.*

1. Day 7 offers these words: "Grace is often given in daily portions, not in lifetime bundles." Where do you need God's grace for this day?
2. Day 8's reflection ends with, "Staying is its own offering." When have you had little to offer God beyond coming back to prayer?
3. In Day 9, we read, "If prayer is only a transaction, delay feels like rejection." What has happened to your prayer as the wait has grown longer?
4. Day 10 reminds us, "Your role is faithfulness, not omnipotence." Is there someone whose troubles you feel you must solve? How might you entrust that person to God by name?
5. From Day 12: "You are not asked to pre-live tomorrow. You are asked to trust today." Was there a line this week that brought you back to the day in front of you?

Quiet minute. Pause together in silence. Anyone who wishes may then name, aloud or in their heart, the person they brought to prayer on Day 10 and entrust them to God.

Close. Intentions, the Our Father, and the closing prayer.

At home this week. Move on to Days 13 to 18 in prayer.

Session 4 of 6

Grief, Weak Faith, and Small Hope

From the book: Days 13 to 18.

Opening prayer

Lord Jesus, grief weighs on some of us, and faith feels hard to hold onto. We come to You as we are. You remain near in sorrow and welcome us even when we struggle to believe. Through the prayers of Saint Padre Pio, sustain us in our grief with hope enough for the days ahead. We leave with You all that hurts and all we cannot understand. Amen.

Read aloud. Turn to Day 15, "When You Feel Weak in Faith," and read the reflection.

Share *Anyone may pass on any question.*

1. In Day 13 we read, "Grief is love carrying the absence of someone or something precious." What loss would you like us to hold in prayer? A single word is enough.
2. Day 13 also tells us, "Christ does not rush mourners. He meets them." What has been welcome in your grief? What has been unhelpful?
3. Day 15 reminds us, "Weak faith is still faith." What might change when we bring God our weakness instead of trying to seem strong?
4. Day 17 tells us, "You do not need to feel strong to choose hope." How could you put hope into practice in one small way this week?
5. In Day 18 we read, "Endurance is not a failure of faith; it is often its truest form." Has someone's faith through hard days stayed with you?

Quiet minute. Allow a little silence, with room for anyone to speak the name of someone who has died. Then say the traditional prayer for the dead together: "Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them."

Close. Intentions, the Our Father, and the closing prayer.

At home this week. Continue with Days 19 to 24 in prayer.

Session 5 of 6

Mercy for Ourselves and Each Other

From the book: Days 19 to 24.

Opening prayer

Lord Jesus, regret weighs on us. Forgiveness can be hard, and some of us are worn out from caring for others. We turn to You with these burdens. Your mercy is greater than our sins, and You never tire of welcoming us back. Through the prayers of Saint Padre Pio, open our hearts to receive Your forgiveness and to forgive those who have hurt us. We entrust ourselves and those in our care to You. Amen.

Read aloud. Turn to Day 19, "When You Feel Ashamed or Guilty," and read the reflection.

Share *Anyone may pass on any question.*

1. Day 19 invites us to "accept mercy as a gift, not a reward". What makes it difficult to receive mercy freely?
2. Padre Pio spent long hours in the confessional. Does anyone know the parish's confession times or whether an Advent penance service is planned? You might offer to go together.
3. Day 20 tells us that healing in relationships "is not pretending nothing happened." Is there a relationship you would like to place before God? You need not give names.
4. In Day 21 we read, "You are called to serve, not to disappear." If someone depends on your care, what care could you accept for yourself this week?
5. Day 24 reminds us, "He is Lord of the hidden hours too." When you lie awake at night, how do you turn to God?

Quiet minute. Leave room for silence before praying together for the caregivers among you and the people in their care.

Close. Intentions, the Our Father, and the closing prayer.

At home this week. Continue with Days 25 to 30 in prayer.

Session 6 of 6

Into Your Hands

From the book: Days 25 to 30, and the Final Encouragement.

Opening prayer

Lord Jesus, at this last meeting we still carry unanswered prayers alongside the answers we have received. We bring both to You. You gave Yourself fully for us on the Cross, and nothing in our lives is hidden from Your love. Through the prayers of Saint Padre Pio, lead us to keep turning to You in prayer with all that remains unfinished. We entrust every person here and every intention we have shared to Your care. Amen.

Read aloud. Turn to Day 30, "Total Surrender to God's Mercy," and read the reflection. The Scripture reference is Luke 23:46.

Share *Anyone may pass on any question.*

1. Day 25 calls control "fear wearing the mask of responsibility." Is there something you are trying to manage that you need to entrust to God?
2. In Day 27 we read, "Planning is wise; panic is not." How do you recognize when your planning has turned to panic?
3. Day 29 reminds us, "The door back to God is never locked from His side." Where would you like to make a fresh start?
4. Day 30 tells us, "Surrender is not the end of effort; it is the end of illusion." During these meetings, has anything become easier to leave in God's hands?
5. Return to the lines you marked during these six weeks. Which would you like to carry into the weeks ahead?

Quiet minute. Pause in silence, then join in reading the Final Encouragement aloud as a blessing.

Close. Intentions, the Our Father, and the closing prayer.

Going on from here. If you would like to continue praying for one intention, you can turn to the book's 9-day novena in Part IV. You may wish to meet again and pray it together.

✦

Copy this page for each person in the group

Closing prayer

Say together as each meeting ends.

Lord Jesus, some of our burdens were spoken tonight; others were too hard to name. We bring them all to You. You know each one, and Your mercy reaches us here. Through the prayers of Saint Padre Pio, hold us close this week, with healing according to Your will and strength for whatever we must still bear. We entrust ourselves and one another to You until we gather again.

Saint Padre Pio, pray for us. Amen.

Copy this page for each person, and hand it out at the first meeting

Two free gifts to share as we pray

Patrick Ignatius Sullivan offers both. We each use our own email address to sign up. Anyone can unsubscribe in one click.

Before Session 2

The Padre Pio You Didn't Know

At our first meeting, we read the Brief Life of Saint Padre Pio in the book together. This free booklet tells more of his story, including his years of suffering and the counsel he returned to: "Pray, hope, and don't worry."

To get it, go to **patricksullivanfaith.com/group-booklet**, or scan the code.

After Session 6

Pray the novena together

We can sign up for this free novena together at the end of our last meeting so the same short prayer reaches all of us by email each day, keeping us in prayer together while apart. The first arrives the next day. We pray for nine days, each holding one intention throughout.

To get it, go to **patricksullivanfaith.com/group-novena**, or scan the code.

We sign up together on: _____

For the leader

Notes for leading when someone is hurting

Tears may come at the first meeting. Keep tissues within reach and give the person time. You can sit quietly beside someone without finding words or hurrying them on.

Be careful with reassurance. Never suggest that stronger faith or more prayer will guarantee healing. The book asks for healing "according to Your will," and that is how you pray together too. You do not need to explain why someone is suffering. Stay and listen.

We turn to Saint Padre Pio for his prayers and intercession. Healing belongs to God. You can leave it there.

Keep personal sharing private, unless someone may be in danger. See the crisis note below. Make this clear at the first meeting and whenever a new person comes.

Every question is optional. Someone may listen for weeks before saying anything, or may choose to remain quiet throughout. They are welcome just as they are.

When someone is in crisis. Take it seriously if a person says they do not want to live or you believe they may be in danger. Stay with them, speak privately, and involve your parish priest. If danger is immediate, call 911. In the United States, you can call or text 988 to reach the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at any hour, day or night. Outside the US, call your local emergency number.

The group offers prayer and support alongside medical care, counseling, and the sacraments, never in their place. If someone needs care beyond what you can offer, gently encourage them to speak with their doctor, a counselor, or their priest.

Add your name to the group

Praying Together: a small group using the Padre Pio Healing Prayer Book

Meeting day _____ *Time* _____ *Place* _____

Name	*Phone*	*Email*	*Do you have the book?*
			yes / not yet
			yes / not yet
			yes / not yet
			yes / not yet
			yes / not yet
			yes / not yet
			yes / not yet
			yes / not yet
			yes / not yet
			yes / not yet
			yes / not yet
			yes / not yet

For the leader

Notice for your parish bulletin

Add your details.

Praying Together this Advent. Join a small group using the Padre Pio Healing Prayer Book for four weekly meetings on *day* at *time* in *place*. We will pray short entries at home between meetings and gather for prayer, a reading, and conversation. You need no experience and are welcome to listen without speaking. Bring your own copy of the book. Contact *name* at *phone or email* to join.

✦

Thank you for making room for others to pray. You may hear little about what these meetings meant to them. You can leave that with God. Bring the worries you carry, too. There is a place for you at the table.

Saint Padre Pio, pray for us. Amen.

These prayers and reflections are offered for comfort and hope. They are not medical advice, and this group does not replace medical, counseling or pastoral care.

The group follows the daily entries in the Padre Pio Healing Prayer Book, so each person will want a copy of their own to read at meetings and pray from at home. Find this guide again at patricksullivanfaith.com/small-groups.