

Thankful for Padre Pio's Intercession

It all started six years ago. I was experiencing some abdominal pain – not very strong, but constant and different than any stomach pain I had felt in the past. It was very unlike me, but I went to see my doctor. She sent me for some tests including an endoscopy which showed there was cancer in the esophagus. A CT scan confirmed this and showed it had metastasized to the lymph and liver. By then I was very lethargic, sleeping a lot, and I had lost 30 pounds. I had to quit work.

All this was a few months after our first Padre Pio Festival. My wife, daughter and friends were very supportive and I was encouraged to pray to Padre Pio. I prayed for his intercession for the strength to follow God's plan.

My hematologist-oncologist put me on chemotherapy and immunotherapy. Once treatment started improvement happened quickly; within 2 months the blood tests indicated a large decrease in cancer antigen and CT scans showed the cancer tumors were shrinking. After a few more months I was regaining some of the weight I had lost and I felt well enough to return to work and most of my other normal activities. Progress continued to surprise my oncologist and he said that he did not know what to do with me since my recovery was proceeding to whole new territory. But he continued chemotherapy for a total of 18 months and immunotherapy for 32 months, well past the time when all signs of cancer were gone. Regular testing in the 2 years since then have not detected any cancer. Recently one of my other doctors said that my oncologist referred to me as a "freak of nature".

I am extremely grateful to my wife who was with me for all of the treatments, to my daughter for her support, and to all my relatives and friends for their prayers and encouragement. And I continue to pray to Padre Pio thanking him for his continued intercession.

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