



OCTOBER , 1965

SEELOS

AND

IMMORTALITY

"GIMME PRAYERS"

Have you ever thought of how often we say "GIMME PRAYERS?"

"Lord GIMME this."

"Blessed Mother GIMME that."

"Father Seelos GIMME this other thing."

"GIMME" "GIMME" "GIMME"!!!!

What is the real focus of such prayer? "GIMME" Prayers are focused mainly upon YOURSELF.

Now, we do not condemn people for asking favors from God for themselves. Certainly God wants this. After all He is our Father. If a son never asked his father for anything his father would feel that his son did not love him.

But remember, devoted children also manifest their love for their father by putting their arms around him and saying "Daddy I love you."

When devoted children offend their father they say "Daddy I'm sorry."

Likewise when their father bestows a favor on them, devoted children say "Thank you, Daddy."

In other words, devoted children manifest their love for their father in more ways than merely asking for things.

So too we should manifest our love for our heavenly Father not merely by continually asking for things, but also by saying "THANK YOU," for favors received; by asking PARDON for our offenses; and by making frequent and fervent acts of LOVE.

FATHER VAUGHN

Seelos and Sanctity

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Seelos - Apostle of Kindness

by Luana Jambois

"They want to make you Bishop. They want to make you Bishop," whispered the voice. Father Francis Xavier Seelos knelt alone in his empty Church in Cumberland. He was severely shaken. The voice must be the devil appealing to his pride. "Be quiet and get out of here," he said. The presence left at once. He finished saying his prayers in peace.

But the voice had been right. On May 14, 1860 the Bishop of Pittsburgh, Right Rev. Michael O'Connor, had suggested to Rome that Father Seelos become his successor. A few days later news reached the monastery that Father Seelos was a candidate for Bishop. Father Seelos trembled at his own unworthiness. He begged his community to pray without ceasing that he be spared this honor. "Pray that the Good God may keep such a cross from me," he wrote his family. To his chief superior in Rome he sent a letter reminding him of his faults and asking him to use his influence with the Pope that he be spared. In the end someone else was chosen.

On August 29, 1863 Father Seelos was assigned as Superior of the Redemptorist Mission Band. Now he was to teach solely the children of the world. "I love this work more

than any other. It is a labor in the vineyard of the Lord." Satan met an ardent foe in Father Seelos. "Sinners." He would open his arms as though to embrace them. "You who have no courage to confess your sins because they are so numerous, so grievous, so shameful! Come without fear or trembling! I promise to receive you with all mildness. If I do not keep my word, I give you permission to remind me in the confessional that I told a lie!"

The people were like parched earth waiting for the missionary priests to bring them the heavenly waters of divine grace. Father Seelos and the other missionaries were all rewarded with most extraordinary favors. It was as though Heaven had opened a door through which the blessings poured down upon their people. There was no rest. No journey was too long or arduous for the Redemptorists. The priests as well as the people favored Father Seelos, calling him "saint" among themselves. "It would make us happy," said one religious, "Just to hear his rosary rattle."

The notice of his last transfer came. He was to go to New Orleans, Louisiana, as a humble priest subject. At last his wish was granted. He made his retreat at St. Michael's Church in Chicago before leaving. "You see me for the last time," he told one of his missionary companions.

On September 28, 1866 he arrived in New Orleans, the "sunny Southland" of his youthful visions. His last act of love, his last carrying of the Cross was about to begin.

(to be continued)

Linda Enters Convent

On September 1 Linda Ricord, one of our very faithful volunteers at the Seelos Center, entered as a postulant in the order of the Marianites of the Holy Cross. We ask you to pray for Linda and beg God's blessings on her in her chosen vocation.

Miracle Examined

In April 1964 a young girl in New Orleans, Clair Rita Helmstetter, was afflicted with blindness. The doctors declared that she was suffering from acute chondritis. This is a disease which causes an inflammation of the area behind the retina of the eye. There is no cure for it and it generally causes an atrophy of the retina and permanent blindness. The vision degenerated to 20/200 in one eye and 20/400 in the other eye. This situation existed for about a month. During the period from April 29 to approximately June 10, she could see only shapes, forms and color. As she looked at a person's face she could not see who the individual was, but she could see only the form of their body.

On about June 10 she began to be able to read the clock on the wall. She estimated that it took about three days before the clock became clear. The clock in their home is about 7 inches in diameter.

About three days after the clock became clearly visible a copy of the Seelos bulletin arrived. She picked it up and began to read it. To her amazement the print was completely clear and she was able to read without difficulty. An eye examination on June 24 revealed that her vision now was 20/40. It has further improved since that time.

During this entire time the family had been praying very hard to Father Seelos for the return of Clair Rita's eyesight. Those of you who saw the television program in New Orleans about Father Seelos will recall an interview conducted with Clair Rita.

We have sent the medical charts and other data to Rome to be examined with the idea of seeing if it is possible to introduce this as one of the required miracles for Father Seelos' beatification. Father Ferrante, the Postulator-General has presented it to two doctors for examination to determine if it has all of the required characteristics for one of the official miracles.

In a recent letter from Father Ferrante we have received the following report:

"I have had the case studied by the second physician. They all acknowledge that the incident is absolutely unusual. According to my judgment, however, two difficulties seem to indicate that it does not quite meet all of the requirements for one of the official miracles.

1. The cure was not instantaneous, but occurred rather slowly.
2. The cure does not seem to be complete. The sight has been only partly restored, but perfect vision has not returned.

"However, I will have the case studied by a third physician and then you will have a definite answer."

From this you can see how exacting is the Congregation of Rights in judging the type of miracle needed for a beatification. The following four characteristics must be present:

1. There must be a clear diagnosis of the presence of a definitely established disease prior to the cure.
2. The cure must be instantaneous or almost so.
3. The cure must be complete. There must be no after effects.
4. The intercession of Father Seelos must clearly predominate. Other saints may be invoked, but the principal one to whom they prayed must be Father Seelos.

We ask that you persevere in prayer that if it is God's Will this miracle will be approved. If not, we humbly await the Will of God, Who in His own good time will manifest His power to prove the sanctity of the Servant of God, Father Seelos.

TO KNOW and IMITATE HIS HOLY LIFE

When a missionary Father Seelos was often extremely tired. His parish duties were frequently very exhausting. At different times during his life he was very painfully ill. Yet he never complained. He suffered all patiently. While his countenance showed plainly the pain he was experiencing, it never could be

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TO KNOW AND IMITATE HIS HOLY LIFE said that he showed any signs of impatience with his illness.

When you love someone you continually seek to do the will of the loved one. Father Seelos so loved God that he continually sought to do His Holy Will. It was this burning love for God that prompted his PATIENCE in suffering.

Patience is the willingness to endure suffering for the sake of a loved one. In imitation of this very admirable quality which Father Seelos possessed, we should strive to bear our sufferings patiently as a gift sent to us by God to help us merit our eternal reward. Accept pain as an opportunity to offer suffering for the souls in purgatory. Then when we are called by our heavenly Father, the souls whom we have helped with our sufferings offered for them will be there to put in a "good word" for us.

JOSIE BECKER

PETITIONS PLACED BEFORE FATHER SEELOS' TOMB

A phrase frequently used among those in the religious life is "Oremus pro invicem" - "Let us pray for one another."

We now present you with an opportunity to gain friends who will join their minds and hearts with yours in asking God to assist you through His Servant, Father Seelos. We also present you with the opportunity to pray for your "brothers in Christ" - your fellowmen.

We are placing a container in St. Mary's Church near Father Seelos' tomb. A sign will be attached to it informing the many people who visit there that this container holds the petitions of many people. They will be asked to join in prayer that God will hear your request.

We also ask each of our readers to say a little prayer every day for all these intentions.

Don't forget. We too often spend our time praying for ourselves. Christian charity demands that we dedicate a great part of our prayer in praying for OTHERS.

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For all the intentions recommended to the prayers of Father Seelos, we ask that you offer the following prayer:

O MY GOD, I TRULY BELIEVE YOU ARE PRESENT WITH ME. I ADORE YOUR LIMITLESS PERFECTIONS. I THANK YOU FOR THE GRACES AND GIFTS YOU GAVE TO FATHER SEELOS. IF IT IS YOUR HOLY WILL PLEASE LET HIM BE DECLARED A SAINT OF THE CHURCH. THROUGH HIS PRAYERS PLEASE GIVE ME THIS FAVOR