



Seelos and Sanctity

~~SECOND CLASS POSTAGE~~
~~PAID AT NEW ORLEANS, LA.~~

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Courtesy In Conversation



Courtesy is the habit of treating other human beings with respect. Courtesy is especially demonstrated in our conversation.

You lack courtesy in conversation if you are chiefly interested in leading the conversation and show no interest in anything said by others. In other words, you are a poor listener.

While others are speaking are you uneasy because you are thinking only of what you are going to say when you get a chance?

Do you belittle the truth or value of what others say by always interrupting the conversation with something you think to be more significant?

Are you unable to keep silence while others are managing to keep a conversation alive?

A good listener listens with interest to others because he realizes that he does not know everything and that there is always something to be learned. Unfortunately many people are so wrapped up in their own ideas that they are bored by listening to others. A good listener listens as much as he talks because he wishes to show kindness and consideration to others. A good listener seeks to give joy to others by showing an interest in what the other person has to say.

It is true that at times we must listen to people who are ignorant or whose conversation is very dull. By being a good listener in these circumstances, we have a golden opportunity to practice the virtues of humility and charity.

One of the greatest acts of charity consists in being a sympathetic listener to the complaints and "hard luck" stories of others. True. There is nothing more boring than listening to a long list of miseries. Yet a genuinely charitable person will listen with sympathy to these troubles, hoping thereby to give some relief to the burdened heart of his brother.

Courtesy in conversation is the oil without which the wheels of our human association would soon get overheated. It eases our life with our fellow human beings by providing many pleasant hours and wins for us a love and respect which all the money in the world could not buy.

Many years ago there lived a perfect gentleman. His name was Jesus Christ. In the entire thirty-three years during which He lived on this earth not a single instance of unkindness could be discovered in His life. The sweetness of His smile, the glint of His eye, the sympathy that swept over His face as He consoled, comforted, and encouraged those in need of help – all gave evidence of His kindness and affection for His fellow man.

Christ was a good listener. He always showed respect for the people who spoke to Him. Though the Bible does not say in it so many words, it does not take much imagination to picture our Lord listening to the dull conversation of the ignorant apostles who surrounded Him. The Bible does tell us that He attended banquets at the homes of certain people. Undoubtedly He had to listen to many boring conversations there. Many times people came to Him with their troubles. We know that He always listened to them with a kind and sympathetic ear.

To be gentle and courteous in your conversation is to imitate Christ Who said, "Blessed are the meek and gentle, for they will inherit the land."

HERE AND THERE

. . . Father Vaughn is continuing to visit patients in hospitals in the New Orleans area to bless them with the crucifix used by Father Seelos. This Crucifix was not touched in either of the robberies. At the present time it is being kept in a very secure vault. If you wish such a visit, please phone 895-6176.

. . . A Film concerning Father Seelos is now available. If you wish to show it to a group, please write the Seelos center, giving approximate date you wish for showing.

. . . We are continuing to collect S & H Green Stamps to provide a new addressing machine for this newsletter. Please send them to the Seelos Center.

. . . Our adoration program continues in St. Alphonsus Church. Have you been faithful in spending the hour before the Blessed Sacrament, which you pledged, in imitation of Father Seelos?



BURGLARY AT SEELOS CENTER

A series of unfortunate incidents occurred at the Seelos Center recently. On August 15 some criminals entered the Center and stole the entire safe. Unfortunately the safe contained a handkerchief used by Father Seelos and the medal he wore on his habit. The burglars brought the safe to a weeded area beneath the Huey P. Long bridge near the Mississippi River and broke it open with a sledge hammer. They removed the money and scattered the contents in the weeds.

The New Orleans police department did a magnificent job in tracing down the criminals. Detective Richard Hunter worked untiringly in order to solve the case. He was primarily motivated by his desire to recover the precious relics of Father Seelos. Within a remarkably short time the case was solved and the criminals apprehended.

When they revealed to Detective Hunter the location of the safe, he immediately organized a search party to scour the area for the missing relics. They were able to find the handkerchief; but an intensive search did not reveal the whereabouts of the medal. To this day the medal has not been recovered.

Father Vaughn was out of town at the time. When he returned in early September, he began taking steps to protect the Seelos Center from burglary. The front door was covered with sheet metal; all of the locks were changed; and an improved system of lighting was installed in the exterior of the building. The next step was to install bars on the windows. However, before these burglar bars could be installed, some more thieves entered the building by placing a ladder to the second story window and entering through it. This time a second safe was stolen. The loss of money was very slight because only a small amount of petty cash was kept in the safe. None of the relics were at that time kept there.

They Saw Bethlehem

by Luana Jambois



The woman had been ill for a long time. She lay now on the pieced together flour sacks and was ashamed of her poverty. She was, she thought, dying. It was the year 1862, in Annapolis, where their beloved Father Seelos taught and worked. She looked at her friends as they mumbled together quietly, trying not to disturb her. They were patient in their resignation to their poverty — a heritage of their negro race. Their clothes were frayed, patched, and clean like hers.

She must see Father Seelos before she died. And yet . . . Ask a priest to come to this attic room? The only way to reach it was the ladder that stood propped against the corner, showing through the hole in the floor! The only way to climb was through the swarm of bees which would not be dislodged and swarmed near the opening from the house below. Could she ask a priest to climb that ladder to bring the Holy Lord to her in his golden pyx, through the insects and the smell of cooking and human sweat and filth from below? Father Seelos had understanding in his eyes when they had touched hers briefly as he spoke from the pulpit. She remembered his compassion in the confessional, the swift easy words which smoothed away her guilt and sorrow. Maybe this priest would not mind the poorness, the filth of the downstairs rooms, the menace of the bee stings. She wished she had something better to welcome him with, something nice . . . Even a chair to sit on when he came.

The pain hit her again and she worried no more. He would come. Father Seelos would come. He would make her well as she had heard he had done for others. And if it was the Will of God that she died; then he would help her to go to the bright heaven for which she waited. "Call him." She gasped with the sharpness of the pain. "Call Father Seelos. Tell him there is not much time."

Through the early morning light, past the carriages that clattered on the cobble stone streets, they went. Time was short. They must rush before their friend died. They talked among themselves, the woman and the man, in muted tones as they waited for him to answer the doorbell. How would he be, Father Seelos? They had listened to him in church and had known the goodness behind

his voice. But how would he act when he saw them? When he saw their friend, her room, the tenement below, the ever-angry bees?

"Yes. Yes. At once. We will go to her right away." The black robed figure was back with the Sacred Veiled Viaticum so quickly they were startled. "Hurry." he said, as eager as they.

The dirty rooms beneath the sick room did not seem to exist. He looked past them and up. The sun was shining as he climbed to their friend balancing himself on the ladder. The bees did not seem so menacing, but buzzed lazily around his head, making golden haloes of themselves where the sunlight caught their wings. They followed him slowly, still fearing the bees, not wanting to disturb them.

The sick woman waited. The sound of the bees seemed a soft lullaby, their color yellow as sunflowers. Before the priest was all the way up into the attic room, she smiled. The pain was quiet. He was smiling! Father Seelos walked to her bed letting her see him plainly. He held the Viaticum in his hands and looked around him happily. "Ah, sweet poverty!" he cried. "How clean everything is! How lucky you are!"

Father Seelos had seen their hesitation . . . Their first halting words, the halfbegun apologies which had died on their lips, the motions shielding the stark poverty of which they were so bitterly ashamed. It was instinctive, his reaction. The understanding and love with which he swept their humiliation away brought love into the room. Never more would they be ashamed. The room sparkled, clean in its sparseness. How few the words of Father Seelos! How much he taught them in such a short time! He had brought the image of Jesus into the room. Yes, Christ was poor. With a few simple words and a sympathetic smile he taught them to rejoice in being able to share the poverty of Christ. The attic room reflected the rays of the sun and nearly seemed a stable, quiet and clean, in a time long ago. Through the eyes of Father Seelos they looked, she and her friends, and saw Bethlehem.

A PRAYER TO FATHER SEELOS

For your own intentions, and all the petitions placed before the tomb of Father Seelos, let us pause and say —

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 SO THAT OTHERS MAY KNOW AND IMITATE HIS HOLY LIFE. THROUGH HIS PRAYERS PLEASE GIVE ME THIS FAVOR . .
