



# Seelos and Sanctity

SECOND CLASS POSTAGE  
PAID AT NEW ORLEANS, LA.

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Published monthly at the Seelos Center, 2030 Constance Street, New Orleans, Louisiana 70130.

In conformity with the decree of Pope Urban VIII all statements contained herein are unreservedly submitted to the judgment of the Holy See and the decision of the Sacred Congregation of Rites.

Published with Ecclesiastical approbation.  
Staff artist John Moley.



Harry was a very lonely little boy. He attended a boarding school in Holyoke, Mass. His mother had died when he was 8 months old. His father was in the Army overseas.

On Christmas Day little Harry was sitting in his room feeling so very, very alone. No relatives came to visit him. He had no family gathering to go to. He had no brothers or sisters with whom to share the joy of Christmas.

One of his teachers walked by and saw the young lad sitting there so sad, so alone on this day of joy. He began talking to Harry. "Harry" he said "if I were some magical creature and could as a Christmas present make just one of your wishes come true, what would you wish for?" The little boy gazed at a large picture on his desk. It was the picture of his daddy. Without a moment's hesitation the young lad replied "I would wish that my Daddy would STEP OUT OF THE PICTURE."

As you kneel before the crib at Christmas time, have you ever had a similar wish --- a wish that Christ would step out of the picture? Would it not be wonderful if Mary and Joseph were real people and the shepherds were real shepherds and you were really there?

The purpose of this article is to try to show you how Christ can in truth STEP OUT OF THE PICTURE.

Christ can truly "step out of the picture" and become living flesh and blood. He can do so if only you will let Him STEP OUT OF THE PICTURE AND INTO YOUR HEART.

And how can you make Christ "step out of the picture?" You can do so by developing in your heart the sentiments and the spirit of GRATITUDE, SYMPATHY, SORROW and HOPE.

During this Christmas season pause a moment and think of all Christ has done for you. He became a little Baby in order to make it easy for you to love Him. He spent His life teaching you how to live. He died in order to enable you to reach heaven. As you meditate on the goodness of Christ during this Christmas season, show your GRATITUDE to Him by thanking Him for what He has done. Ex-

press your gratitude in thought, word and action to those with whom you associate.

As you gaze on the crib this Christmas, think of the shivering Infant lying there in that cold stable. Think to yourself: "It was for me that He suffered all this," As the sentiments of SYMPATHY for Christ are nourished in your heart, call to mind the great sufferings of your fellow man and seek to alleviate them whenever possible.

As you gaze on the crib realize that it was because of the sins of mankind, because of YOUR sins that Christ had to suffer the inconveniences of the stable. You share the responsibility of those sufferings by the sins you have committed. Tell the little Infant that you are SORRY for all your sins.

But don't be discouraged. Sure, we sometimes wonder "Will God forgive me? Is there any release from the heartaches, frustrations and sorrows of this life?" A glimpse of heaven is granted to all who gaze upon the Christmas crib. HOPE wells up in our soul as we see in the Infant the depth of God's love for us. We know that a God who loves us so much will certainly give us the means to get to heaven.

THUS IF YOU WISH TO MAKE CHRIST "STEP OUT OF THE PICTURE" YOU MUST NOURISH WITHIN YOUR HEART THE SENTIMENTS OF GRATITUDE, SYMPATHY, SORROW AND HOPE.

Father Vaughn

## BETHLEHEM IN BREAD

by Luana Thiel Jambois

The odor of incense and candles burning hung like a mist over the cold clear night Outside the snow piled high in drifts, like white clouds come down to the earth in the moonlight. The stars twinkled as though their light could sing hosannahs to the joyful time... the time of Christmas. In Baltimore in 1858 the dark clad priest hurried through the snow to the nun's chapel. The hill on which the convent stood seemed carved out of the whitened earth as it was silhouetted against the midnight stillness. Below the people were asleep in their houses darkened against the night. But here on the convent hill, the dark-robed sisters came two by two, hurrying to their chapel for the Midnight Mass of the Nativity of their Blessed Lord.

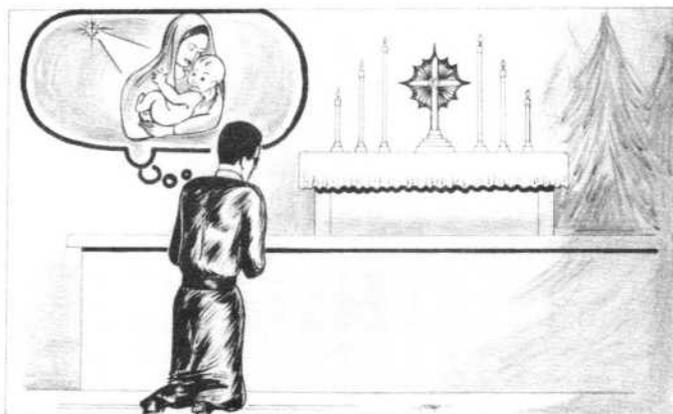
Before the altar Father Francis Seelos knelt. This was as close, he thought, to heaven as he would get on earth. The chapel was jeweled with the lights of brilliant candles, each one casting its shadow like a sentry in the honor guard of the Babe of Bethlehem. It was a time of contentment and peace.

The poinsettias and fir branches blazed red velvet and forest green in ivory vases, mixing Christmas odors with frankincense and myrr. In the blue and yellow reflections of the candles that flickered in ruby cups Father Seelos thought of the long ago time. Here in the golden chalice behind the intricately carved golden door was Jesus. On just such a cold clear night as this He had been born in the stable of Bethlehem. The reflections of light on hay and shiny wood and metal must have seemed like so many sparkling jewels to the new Infant Eyes. Perhaps His small Hand had gone out to clutch at the reflections. The fervent and deep silence of the praying sisters seemed to give

their Master pure haven this night of nights. Father Seelos felt the contentment of the Blessed Infant as He lay at His Mother's breast in the quiet of the Bethlehem stable. The chimes of the bells were like loud sweet clarion calls in the stillness. He could nearly touch the Babe of Bethlehem... "Lord, I thank You," he said in his thoughts, "I thank You for this glimpse of Bethlehem."

Later he wrote to the sisters: "What I experienced that Holy Christmas night in your chapel surpassed all my expectations. The deep stillness of the night; the chapel brilliant with lights; the devotion of the chaste brides of Christ... In the midst of all these heavenly treasures was I, the most miserable of all sinners. With what clarity I saw the goodness of God! My soul was flooded with happiness, contentment and peace. It was an ever holy and precious night. I will never forget the impression it made on my soul. You sisters created around everything an atmosphere of profound but eloquent silence. Never before was the beauty of silence in the cloister so brought home to me."

Dear Reader, as you kneel in the silence of your own church or chapel wherever it might be, meditate on the deep spirit of childlike love with which Father Seelos gazed upon the Christ Child under the form of bread in the Blessed Sacrament of the altar. As he knelt there he must have created again in his mind the sentiments of the shepherds when they stood before Christ on that first Christmas day. In Baltimore the dark quiet figures of the sweetfaced nuns moved gracefully down the aisle. In New Orleans, the people of St. Mary's Church, destined to be Father Seelos' final resting place, were receiving Holy Communion at the first Midnight Mass celebrated in their new church. How wondrous the ways of God! If more than a hundred years later we can learn to live as this simple man lived, we too will be able to see Bethlehem in Bread.





Thanks  
To Father Seelos  
For.....

- ... relief from a skin irritation which had caused me much concern and worry. The medication prescribed by the doctor did not have the desired results, neither did the change of medicine which he prescribed help me. After invoking the intercession of Father Seelos, I sought the advice of another doctor and I am happy to say that it now over a year and the irritation has not returned.
- ... the return of my sight after a cataract operation. I had difficulty adjusting to the cataract lens, though I did so after a comparatively short time.
- ... for the conversion of my daughter-in-law to the Catholic faith and the return of my son to the practice of his religion. After seventeen years of marriage outside of our church, they have now been married by a priest. This is an answer to seventeen years of prayer.
- ... the safe delivery of my twin girls. I had anticipated trouble due to R H factor blood and during my pregnancy antibodies were present in the tests that were made. The girls are fine and it was not necessary for their blood to be changed as had happened at the birth of my sixth child three years ago.
- ... the recovery of my husband after the removal of a brain tumor. The doctor predicted that he would be paralyzed. Thanks to our Lord through Father Seelos, he is able to walk.
- ... a promotion in my place of employment. I was about to resign because of the emotional pressures. I asked Father Seelos to give me some sign to let me know if I was making the correct decision. The next day my employer informed me of the promotion to a job that has much less worry connected with it.

#### 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 . .*

N.B. These reports of "Thanksgiving" are from the statements of our correspondents. Official judgement of the favors granted can be given only by the proper church authorities.

... We are looking for a copy of the picture of Father Seelos which was taken after his death. Some people still have copies of this ancient photograph. We merely wish to borrow it in order to have a copy of it made and restored. If you have a copy of this picture please call the Seelos Center.

... Father Vaughn is continuing to visit patients in hospitals in the New Orleans area to bless them with the crucifix used by Father Seelos. 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 the 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?

... Are you continuing, as a Guild member, to pray each day for the intentions of all other Guild members?

... Our Wednesday night group continues to say the rosary for the intentions placed before the tomb of Father Seelos and in petition for his speedy canonization. Anyone interested in forming a weekly or monthly rosary group is requested please to notify us.

... We are again appealing to you to send us names for our mailing list. This is important to our program. It is the principal way of making Father Seelos better known. Won't you please send us at least one name? Any number of names will be appreciated.

... If anyone wants to swap S&H Green stamps for some other kind, please notify us. We have several other types of trading stamps we can give in exchange.



BEST WISHES

FOR A

BLESSED  
CHRISTMAS  
SEASON