



Seelos *and* Sanctity

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The World's Greatest Mother

by Father John Vaughn, C.S.S.R.

The famous artist, James McNeil Whistler, painted a picture of his aged mother seated in a chair at their own modest home, with all the quiet dignity and loving piety of one who had devoted the major portion of her life to fulfilling the duties of motherhood.

I once read that this famous painting was actually painted on the back of a canvas. On the other side was a picture of a child. Although the artist intended no particular significance to this, a lesson can be drawn from it – a mother and a child are inseparable. There can be no mother if there is no child.

We often think of a mother as the creator of a child – and so she is. But a child is also the creator of his mother. All great mothers have been created by their sons and daughters. No one would have ever heard of Whistler's Mother if Whistler himself had not become great.

Such was the greatness of Mary. She was created by the greatness of her Son. Since her Son was the greatest Being-God Himself—she then is the **WORLD'S GREATEST MOTHER.**



It is nearly 2,000 years since a certain little boy climbed the hills of Nazareth. That lowly village in the springtime was lovely beyond description. The ground was covered by a rich green carpet of grass, polka-dotted with many colored flowers which grew in abundance and variety. Across this color-splashed field of grass walked a peasant woman. She was a little woman with perhaps large eyes, olive skin and black hair. Her expression was kind and gentle. Her radiant flashing eyes may at times have carried an expression of wonder as she gazed upon her Son. But she was also a bit fearful as she contemplated the future, for in all likelihood she already knew what was in store for Him.

They returned to the little house that was the house of Joseph, the carpenter. It was small, perhaps 24 feet square. Here lived the family who possessed a Son whose name would live until the end of time and whose name was to heal the hearts and bodies of men.

His mother was at his side throughout His life. For the first 30 years she never left Him. For the last three she was always ready whenever He needed her. When she heard the cries of the bloodthirsty rabble, "Crucify Him", and saw the cross loaded upon His shoulders, she was the first to take up her cross and follow Him – follow Him even unto the hill of Calvary.

She stood by Him on the hillside as a boy. She stood by Him on the hilltop of Calvary when as a man, He gave His life for humanity.

This is the spirit of a true mother. It is the spirit which must dominate the world if order is to be brought into the chaos and hopeless confusion in which we find ourselves today. It is the spirit which consists in completely giving of one's self for others. It is the willing sharing of life – a willingness that springs from unailing love – a love that lasts even unto death.

During this month of May let us honor the world's greatest mother, the mother of the world's greatest Son. Let us, like her, take up our cross and follow her Son. Let us follow Him to the hill of Calvary. Stand by the cross of Jesus at the side of Mary.

Like Mary, accept every trial and suffering in union with the sufferings of her Son.

Hospitals Blessings

I am continuing to visit the sick in hospitals once a week. I will be engaged in other duties on most weekends of this month of May. Consequently I will not be able to make my hospital visits on some Saturdays during this month, however, I will make them sometime during the week. Once a week I will visit sick people **IN HOSPITALS IN THE NEW ORLEANS AREA** and bless them with the mission cross Father Seelos used while he was living. Due to the limitation of time it will be impossible to visit private homes or nursing homes.

If you know of a hospitalized friend or relative please phone 895-6176.

FATHER VAUGHN

Thanks To Father Seelos For.....



- . . . making my daughter see that she should give up the company she was keeping and for strengthening her faith. After making a mission given by Redemptorist Fathers she had the courage to do what she knew she was obliged to do.
- . . . my husband's recovery from a two day coma due to a cerebral hemorrhage. He improved immediately after prayers to Father Seelos.
- . . . sending me to a doctor who has helped my daughter. She suffered for years with asthma. Shortly after I started praying to Father Seelos, the specialist was recommended to me.
- . . . the recovery of my husband who suffered a heart attack and stroke after serious surgery and also for giving me the courage to take care of him.
- . . . helping my husband obtain a much wanted position so that he can be at home with our family.
- . . . the dissolution by the church of my former marriage. I am now able to be married in the church.
- . . . letting my son go home from the hospital three weeks before he was supposed to. He was able to do so immediately after being blessed with the crucifix of Father Seelos.
- . . . curing my sister after doctors said there was no hope. Her illness was diagnosed as aneurysm in the vessels to the brain. She has now been discharged by her doctor and is living a normal life.

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.

Are you actually reading SEELOS AND SANCTITY? It is an expense to print and send it out each month. We would be interested in knowing what our newsletter means to you. Many come to see us or write to us — we are sending out many, many more newsletters than the people who contact us. We trust that through this newsletter we are bringing the inspiration of the life of Father Seelos to many hearts.

Daily, Daily, Sing To Mary

by Luana Jambois

Like the song of forgotten childhood, the life of Francis Xavier Seelos was one long daily act of devotion to His Beloved Lord Jesus and His Blessed Mother, Mary. He, the seventh child of Francesca and Mang Seelos, was the dearest to his mother's heart. Francesca Seelos nurtured a deep and abiding love for the Blessed Mother of God. Little Francis, weaker than his brothers and sisters, was with her as she went about her home-making duties. The happiness and devotion with which she prayed as she worked inevitably impressed his small soul. The rattling of his rosary as he lay in bed praying was the source of a good sound blow and loud brotherly complaint.

Though the rosary never made the brother lose sleep again, Francis' nightly habit of saying the prayers in honor of his Beloved Mother Mary never ceased to the days of his last delirium and death. Even then, he was lulled to everlasting sleep with the hymns to her honor the last sounds he heard.

For sheer exuberance none could match him. While he was a student, he sometimes embarrassed his fellows. "Seelos, not so loud!" they would say when he got carried away with his singing in the choir. His enthusiasm made him sing his love for God and His Mother even louder! "Once a few of us went to visit a new church. Xavier began a hymn to our Lady and sang it to the end, without paying the least attention to us," said a schoolmate.

Father Seelos said this prayer every day.

"Oh Blessed Lady, pray for us at the hour of our death. Oh holy Virgin, grant us a happy death."

His life was interlaced with the milestones which always seemed to occur on special feasts of the Blessed Mother. He had been ill to the point of death. Recover-

ing, he wrote: "Praised be Jesus and Mary, the Immaculate Mother of God! Today, April 3, the feast of the Seven Sorrows, I was allowed to say Mass the first time in four weeks! Now I really look somewhat older! How will this end? I think only with death. All around us on earth is uncertainty." To a mother whose daughter was a nun and whose son had just been ordained: "One of the most beautiful days of my life was this great feast of our Immaculate Conception of our Queen in heaven. She took these special children under her maternal care. Honored Madam, you have no cause to grieve. Your children have been called by God. Thank Him without ceas-



. . . For the past five years several devout ladies of St. Alphonsus parish in New Orleans have been meeting each Wednesday to recite the rosary for the success of the canonization cause of Father Seelos. Each member of the group takes a turn in having it in her home. A large portrait of the Servant of God is brought to the home and remains there for one week. Anyone desiring to organize a similar group is requested to contact the Seelos Center.

. . . Two months ago we mentioned that one of our volunteer workers, Maggie Ford, had dislocated her right shoulder. Some considerate ladies in Chicago sent her a "get-well" card. This is the kind of thoughtfulness we like to see in our readers.

. . . Recently a couple travelled 12,000 miles from Ceylon to visit the tomb of Father Seelos.

. . . Members of the Seelos Adoration program are urged to make their holy hour in St. Alphonsus Church. Do not omit this even though St. Mary's Church is closed.

. . . Our hearty congratulations to one of our very faithful Guild members, Mrs. Vath. Her son, Bishop-elect Joseph Vath, will be consecrated at Auxiliary Bishop of Mobile this month. We also extend our best wishes to Bishop Vath. Ask Father Seelos for God's blessings on his new assignment.

. . . This is our birthday issue of SEELOS AND SANCITY - four years ago we made our first visit to your home.

ing and pray that they may persevere." At one of his retreats, he said, "Oh Virgin, I too propose to lead a virginal life. Are you astounded to hear this from a good-for-nothing like me? Oh Mother, plead with your Son, He Who is able to make sons of Abraham out of stones. I fly to your protection, Holy Mother of God."

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

Please print your name when sending this enclosed contribution envelope. Handwriting is frequently difficult to read; thus slowing the posting of contributions.