



SECOND CLASS POSTAGE  
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## EACH FRIDAY NIGHT

by  
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It was March 12, 1966. This was the first time I began making my weekly rounds of the hospitals in the New Orleans area to bless the sick with the crucifix used by Father Seelos.

When I announced my plan, a parishoner, Mr. Cletus Stack, agreed to act as my chauffeur. This saves quite a bit of time because it relieves me of the necessity of searching for parking place and perhaps having to walk a block or two before I even get to the hospital. Another parishoner, Miss Addie Buhler, agreed to accept phone calls. It is her home phone number that you see in each issue of this newsletter (895-6176). Miss Buhler is confined to her home by illness and is always available by telephone. The part she has played in this program in visitation of the sick has truly been tremendous. In fact I positively could not have been able to visit these sick people without her help.

Often people thank me for visiting them in the hospital. However, I keep telling myself that it is I who should thank them. They are doing a greater favor for me than I for them. Each Friday night I feel like a million dollars when I finish my weekly encounter with suffering, pain and agony. I then thank the good Lord for the health He has given to me.

Perhaps it will be helpful if I describe a few of the more outstanding incidents that have occurred over the past two years.

I shall never forget the look in the eyes of a woman in her late thirties as I anointed her. Earlier in the day I had pleaded with her family to allow me to talk to her and tell her of her sickness. They would hear none of it. Now they had called me to rush to the hospital and anoint her and give her the blessing with the crucifix. A staff of nurses and doctors were around her. I saw terror in the woman's eye for only now it had struck her that she was going to die. I really do think that if she had been properly prepared she would have met death with greater calmness of spirit.

This brings to mind a woman well into her seventies, who was dying of cancer. Upon my advice the family requested that I speak to her. In the kindest and most gentle way possible I told her that there was nothing more medical science could do, that she had at best another month to live. She smiled and told me she realized this. She was happy because she had prayed to God to let her live to see her youngest son ordained a priest. He had been ordained a few months previously. All the rest of her children were happily married. A sweet smile came upon her face as she said "Now I am ready to die." I called in the family and told them in front of their mother that I had informed her that death was near. I told them to talk about it and to treasure these last weeks. When the time came everyone was quite well reconciled to the Will of God.

Then there was the man in his fifties who had cancer on his cheek, as well as in his jawbone. The doctors removed the lower jaw, causing extensive facial distortion and then applied X-ray treatment to the side of his face. Somehow the machine

was left on too long and a hole, the size of a silver dollar, was burned in the side of his jaw. You could look through it and see the interior of his mouth. He was being cared for by his sister who had brought him to the hospital because she could no longer feed him. Food would run out of the hold in the side of his face. The doctors were able to insert a tube into his stomach so that his family could attach a funnel to the tube and pour food and water into him to keep him alive.

Then there was the charming young negro woman I visited sometime ago. I asked what was the matter. She replied she had cancer and indicated that she would die soon. I remember how impressed I was with the calmness with which she spoke to me of death. She appeared to be a very intelligent woman and well educated. I made some remark about how hard it is to endure this suffering. She only smiled very sweetly and turning her head to the eight or ten people who were visiting with her, she said "Yes, it is but, as you can see, I have many friends. They help make things easy."

Then there was little Renee who was a bouncing young girl about three years old. Little Renee looked exactly the same as any other baby, except she was a little pale. You see Renee had leukemia. Within a short time this little child who was now bubbling with life would be dead. Her mother must stand by helplessly as she sees life slowly seep from her child's body.

Then I visited Bill who was in a terrible automobile accident. Both of his legs are hanging in the air suspended by a multiplicity of ropes attached to stainless steel pins the doctors have placed through the bones of his body and his two arms are likewise in casts, held immobile in various awkward positions. He will not be able to move for six weeks to two months.

I then saw little Jimmie. His head was enlarged in comparison with the rest of his body. I took one look and saw that Jimmie was retarded. He was a sweet little boy about 12 years old. He was in the hospital for an operation to rectify damage to certain internal organs sustained since birth.

Next I visited the mental ward. This is always rather trying because many people come to you to ask your blessing and to talk a blue streak without really saying too much. Their mental disturbances are quite evident and you quickly realize that you are helpless to do them any good. In this particular instance I recall Mary who was in an extreme state of depression. All Mary could do was sit in the chair and cry. She was quite thin because she had only arrived a few days before and had been starving herself at home.

I then visited Judy who was in intense agony. She was a woman in her late thirties who had cancer of the bone. She was nothing but skin and bone now and suffering intense agony. This had been going on for months. Drugs gave her little relief. She could only wait for the merciful hand of death to take her. It was taking a long time for the cancer to destroy a vital organ.

Next was an old man well into his eighties. He was very weak. I don't know exactly what he was dying of, but I knew he was not long for this world. He couldn't speak but somehow the look in his eyes seemed to tell me that he was glad I was there.

Next there came an elderly woman. She was quite stout and she lay there in a coma with several tubes in her body and an

oxygen tent over her head. About all she was doing was breathing. Her daughter stood beside her waiting for the end to come.

Next was a young boy. I am not sure whether he was in his late teens or early twenties. He had received a head injury and was now in a coma. The doctors had said there was no hope. With tears streaming from her eyes there stood beside him a very lovely young girl. In a couple of months they were to have been married. I could see she deeply loved him. In a few days he was dead.

The next man I visited told me that he had been shot by a robber while he was caring for his small grocery store. He showed me the bullet wound and told me how it had pierced his lung, but had missed his heart.

Down the hall was a policeman. As I passed I asked if he was guarding someone. "Yes," he replied. "There was a guy here who got shot. He was shot by his own brother because he was going after his mother with a knife."

NOW CONSIDER YOURSELF. YOU ARE REASONABLY HEALTHY. YOUR EYES STILL SEE. YOUR EARS RECEIVE SOUND. YOUR LEGS ENABLE YOU TO WALK. YOU ARE ABLE TO WORK AND PLAY AND EAT AND DRINK.

PAUSE FOR A MOMENT AND THINK OF THE PEOPLE WHO CANNOT DO THESE THINGS. SAVE THIS ISSUE AND THE NEXT TIME YOU ARE TEMPTED TO FEEL SORRY FOR YOURSELF, READ IT -- THEN THANK THE LORD FOR BEING SO GOOD TO YOU.



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### 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 . .*

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Staff Artist John Moley.

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