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FATHER SEELOS PRACTICED THE VIRTUE OF HOPE ADMIRABLY

BY FATHER GRANGELL

The month of February in the Redemptorist way of living is the Virtue of Hope. That means every Redemptorist in the month of February, in all his daily meditations and soul examinations, checks his practice of this virtue.

One day a man asked Father Seelos why he was always so happy, relaxed, smiling, pleasant. He said he lived the virtue of Hope always. The man then asked Father to give him a clear, understandable definition of the virtue of Hope. He answered: Do you know the Act of Hope, do you ever make it? If you do, then you know what the virtue of Hope is.

The Act of Hope, which we learned as small children, never changes. "O my God, relying on Thy infinite goodness and promises, I hope for the pardon of my sins, for Thy Grace and for life everlasting, through the merits of Jesus Christ, our Lord."

We read the Gospels. We see our Lord always so kind and merciful to all who went to Him. He promises so much to all who had Faith in Him.

Like all great Saints, Father Seelos thought he was the greatest of sinners. But he hoped for the forgiveness of his sins. He saw Christ's kindness to Mary Magdalen, to the Good Thief, to the Predigal Sen. He never worried about his sins. He was sorry for them. He was not scrupulous. (Scrupulosity means lacking hope and confidence in God, selfishly worrying.) He obeyed his Confessor. In turn he was an understanding confessor. As a spiritual adviser he instilled confidence in the lives of people, reminding them of Christ's goodness and all the promises He made to help all.

The second thing we hope for in the simple little Act of Hope, is God's grace. That means God's help. God reminds us in Holy Scripture - "Without Me you can do nothing" and yet, "ask and you shall receive," and more, "if you ask the Father anything in My Name, it will be given to you." Notice: "Ask for ANYTHING: Notice too: "ASK IN MY NAME." That's the reason you hear re-echoing all through Holy Mass "Through Christ, our Lord."

If we have hope, we pray. People who do not pray, sin by presumption. They are proud! They do not need God's help. They are self-sufficient! Those who pray little, have little Hope. Those who pray with doubt, with hesitation, without perseverance, sin against Hope.

The trade mark of the Blue Cross Insurance is: "Nisi Deus, frustra," which means unless you trust in God, you fail. These words were inspired, doubtlessly by Psalm 126: Unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build it. Unless the Lord guard the City, in vain does the guard keep vigil.

The Founding Fathers of our Country gave us as our motto - and it is on the coins we carry in our pockets and purses - "In God we Trust." Americans should be praying people. Are we?

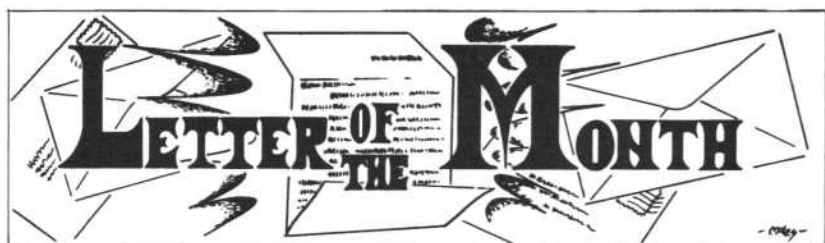
We are a restless people. Youth, in particular, is looking for something. They are looking for God. St. Augustine many centuries ago prayed: Thou hast made us for Thyself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in Thee! Pray that Americans and the world find God. St. Alphonsus, a Doctor of the Church, in his great book on "The Great Means of Salvation" teaches: Pray and you shall be saved! Neglect prayer and you shall be lost.

That brings us to the last thing we want in the Act of Hope: LIFE EVER-LASTING. Father Seelos was a home missionary, and the theme of all his sermons was: SAVE YOUR SOUL! GET TO HEAVEN! For our consolation, our Lord has promised: If any man shall eat of My Flesh and drink My Blood, he shall live forever! Assure your Eternal Salvation by being a daily recipient of Holy Communion.

Help others to save their souls. Begin at home.

Wouldn't it be a wonderful thing if many times daily on our T.V. Programs and our radio broadcastings some voice would remind all of the words of Christ: WHAT DOTHT IT PROFIT A MAN IF HE GAIN THE WHOLE WORLD AND SUFFER THE LOSS OF HIS SOUL! We trust for Security as a nation in material things rather than in God. That's it.

Father Seelos had great hope in the Mother of God for his eternal salvation. He used to pray always - and you should to. "SACRED HEART OF JESUS BE MY LOVE! SWEET HEART OF MARY BE MY SALVATION!"



Just a thank you to Father Seelos for interceding with Mary and her Son in behalf of my granddaughter, one-year old.

The baby was stricken with a rash diagnosed by the pediatrician as an "allergy" - something she "ate."

For 12 hours the doctors directions were followed at home - then a rush visit to the hospital - back home again - begging Father Seelos to help.

A new change for the worse - the wailing baby was red and swollen from head to toe, fever rising. A nurse friend made arrangements with another hospital and the baby was readily admitted. The pediatrician called in a dermatologist and several other doctors (9 in all) for consultation. Medication had to be administered by injection - nothing by mouth. Over the next 30 hours her condition improved but the doctors said she would be weeks in isolation.

To the amazement of the doctors, in one week's time, the baby had made a rapid recovery - they couldn't believe it was the same baby.

Thanks again Father Seelos. May others learn to invoke you with confidence in your powerful intercession always.

NOTES FROM THE DESK OF THE VICE-POSTULATOR

Again we ask your prayers for a good friend of Father Seelos. On December 18 God called Mrs. Marie Abadie to her eternal reward. She was the mother of Father Alphonse Abadie, Vice Provincial of the New Orleans Vice Province of Redemptorists. Her loss is felt by all Redemptorists, but we confidently hope that she has taken her place in heaven with the Redemptorists - St. Alphonsus, St. Clement, St. Gerard, Father Seelos and countless other devoted sons of St. Alphonsus.

Father Grangell continues to visit the hospitals in the New Orleans area each Friday evening to bless the sick with the Mission Crucifix of Father Seelos. If you wish a relative or friend blessed by Father Grangell, kindly call Addie Buhler at 895-6176.

Every Wednesday evening the 5:30 P.M. Mass at St. Alphonsus Church is offered for the petitions placed before the tomb of Father Seelos. We started this practice on January 8 and thus far the attendance has been a bit disappointing. We are confident however, when the weather is warmer and the days longer the attendance will grow and our people will display their devotion to Father Seelos. After Mass Father Grangell will bless those who wish him to do so with the Mission Crucifix of Father Seelos. This is a wonderful opportunity to bring the sick who are able to leave their homes to church to receive this blessing.

Father Grangell quite often refers to books of St. Alphonsus. These books are still in print and may be obtained from the Redemptorist Fathers, Liguori, Missouri 63059.

Thanks To Father Seelos For.....

...the disappearance of a large lump on the back of my husband's head. It was very uncomfortable and dreaded the thought of surgery. After praying to Father Seelos for one week my husband suddenly realized the lump had disappeared.

...return to health of my grandchild and a reconciliation of his parents.

...my son being relieved of the responsibility of paying out a loan on which he had signed as co-signer. The maker of the note was located and has been making the payments.

...finding a piece of jewelry which had great sentimental value.

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.

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