



FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY

VOLUME IX, NUMBER 6

JUNE, 1970

STREET VIOLENCE IN FATHER SEELOS' TIME

BY FATHER ELWORTHY

Rioting in the streets, violence and vandalism were not unknown on our Cities' streets a hundred and more years ago. In 1850 Father Seelos was stationed at the Redemptorist parish in Pittsburg, St. Philomena's.

At that time there was a well-known anti-Catholic rabble rouser named Joseph Barker. It was his vocal conviction that the only trouble with St. Philomena's was that it could not be burned down. He was put in jail for obstructing the streets, using indecent language, and inciting a riot.

His imprisonment made many people regard him as a martyr. In one of the strange ways in which democracy works, he was nominated by the Whig party as a candidate for mayor, and what is more strange, he was elected. The prison officials had to let him out of prison for a day so that he could take the oath of office. Knowing his dislike of them, the Redemptorists handed over to the mayor the keys of their church so that as mayor he would be obliged to protect it, even though as an individual he thought of destroying it.

The Fathers' fear of violence was not groundless. One night they heard a mob of fanatics moving toward the rectory. They quickly put out all the lights in the house. Someone knocked at the door and asked for a priest to attend a wounded man. The priests said no one could go. Thus the mob was foiled in its attempt to enter the house. Before the mob withdrew, someone hurled a large stone at the door of the rectory. If the house had not been made of brick, these men certainly would have set fire to it. Sometime later combustible material was found burning in the belfry of the church, but since it too, was made of brick, little damage was done. These were some of the "Good old days."

OBTAIN YOUR COPY OF "CHEERFUL ASCETIC" BY FATHER MICHAEL CURLEY, FROM THE FATHER SEELOS CENTER, 2030 CONSTANCE STREET. THIS IS THE LIFE OF FATHER SEELOS AND IS VERY INTERESTING TO READ. THE PRICE IS \$4.95.

THE PURITY OF FATHER SEELOS

BY FATHER GRANGELL



The world is full of hypocrites! So spoke a man to Father Seelos! Explain yourself, please, asked the holy priest. Everybody indulges in sex promiscuously, and many parade a holier-than-thou attitude, and play the part of angels incarnate! Father Seelos told the blasphemer that all he said proved just one thing, - he was branding himself. There is much impurity in the world, but that everybody was impure, was a false accusation!

Father Seelos was a John the Baptist in the pulpit, emphasizing most eloquently and fearlessly as John did before King Herod: 'You cannot live like that!' (Matt. 14-4). He was as gentle and forgiving in the Confessional as was Christ with the adulterous woman. (John 8-11)

His rule-virtue for the month of June was "Purity of Heart." As a Redemptorist religious he made the perpetual vow of Chastity. He renewed this vow when he received the Order of the Subdiaconate. He renewed the vow on the 25th day of every month at a community exercise. God alone knows how often in his daily life he renewed this vow.

Father Seelos thanked God daily for his Redemptorist rule of community prayer and meditation. His prayer life was his greatest safeguard for his life of purity. The community bell, like the voice of God, called him every morning one half hour after rising for his first meditation. In June his meditation was on the purity of Christ. The gospels were his best meditation book.

At noon, he was in the chapel for the particular examination of conscience. He preached to the people from the pulpit, he counseled them in the Confessional - to avoid the occasions of sin if they wish to be pure. Now at this community exercise, he examined his own life on what might be an occasion of sin for him - places where he had been, things he had used, people with whom he came in contact. If he saw failings, no matter how slight, he would impose a penance on himself and then make acts of the firm purpose of amendment.

Again in the evening there was a second community meditation of the day. The topic of this meditation was the sufferings of Christ in His infancy and His last agony and death. He learned in this meditation that he must mortify himself greatly, deny himself many things, if he would be pure, one with Christ.

His love for the Blessed Sacrament kept him pure - his daily Mass, his many visits to the Blessed Sacrament.

His love for the Virgin Mother of God, was a sure help in his purity. He recited the 15 decades of his Rosary daily. Can't you hear him whispering to Mary over and over again: Pray for us sinners now - pray for me now to be pure!!

He persevered in his vocation to death - because he belonged to God, whole and entire. His heart was undivided. Temptations to the contrary were loathsome to him.

If you who read this would be pure, reread this short story of Father Seelos. Like him, pray much, avoid the occasions of sin, love the Blessed Sacrament, love the Immaculate Mother of God. Beg God to give you the grace never to give scandal, never to lead another into sin.

THANKS TO FATHER SEELOS

Metairie, La.

"...A few weeks ago I was handed in passing, a card pertaining to Father Francis Xavier Seelos, C.S.S.R. I began praying to him for a special personal favor, truly believing that he would help me. Within a matter of days I could tell that he was listening to my petitions. I could not begin to transmit to you the love I now hold in my heart for Father Seelos. He has helped me when prayers to others seemed to be of no avail. I promised him that if my petition was granted I would report it to you. I am to be married soon and I shall pray to Father Seelos to be our guide to happiness, joy and the love of God."

F. H. P.

New Orleans, La.

"...My thanks to Father Seelos for favors granted. I promised Father Seelos if the X-rays which I had made while in the hospital were negative and I would feel well again I would have it published. I thank Father Seelos for all the favors which have been granted me."

Mrs. S. D.

New Orleans, La.

"...I was unable to walk. X-rays showed I had a fractured pelvic bone. I entered the hospital for a bone scar. A lump had shown up on my rib. I was operated and the lump was removed and found to be benign. About a month later through more X-rays it was brought to my attention that the doctor removed part of the rib and the original lump was still there. So I again entered the hospital for surgery. This time the right piece of rib was removed. It also was found to be benign. Meanwhile more X-rays were taken and the pelvic bone showed a healing process. I prayed to Father Seelos, as did my mother and friends, that I could walk again and take care of my family. I feel our prayers were answered, as I am on the road to recovery."

Mrs. M. D.

Irving, Texas

"...While suffering for some months with phlebitis, I placed my case in the hands of Father Seelos and promised publication if I recovered sufficiently to return to my duties. As of yesterday I was back on the job. Seelos and Sanctity arrived in the mail today, reminding me of my promise. I am very grateful to this saintly Redemptorist. Please know that it is my constant custom to say the prayer for his canonization at least nine times daily - usually eleven or twelve times. And I do try to promote the devotion by distributing pictures and relics."

Sister M. B.

OUR MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP

Did you ever study the picture? The child is frightened by two angels with the instruments of His passion and death. He runs to His Blessed Mother for Protection. She is looking at you, saying: Run to me in all your worries, needs, anxieties, I am your Perpetual Help. Make the Tuesday Novena at St. Alphonsus Church in connection with Holy Mass, at 6, 7, 7:45, 10:30 A.M. and 5:30 P.M. Bring somebody with you.

SPECIAL NOTES

We are again revising our mailing list and are attempting to make sure all names are correctly spelled and zipcodes are correct. We have noted quite a few duplicates in the files. If you are receiving duplicate letters, it would be helpful if you would advise us so that we could remove one plate, thereby saving the expense of the extra postage each month. Your assistance in making the necessary corrections in our files will be greatly appreciated.

Those of you who live in New Orleans should make an effort to come to the Father Seelos Mass on every Wednesday at 5:30 P.M. Bring your sick! Put your written petition at the tomb in St. Alphonsus Church. Those of you who are out of the city send your petitions and we will put them at the tomb for you.

Every Friday Father Grangell visits the local hospitals and blesses those who have requested it with the mission crucifix of Father Seelos. If you have a relative or friend whom you wish blessed, kindly call 895-6176 and the names will be placed on Father's list. If you wish someone visited at another time than Friday, or if the patient will not be hospitalized on Friday, call any way and Father Grangell or one of the Fathers or Brothers, if at all possible, will call on the patient.

Published monthly by the Redemptorists at the Father Seelos Center, 2030 Constance Street, New Orleans, Louisiana, 70130. Subscription \$1.00 per year.

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

Published with Ecclesiastical Approbation.

Rev. William Grangell, C.S.S.R., Vice-Postulator and Editor; Miss Josie Becker, Associate Editor; Mrs. James Bourg, and Rev. Joseph Elworthy, C.S.S.R., Executive Assistants.