



FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY

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FATHER SEELOS' VOCATION

In the fall of 1842 Father Seelos entered St. Jerome's the Augsburg diocesan seminary at Gillingen. He had been in a quandary what to do while waiting to hear from the Redemptorist superior in America. His stay at St. Jerome's lasted only five weeks. Even then he made an impression.

The Regent of the seminary gave him a farewell testimonial: "His life in the seminary was such that it gives great promise that he who leaves it with the grade Excellent in application, in achievement, and in moral conduct will become a great pastor of souls."

A note in the daily paper said, "at eight o'clock this morning one of the most worthy young men at the clerical seminary, Francis Xavier Seelos, left to enter the Redemptorist Order in Baltimore and devote himself to the life of a missionary there." The note went on to hope that many would follow Seelos' rare example of generosity and apostolic zeal.

And so in 1971 this, too, is our prayer.

Joseph Elworthy, C.SS.R.

THE CHEERFUL ASCETIC by Father Michael Curley, C.SS.R. is available at the Seelos Center at \$4.95 per copy. This is a book written about the life of Father Seelos.

For blessings of patients in hospitals with the mission crucifix of Father Seelos, please call 895-6176 or the Father Seelos Center 525-2495.

VIRTUE FOR JUNE: PURITY
PATRON: ST. JAMES MINOR, APOSTLE

BY FATHER GRANGELL



Father Seelos lived the Bible text of this month of Purity: Blessed are the clean of heart for they shall see God. (Mark 5/8) His heart was pure, hence his thoughts, words and actions were pure. We saw him last month as a man who was detached from the material things of life. He could well preach: If the love of riches estrange the soul from God, still more do the pleasures of the flesh weigh down the heart and prevent it from consecrating itself to the love of God. He used to say there was a dearth of vocations to the priesthood and the religious life because of voluntary celibacy demanded by the church of her priests and religious. He used to say of himself: Since God has raised me to the most sublime dignity of the priesthood, He expects of me the highest sanctity and the most absolute purity. I will strive after perfection. His Redemptorist Rule told him: Since this virtue is so pleasing to the Son of God and so necessary to the evangelical laborer, the subjects of this congregation shall guard it most carefully.

His Rule told him to be modest, gentle, pleasant, polite, approachable, as Christ was, but always to lead souls to God. For a priest, all contact with souls is to bring them to Christ.

Father Seelos realized that to be pure, he had to deny himself many things, mortify himself much. He knew he had to be generous with God. He tried never to shock, surprise, scandalize anyone by his words and actions, where he went, how he dressed, how he spoke.

He knew his perseverance in his vocation of celibacy depended on prayer. He was up early in the morning for the community meditation of one-half hour. He was in the chapel with the Blessed Sacrament before dinner for the particular examination of conscience. He dedicated the first three hours of the afternoon to the Passion of our Lord, whether he was in his room, in the parlors, on the street, or visiting hospitals. The immediate half hour before supper he spent in the chapel meditating on the sufferings and death of Christ. The prayer of St. Alphonsus was his: Grant that I may love Thee always, and then do with me as Thou wilt.

He put his purity in the keeping of the Blessed Mother of God. The big fifteen decade rosary at his side kept him in constant touch with Mary. He recited her litany daily.

Because he lived this kind of a life he became a saint.

The church is suffering today because the spirit of Jesus and the sanctity of old is lacking. Sex is the big word.

If anybody wishes to be pure, he must pray, he must deny himself many things, he must love Holy Mass and daily Holy Communion and the Blessed Mother of God.

SPECIAL LETTERS

New Orleans, La.

"...I want to tell you about two favors I had granted through the help of Father Seelos. Four years ago my daughter developed a lump in her cheek, which lump was judged by the doctors to be growing and would have to be removed. Since she was pregnant they decided to wait until after the baby was born. I prayed to Father Seelos and while my daughter was still confined and nursing her baby this white swelling appeared in her mouth and broke. It drained until the lump disappeared. It turned out to be an accumulation of infection and not a growing thing. Thank God...Recently after my husband received a corneal transplant he developed pressure in his eye. This was his second transplant and the pressure would most certainly ruin it. Again I prayed to Father Seelos. The doctor said he would have to put my husband in the hospital to relieve the pressure, if it wasn't down by his next visit. When we returned for this visit the pressure was down and he didn't have to go to the hospital."

Mrs. A. S. M.

New Orleans, La.

"...I wrote a few months back about my nephew having a bad ulcer on his ankle. He had been going to a doctor for several months. The doctor had tried many things on the ulcer but it would not heal...He feared going to a hospital to be operated on for varicose veins...I prayed hard to Father Seelos asking him to pray to God for my nephew to change doctors. Thanks to Father Seelos his boss called a good surgeon and made an appointment for him. He was operated on in December, had the varicose veins stripped. Thanks to God and Father Seelos, the ulcer is healed now. My nephew says his leg never felt better."

Miss E. M.

Meridian, Miss.

"...During a recent ten day session in the hospital for diabetes, I invoked Father Seelos in prayer and promised to report the favor if through his intercession, I did not have to have daily injections of insulin after returning home...Since coming back to my rectory, I am glad to report that the favor was granted. I am controlling my sickness with pills and diet. Also I am quite able to do all my work. I am grateful for the intercession of Father Seelos and often address short invocations and petitions to him.

A. C. W., SVD

New Orleans, La.

"...I promised publication if my prayers were answered. My son was having pains in his stomach whenever he got disturbed about any task he had before him. Thanks to Father Seelos my prayers were answered. My son hasn't had any trouble in a long time."

Mrs. B. S. B.

Baton Rouge, La.

"...When our son reapplied for admission to college, he found many obstacles standing in his way. The courses he needed were not offered in the night classes. I went to novena services and asked the Blessed Mother and Father Seelos to ask God to help him. I promised Father Seelos an acknowledgment if he obtained this favor for our son. Two days later, just 24 hours before registration was to close, he was advised a course he needed was available to him at night. We know this came from God and want to Thank the Blessed Mother and Father Seelos for their intercession, as there were other problems involved besides the night classes."

Mrs. A. B. L.

SPECIAL NOTES

A WORD OF EXPLANATION: We asked all of the readers of Father Seelos and Sanctity to help us restore St. Mary's Assumption Church, because we know you are devotees of Father Seelos. St. Mary's is not a parish church. It was when Father Seelos was living. It is now decaying in neglect and for want to funds to repair it. Father Seelos was buried in its sanctuary, but had to be moved after a hurricane made the old structure unsafe. When the church is restored, his body will be returned to its first resting place. Please, do not be offended at our asking you for help. God bless you for your interest in Father Seelos and his cause for canonization.

If you send an offering to Father Seelos Center, be sure to give your name and address so that we can acknowledge it. State, too, if your offering is for the general Father Seelos Fund or for the restoration of St. Mary's Church....Thanks and God love you!

If any boy or young man is interested in a Redemptorist vocation, please write to the Father Seelos Center for information.

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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.