



FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY

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FATHER SEELOS - CONFESSOR

One of the measures of a priest's love for his people is taken by his devotion to the confessional. The first requisite for a confessor is patience - patience with the physical discomforts of "the box", with the heat and the cold, with the endless whispering back and forth, with untoward noises in and out of church, shuffling feet, scurrying steps, repressed coughs and sneezes.

A good confessor has to be kind-kind to the discouraged, to the apathetic, to the faltering, to the weak.

He has to have deep faith - faith in Jesus Christ whom he represents. He has to believe that he is providing souls with one more opportunity to encounter Christ in mercy of the sacrament of penance.

That Father Seelos was a good confessor and much sought after, there is abundant evidence. One young man who later became a Redemptorist said he had to wait in line for about two hours to get the chance to go to confession to Father Seelos. Another man said "he was a very good confessor, and he had a power that others did not possess."

Another penitent from Baltimore testified: "I never left his confessional without consolation and I desired to go to confession to him more than to anyone else."

A Carmelite nun pointed out that Father Seelos' skill in the ways of the interior life was such that when she confessed to him he could look into her heart.

Joseph Elworthy, C.S.S.R.

Copies of the CHEERFUL ASCETIC, the life of Father Seelos, by Father Michael Curley, C.S.S.R. are available at the Father Seelos Center, 2030 Constance Street, New Orleans, La., 70130. The price is \$4.95.

DECEMBER MEDITATIONS

BY FATHER GRANGELL

Virtue: Self-denial and love of the Cross

Patron: St. Matthias, Apostle

Text: If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me. Matt. 16/24

Father Seelos used to say his two best Meditation Books were the Crib and the Crucifix - looking at them he could pray so easily and make all kinds of generous resolutions.

These were not just occasional books he read. He had them open before him always. He never got away from the Crucifix. He wore it daily close to his heart as a part of his religious habit. It was in his hands and at his lips often. The Crib was not just a Christmas devotion. The Redemptorist rule orders a Crib to be erected in the Community Chapel on the 25th day of every month, which the Fathers call "Little Christmas." The morning meditation on this day is to see the virtue of the respective month in the Crib. They renew their vows to be holier men in the love and service of God.

In St. Alphonsus Church on Constance Street in New Orleans, across the street from where Father Seelos lived, there is a big painting, representing St. Alphonsus adoring the Blessed Sacrament. Above the Tabernacle in the picture is the Crib and rising from the Crib one sees the foot of the Cross. This picture used to inspire Father Seelos, particularly in the month of December, the month of self-denial and love of the Cross.

If anybody wishes to deny himself, he has only to study the Crib and see Christ suffering and hear Him say: If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, take up the Cross and follow Me.

The crib is self-denial in its perfection. We see poverty with all its hardships and privations at its best. We see the lack of all comforts. We feel the cold, we grope in darkness. There are no warm clothes. There is little food. There isn't even a bed or a chair or a table. There is no furniture. The floor is the cold ground. Let your imagination run wild!!!! These sufferings are to continue for 33 years and terminate in the Crucifixion of the Babe of Bethlehem.

Father Seelos used to ask: How mortified am I? Do I ever Complain when something is denied me or when something is missing?

He used to embrace the image of the Divine Infant and say: Grant that I may love Thee always and then do with me as Thou wilt.

Kneel quietly at the Crib and ask yourself how much self-denial you practice for the love of God. Ask yourself if you rebel against your cross in life. Ask yourself if you rebel against your cross in life. Ask Mary and Joseph to pray for you that you learn the true meaning of the Crib.

SPECIAL LETTERS

New Orleans, La.

"I wish to acknowledge and thank Father Seelos for his intercession for the favor granted me. For 29 years I hadn't been to confession or communion. Some weeks ago a friend suggested I turn to Father Seelos, and on September 19, I went to confession and I received the Holy Sacrament at his Mass at St. Alphonsus Church September 20th. By his Mass I mean where the novena to Our Lady of Fatima is said for the canonization of Father Seelos.

The reason I couldn't receive communion was that I had lived in sin all those years. There are no words to say how I came to leaving this life behind, but believe me, there aren't any words to describe the reaction I had.

When I was given the body and blood of Christ the strangest feeling came upon me. The biggest moment was when I kissed the crucifix of Father Seelos. My whole life changed for the better. Thanks to God and Our Dear Mother Mary and Father Seelos."

R. B.

Pittsburgh, Penn.

"Enclosed you will find a M.O. for five dollars which I promised to send you for a favor received.

On april 26th my niece's husband had an accident at work. (I am past 80 and I make my home with them). He had his four fingers cut off-a bit of the skin holding them to his hand. He carried them to the hospital on a piece of paper. The surgeon sutured them back on but was not very hopeful. They were cut straight across at the second joint, and after about a week the index finger had to be amputated. He developed post operative pneumonia, accompanied with severe chills and a temperature over 104. I asked Father Seelos to intercede for him. On May 12th he was discharged from the hospital, the hand still in a cast, but the pneumonia all cleared up. On June 16th, the Doctor told him he could start to drive a little at a time, a car but not a truck. On July 22nd, he was permitted to go back to work. He drives one of the largest concrete mixing trucks that is made. The pins holding the fingers to the joints were removed gradually and now, Thanks be to God and the intercession of Father Seelos, he is as good as new and back to work. I forgot to mention it was his right hand that had the accident."

V. N.

Gladstone, Mo.

"In 1964 a lady who introduced me to Father Seelos, through a card, told me about her prayers to Father Seelos and what he had done for her. At that time I was in the mortgage banking field with a burning desire to have my own business.

Well, I started praying to Father Seelos at that time and in 1966 I left the Mortgage Banking field and started my own construction company. I am still developing ground, building houses and doing real estate appraisal work. It has been very good to me and my family. Every time I have a house that doesn't sell, I beg Father Seelos' intercession and it sells soon.

I feel in my own mind that my prayers were answered thru Father Seelos' intercession."

J. P.

Franklin, La.

"I am a bit slow in writing, but I do feel the prayer to Father Seelos, which I have read daily since it was given to me, has been answered several times.

Once on the occasion for a friend who had suffered a stroke and was in a coma (about in the month of February). He was in a coma, and on a Saturday morning as I read my daily prayers, I asked for him to plead with God that my friend may come

(Continued on next page)

out of the coma. (He had been in the coma for a couple of weeks.) I was told that at about 10:00 that morning he had come out of the coma and said a few words (or was able to understand when he was spoken to). He is still not fully recovered, but is improving from a paralysis on one side.

The other, our little granddaughter (2 years old) was sent to a bone specialist as she walked on her tip-toes. On the first visit, he told our daughter and myself that Jessica had a mild form of cerebral palsy and that she may outgrow this or maybe require surgery. He gave her another appointment for two months later. On this visit he told our daughter that Jessica was doing beautifully and would require no further visits and discharged her."

R. T.

I want to give you your best Christmas Gift - a personal remembrance in my Christmas Masses, in my New Year's Masses and in all my Masses of 1973. That should make your Christmas very merry and happy. Pray for me.

Make your Christmas a Mary Christmas! Make a novena of Rosaries in preparation for Christmas.

Give the Infant of the Cold Manger a gift. Take Him into your warm heart in Holy Communion on Christmas, His Birthday!

A REMINDER: We send you a gold envelope every month as an all service help - to send us your petitions or thanksgiving or for a gift to Father Seelos Center.

Thanks to the handful of wonderful people who are volunteering their help at the Seelos Center - without them our secretary, Mrs. Bourg, would not be able to keep up. She still needs a typist for one or two hours a week. Thanks again, volunteers - you are in my daily prayers.

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