



# FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY

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## SERVICE AND SUFFERING IN BALTIMORE

Father Seelos loved the city of Baltimore - he thought it the fairest of all the cities of the United States. During his pastorate at St. Alphonsus, troubles kept coming after him, as we have already seen. In the mid-fifties of the last century the Know-Nothing party was very strong in Baltimore and Maryland. The members of this party hated the new immigrants, and since most of the immigrants were Catholic, they hated the Catholics. Violence on the streets was commonplace, and even pitched battles were fought.

Somehow or other, St. Alphonsus' was spared in the lootings and burnings and Father Seelos and his staff of priests were able to continue their ministry not only at the main church, but in the mission stations as well. With their daily comings and goings to and from these places of worship, no harm came to the Redemptorists. The situation was not without its dangers for them, for Father Seelos was known to say, "If this goes on, I might even have the privilege of being a martyr. What a wonderful way to go to heaven."

Perhaps it is some small consolation to us of the 1970's to know that even in the good old days, 120 years ago, things were not too much better on our cities' streets.

*Joseph Elworthy, C.S.S.R.*

For copies of THE CHEERFUL ASCETIC, a book on the life of Father Seelos by the late Father Michael Curley, C.S.S.R., please write the Father Seelos Center. The books are \$4.95 per copy including postage. Orders will be filled promptly.

## BE ATTACHED TO GOD

The Virtue for the month of May is Poverty and the Patron, St. Thomas the Apostle. The text is from St. John's first Epistle 1/16 'All that is in the world is the concupiscence of the flesh, the concupiscence of the eyes and the pride of life.'

The dictionary defines concupiscence as an undue or illicit desire - any inordinate appetite. The concupiscence of the flesh is sensuality; the concupiscence of the eyes is avarice; the price of life is the spirit of haughtiness and independence. These are the three great tyrants who snatch souls away from God to make them the slaves of the world. The Christian withdraws from and escapes this shameful slavery by means of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience.

For a few moments let us consider Poverty which detaches a man from the goods of this world and liberates his soul from avarice.

Father Seelos as a religious, made the vow of Poverty. He did it to be entirely detached from all money-things. He aimed at greatest perfection in the love and service of God. He wished to be a worthy imitation of Jesus Christ who was so poor in the world. He heard Christ say: If you will be perfect sell what you have, give to the poor and come follow me. He would own nothing of the world's money-goods. He would dispose of nothing of money-value as an owner. He used the necessary things of life with permission from his religious superiors.

Not many people make the vow of Poverty, but every true Christian must practice the Virtue of Poverty. One may have all the money it is possible for any man to have and every luxury that money can buy, but he must not be attached to these things. He must not allow them to distract him from God. He must never turn against God and religion. Many people who have money and the good things of life have no religion, they never say a prayer, they never go to Church. Many of them are misers. Their money and their pleasures are their gods. Pray for their conversion.

In reality, these people are spiritually poor. Father Seelos used to say he felt sorry for the poor man who had nothing, but he felt more sorry for the man who had not God in his life. He was really poor.

He pitied those unfortunates who had money but who wasted it, threw it away. He pitied more the Catholic who received the riches of Faith at Baptism, but who threw them away by neglecting to pray, to go to Holy Mass and receive the Sacraments.

He praised the young couples who sacrificed much to own their own homes. He praised those more who purchased a mansion in heaven by much prayer, religious fervor and some personal penance.

Father Seelos said the richest people in any parish were those who did volunteer work for the Church. Their reward was great in the kingdom of heaven.

He summed up the whole system of spiritual riches in a few words! Make a living for the body and don't forget the soul. Lay up treasures for old age and don't forget to lay up treasures for the ageless years of Eternity. If you are poor, just think how poor Jesus and His Blessed Mother were. Read the Gospels.

## SPECIAL LETTERS

New Orleans, La.

"Over three years ago I learned that I was pregnant for my fifth child. This would be my fourth Ceasarian Section and everyone said I was crazy to have this baby and that I was going to die in the process. Although I am late in giving thanks I would like now to give my thanks publicly to Father Seelos, St. Gerard and Our Holy Mother, to whom I turned immediately in prayer asking that they intercede for me. I was blessed with a beautiful healthy boy and had not even a pain. In this age when having children seems to appear stupid, I am pleased to be so blessed and have learned through this experience that no matter how hard the way looks God does provide. May Father Seelos, our Holy Mother and this letter help others to love God and gladly give heaven to his children that he so kindly sends us to enjoy on this earth. My prayers are that someday this little son will serve on God's altar."

M. G. F.

New Orleans, La.

"I would like to keep my promise of publication, as a favor was granted to me. I had an eye problem which was finally diagnosed. I am now being treated and have some improvement. Thank you Father Seelos for your intercession and also thanks to St. Lucy."

H. D.

Baton Rouge, La.

"My mother was ill, and feared her report from the doctor. He told her she was completely alright and had nothing to worry about. We had prayed so hard through the intercession of saintly Father Seelos and promised that I would write in thanksgiving."

N. N.

Memphis, Tenn.

"I started praying to Father Seelos about four years ago and each and every prayer was answered. About three years ago, I visited the Seelos Center. Mrs. Bourg showed me around the Center, also St. Alphonsus Church and the tomb of Father Seelos. She also gave me various literature about Father Seelos, which I could distribute to my friends in Memphis . . . . Two months ago the doctor told me my 15 year old son had a hole in his heart, he would have to run tests to determine the size of the hole and see if surgery had to be done. I prayed so hard to Father Seelos that nothing would be wrong with him when the results of the test came in. Once again my prayers were answered. The doctor called and said he is a normal healthy boy and he could participate in football and all other sports. I promised Father Seelos I would continue to spread his literature if my prayers were answered through his intercession."

L. C.

Vancouver, B. C.

"I wish to express my gratitude to Father Seelos for a favor received through his intercession. Our daughter has just had a beautiful baby girl. For a time they feared they could have no children and there was the possibility if they did have, that the child could have an inheritable physical defect. We offered prayers and made novenas to our Blessed Mother, St. Jude and Father Seelos and thank God and these our friends, the baby is perfect and our daughter had a happy and safe delivery."

E. C. L.

### SPECIAL NOTES

We are in the month of May, our Blessed Mother's month. Be sure to say the Rosary daily - and sometimes her litany.

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Read and weep!! To put up the scaffolding in St. Mary's, to plaster and decorate the Church, to air-condition it and make electrical changes, will cost a fortune! We will need a money miracle to do the work. As Father Seelos to work this miracle. It's for his Church, after all.

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Have you seen the brochure - MEET FATHER SEELOS - Write to the Center. We will send you one or many.

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For blessings with the mission crucifix of Father Seelos, please call the Father Seelos Center, 525-2495 or Miss Addie Buhler, 895-6176. Proper arrangements will be made.

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We would like again to remind you of the Mass offered each Wednesday at St. Alphonsus Church at 4:30 P.M. for the petitions placed on the tomb of Father Seelos and also prayers are offered for his speedy canonization.

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