



# FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY

VOLUME XV, NUMBER 12

DECEMBER, 1976



## Christmas Day, 1844

December 25, 1844, was a most memorable date in the life of Father Seelos. It was the day he said his first Mass as a Redemptorist priest. The scene was St. James Church in Baltimore, Maryland. For this purpose he had come from Bavaria only a year and eight months before. He was nearing his twenty-sixth birthday.

In the normal course of events, Father Seelos would have said his first Mass in the church of his baptism, St. Mang's (pictured above in winter dress), in far-off Fussen. His family received this letter from him, noting the event: "I prayed for all of you, and I commended you to Him who is so close to me, whom I touched with my hands and received into my heart."

Joseph Elworthy, C.S.S.R.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS!**

## FATHER SELOS AT THE CRIB

*by Father Grangell, C.S.S.R.*

Virtue for December: Self-denial and love of the Cross.

Patron: St. Matthias, Apostle.

Text: If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. (Matt. 16/24)

The Christmas Crib was a meditation book for Father Seelos. He said he learned perfectly the meaning of self-denial and love of the cross when he saw how our Divine Savior practiced this virtue in the stable of Bethlehem. The Babe of the manger is God, the Lord and Master of all things. He came into the world as a man to save us. He could have been born in a luxurious mansion, with every bodily appetite completely satisfied and with every human comfort and convenience, but He denied Himself every creature want, even a house to live in, a bed to sleep in. His whole life was to be one of voluntary, abject poverty, denying Himself everything, embracing the Cross. He throws out a challenge to the world from His manger-throne: "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself." (Matt. 16/24) and suffer much. Father Seelos accepted the challenge and became a Saint.

During the penitential season of Advent, in his morning meditation, Father Seelos made many resolutions to practice in detail, the virtue of "self-denial and love of cross." Only God knew those resolutions and how they were kept. Father Seelos was generous with God. He gave much, and did not count the cost. He never said: "I can't do that! It's too hard!" He was not a quitter!

We are in the season of Advent 1976! We are preparing for Christmas. Don't make your preparation entirely material; make it spiritual too. Deny yourself something every day for the love of God.

Never say: I would like to give up many things in Advent, but it's too hard to do these things, day after day. (You would for health reasons!) Be generous with God. Do lots of little things — they make perfection.

Give up a few smokes every day, deny your appetite at table and between meals. Skip some sweets, a TV program, a party. Deny yourself some sleep every morning and go to Holy Mass. Suffer a contradiction, a criticism, an insult, a slight, with a smile. Be patient-prayerful in sickness. Do a little unseen penance for a conversion.

**ASK THE BLESSED MOTHER TO MAKE YOUR CHRISTMAS MERRY AND HOLY.**

## SPECIAL LETTERS

New Orleans, La.

"Special health favor granted."

J. A. G.

Laplace, La.

"My grandson was very ill and had to be hospitalized for tests. All proved negative. Thanks to Father Seelos."

M. D.

Baton Rouge, La.

"I have a very sick husband and was desperately in need of help. Through Father Seelos' intercession my prayer was answered."

J. A. B.

New Orleans, La.

"I asked God through the intercession of Father Seelos to please take my husband before me and spare him the suffering he was going through. My prayer was answered."

D. Y. W.

Belle Chasse, La.

"My mother who is elderly, had a major operation, which thanks to Father Seelos' prayers, was very successful. My daughter also had surgery from which she recovered."

M. L. L.

Vacherie, La.

"My grandson was poisoned from the spraying of a chemical on sugar cane. We prayed to Father Seelos asking his intercession. He was brought to the hospital where he recovered. I also had a major operation and returned home within ten days. Thanks to Father Seelos for these two favors which were granted through his intercession."

F. F. P.

Fathers Grangell and Elworthy wish you, a devotee of Father Seelos, a very merry Christmas! We will give you your best gift — something priceless, infinite — you and your dear ones will share in our Christmas Day Masses and all our Masses during the Christmas season. The workers at the Father Seelos Center join us in wishing you a MERRY CHRISTMAS!

MRS LAWRENCE BÜHLER  
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## SPECIAL NOTES

1. The greeting "Merry Christmas" has a Catholic origin. Back in the centuries when England was Catholic, as people went to Holy Mass on this day, they greeted one another with these words: Let us be MERRY and rejoice as we go to CHRIST'S BIRTHDAY MASS! It has been abbreviated to Merry Christmas. It's the Holy Mass that counts on Christmas! The Priest, at the Consecration of the Mass, does what the Blessed Mother did in the stable at Bethlehem. He gives us Christ to be the true Priest and Victim of our sacrifice. Love your Holy Mass. I hope everybody in your family will go to Holy Mass on Christmas.

2. Give the CHERFUL ASCETIC, the life of Father Seelos, to a friend as a Christmas gift.

3. Treat yourself — if possible — to something very inspiring — the 4 P.M. Sunday Mass in beautiful St. Mary's Assumption Church, and venerate the Crucifix of Father Seelos after Mass.

4. Pin a crocheted memento on your sick. Write for them.

5. After you read FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY give it to your neighbor, or keep it and send us the names, addresses and zip codes of some of your friends and we will send them our little paper every month. Spread devotion to Father Seelos. Pray for miracles.

6. For blessings with the Crucifix of Father Seelos, please call Miss Addie Buhler, 895-6176.

M. G. I. L. Y.

## MERRY CHRISTMAS

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We are most grateful to all you good people who send us an offering toward the liquidation of the debt of \$395,000.00 on St. Mary's, Father Seelos Church. God reward you!

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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 judgment of the Holy See and the decision of the Sacred Congregation of the Causes of Saints.

Published with Ecclesiastical Approbation.

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