



FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY

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PROMOTING THE CAUSE

For over a century the remains of Father Francis Seeelos have been buried in St. Mary's Church on the corner of Josephine and Constance Streets in the Irish Channel of New Orleans. His tomb near the altar where he once said Mass has become a center of pilgrimage for his grateful friends from all parts of the world. His cause for canonization is progressing in Rome.

In 1960 the Father Seeelos Center was established to promote the cause in this part of the world. Cards with his picture and a prayer for his canonization, along with cloth mementos that had been touched to his tomb, were and are still being distributed by the Center to encourage people to pray. His missionary crucifix is brought to bless the sick for this blessing, call 895-6176.

In 1962 the Center began to publish a monthly bulletin, "FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY."* It is now in its 25th year. It reaches 36,000 people in all states of the Union.

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HEAVEN

The object of the virtue of hope is heaven. Heaven is the place where we all expect to be for all eternity. In our minds heaven means no suffering, no mourning. It means eternal rest, or even better, eternal life. It means utter peace in God. Once four and half decades ago this present writer was asked by a dying teenager, what is heaven like? The answer then, I know, was vague, and the answer will be no clearer today.

One thing is certain. Jesus promised us eternal life in heaven. "He who feeds on My flesh and drinks My blood has life eternal" (John, 6/54). "Come. You have My Father's blessing! Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt., 25/34).

St. Paul was fortunate. He was caught up in rapture to the third heaven. He tells us he heard words not given to man to utter (2 Cor., 12/4). He could not begin to describe what he, still in mortal flesh, had caught a glimpse of. St. Paul was a man never at a loss for words. But the short vision of heaven was more than a match for him.

One of the great doctors of the Church in medieval times, St. Bernard, gave us some guidelines for the picturing of heaven. He wrote that in heaven we shall find all that our heart can desire, and there will be nothing there that can displease us.

St. John the Evangelist says in heaven we shall see God as He is (1 John, 3/2). This we shall be able to do because through the sanctifying grace of our baptism we have been made sons and daughters of God our Father. The sharing of the divine life begun in our baptism will be transformed into the glory of heaven. Then we shall see God as He is, face to face (1 John, 3/2). No wonder human words fail us when we describe the future life.

In heaven it is God himself who is our reward. God called Abraham to leave his homeland and relatives to go to the land He would show him. God promised Abraham he would be the father of many nations even though at the time he was old and without children. Because of his obedience and unshakable faith, God told him, "I will make your reward very great." (Gen., 15/1).

St. John wrote in his first epistle, "Dearly beloved, we are God's children now; what we shall later be has not yet come to light. We know that when it comes to light we shall be like Him" (1 John, 3/2). Nothing will come between us and God.

Joseph Elworthy, C.S.S.R.

SPECIAL LETTERS

Metairie, La.

On March 7, 1985, I was involved in a serious motorcycle accident while serving as a motorcycle officer for the sheriff's office. As a result of my accident, I crushed my wrist and I also broke my hip and fractured my pelvis. At that time the doctor stated I would be in traction for at least six weeks and at best I would walk with a limp and would not get full use of my wrist. For the next three months I was in traction. During my stay, my mother heard of Father Seelos and so I was blessed with the mission cross of Father Seelos.

I began to undergo an extensive physical therapy program at the hospital. In June, the doctor said I was doing fine, but I would never be able to ride a motorcycle again and was not sure if I could ever serve as a police officer again, except for desk work and light duty work. On July 1 I began to work in the office while still undergoing physical therapy.

On September 4, after another office visit I was told by my doctor my hip was completely healed and he had never seen one heal so well or so fast. He was amazed. I began to jog. I am now back at work, have full use of my wrist and barely a limp. This is my letter of thanksgiving.

IN MEMORIAM

On December 14, 1986 at 4:00 P.M. Father William Grangell, C.S.S.R. left this earth for his eternal reward. He was two weeks shy of his 93rd birthday. The funeral Mass was celebrated in St. Mary's Church, New Orleans on December 17, 1986. His body was buried at Holy Redeemer Mission Center at Lacombe, La. Remember this good priest in your prayers and Masses.

Mail received during October, 1986

Petitions 733 - Thanks 246 - Other 837 - Total 1816

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Published with Ecclesiastical Approbation.

Rev. Joseph Buhler, C.S.S.R., Vice-Postulator; Rev. Joseph Elworthy, C.S.S.R., Director and Editor; Miss Regina Beck and Warren Gautreau, Executive Assistants.

PROMOTING THE CAUSE (Cont'd)

In 1967 doubloons in the New Orleans mode were struck to commemorate the first century of his death.

In 1969 Father Michael Curley, C.S.S.R. of the Baltimore province completed his definitive biography of Father Seelos, "The Cheerful Ascetic." This book is still available at the Center. The Center also has two pamphlet-size biographies of Father Seelos: "Meet Father Seelos" and "Father Francis X. Seelos, C.S.S.R."

In 1985 a documentary video of his life was done and called "Seelos: A Cause to Rejoice." This tape can be copied for the VHS type of video recorder. This tape runs for approximately 45 minutes.** A tape for public television runs for 28 minutes and 45 seconds and is available to any television channel on request.

The Father Seelos Center sponsors a dial-a-message. The number is (504) 586-1803.

In September of this year a room to the rear of the sacristies of St. Mary's was made into a museum. It was designed to house the memorabilia of Father Seelos and to be a resting place for pilgrims who come to visit St. Mary's and the tomb. With due notice we can accommodate small groups for short days of recollection, confession, conferences, holy hours.

The museum is opened on Saturdays immediately after the 3 P.M. vigil Mass, and again on Sunday mornings from 9:30 A.M. to 11:00 A.M. At other times, by appointment.

On Sunday in St. Mary's at 11:00 A.M. we have a prayer service for the canonization of Father Seelos, if this be God's will. It is a time of meditation and silent prayer with exposition and benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament.

* The subscription price of this bulletin is \$2.00

** The price of the VHS documentary is \$45.00

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