



FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY

VOLUME XXVI, NUMBER 8

AUGUST, 1987

FATHER SEELOS AT ST. ALPHONSUS, BALTIMORE 1854 - 1857

At the time Father Seelos was there, St. Alphonsus, Baltimore, was considered as one parish. St. James and St. Michael's were looked on as out-missions. These three churches demanded daily attention, with Masses, confessions, religious instruction and sick calls.

Periodic visits were also made to the new German-Catholic center being developed in the Federal Hill district with Holy Cross church. For a dozen years the Redemptorists also visited the emerging St. Joseph's Catholic center on Belair Road.

The priests of St. Alphonsus also had charge of the black Catholics who numbered between five and six hundred. They looked after the spiritual needs of the Sisters of Providence who ran the school for blacks.

The Redemptorists heard the confessions of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, the Sisters of Providence, and the Carmelite Sisters. They said Mass for the Visitation Sisters and the Sisters of Charity. They made occasional visits to Westminster and New Freedom in Pennsylvania and to Ellicott Mills and Catonsville in Maryland.

All together, there were 1300 children in school, the largest enrollment in the city. They were scattered in several buildings under the instruction of different groups. For this giant parish Father Seelos had the services of seven priests.

Joseph Elworthy, C.S.S.R.



St. Alphonsus' Church

THE HUMILITY OF JESUS

It is not too much to claim that there is one lesson more than others that Jesus wishes to impress upon us: that lesson is humility. To attract our attention, Jesus tell us to learn it from Him: "Learn of Me, for I am meek and humble of heart" (Matt. 11/29).

Charity is the crowning of all the virtues, but humility is their foundation, the only sure rock on which the edifice of true holiness can be built. Our Savior knows that without humility we shall not be able to receive His teachings, or put them into practice. Hence He holds before us His own example and urges us to practice it.

An ancient writer (Cornelius a Lapide) represents Jesus as saying: "Learn humility of Me, for this is my virtue, dear to Me above all others. In coming down from heaven and taking upon Myself the most abject poverty and the shameful death of the cross, I exalted this virtue to such a degree that no other virtue shines with greater luster either in My life or in My death."

Let us give heed then to the teaching of Jesus on the importance of humility. Before His coming the world did not know it; since His coming, no one has practiced it, save by walking in His footsteps and being attached to Him by an ardent love.

To understand the humility of Jesus Christ it would be necessary to measure the Divinity itself and the immense distance which separates God from His creatures. This we cannot do, but we do know that our Savior bridged this infinite space by an astounding act of humility. St. Paul says (Phil. 2/7): "He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made into the likeness of men," and this was but the beginning of a life of humility. From heaven He passes into the womb of Mary. Then from the womb of Mary to the manger. Then there are the humiliations of obedience. Though He was the Creator and Lord of all men, He willed to be subject to Mary and Joseph, His earthly parents, but also to the very men who would so cruelly put Him to death.

Help me to bear with patience the humiliations that come to me through my daily life and work.

George Corbett, C.S.S.R.

SPECIAL LETTERS

St. Louis, Missouri

This letter is long overdue. Around Christmas of '82 I went shopping, leaving my two-year old girl and two-month old baby with my husband. My husband warmed the baby bottle in the microwave. When he took it out with the baby in his left arm, the bottle exploded and the contents splashed over his left arm and the baby's left foot. My husband rushed him to the emergency room right away. The baby was severely burned. When I got to the hospital, the doctor told us that we could take the baby home. But the next day the blisters had deepened and burst. He was kept at the hospital.

My mother brought me prayers and mementos of Father Seelos. We prayed continually and invoked Father Seelos' intercession. The doctors were very guarded in their prognosis. They predicted severe disfigurement of the foot with probable skin grafts to cover the baby's toes. They said I could take the baby home probably by mid-January if I learned the technique to clean and bandage the foot.

However, on New Year's eve I was told I could bring the baby home. We were overjoyed but still expected skin grafts. When I came back for the first check-up the doctors said the leg was fine. The skin of the foot was scarred some, but the baby could bend his toes and flex his ankle. The skin has continued to grow with him. There was no need of skin grafts or surgery of any kind.

As of the end of 1987 everything was fine with the child. Praise God and thanks to the intercession of Father Seelos.

Corpus Christi, Texas

This is a letter of thanksgiving that I have promised. I had a farm to lease and could find no one to lease it. I tried to enroll in a special farm program. It is a government program that permits one to sign for as long as ten years. I was told by the government agency that I would have to take the chance of being accepted. After a week of waiting and praying, I received news from the agency that my farm had been accepted for the program. I know that Father Seelos prayers helped me to get on the program.

Mail received during April, 1987

Petitions 415 - Thanksgivings 151 - Other 623 - Total 1189

Dial-a-message calls: 519.

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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.

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.

SPECIAL NOTES

1. Father Seelos died in New Orleans on October 4, 1867. On October 4, 1987 we shall commemorate the 120th anniversary of his death with the annual memorial Mass at 11:30 A.M. in St. Mary's Assumption Church in the Irish Channel of New Orleans.
 2. The Father Seelos Museum is open Saturdays after the 3:00 P.M. vigil Mass, and Sundays from 9:30 to 11:00 A.M. At other times by appointment.
 3. Every Sunday morning at 11:00 there is a prayer service for the canonization of Father Seelos. It consists of exposition and benediction of the most Blessed Sacrament, a brief meditation on the life of Christ, and time for private prayer. There is an opportunity to venerate the mission crucifix of Father Seelos. It is followed by the 11:30 Sunday Mass.
 4. Start your day with a spiritual message from the Father Seelos Center: just dial (504) 586-1803. Mr. Cletus Stack records a message for each day of the week.
 5. For blessings of the sick with the Father Seelos mission crucifix, call Miss Addie Buhler at (504) 895-6176.
 6. The subscription price for FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY is \$2.00 per year.
 7. The TV documentary, "Seelos - A Cause to Rejoice" is available for VHS at \$45.00 per copy.
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