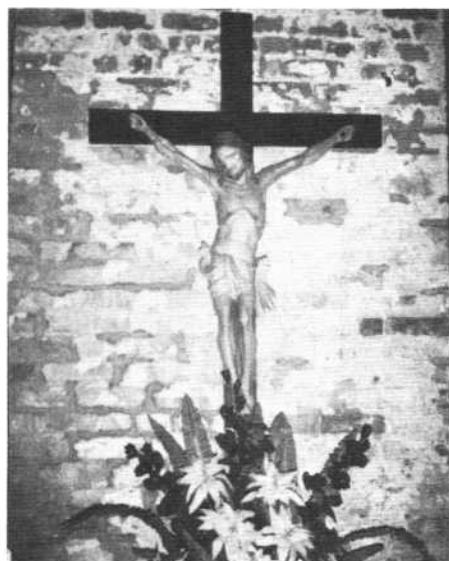




FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY

VOLUME XXVIII, NUMBER 3

MARCH 1989



LOVE FOR GOD

The crucifix pictured here is a focal point of the Father Seelos Museum. Its age and origin are unknown, but from its appearance it has been in the rectory for over a century. The season is Lent. The crucifix reminds us of the love we owe our Redeemer.

Father Seelos loved God. To one nun he confided, "I never knew what it was to love anyone but God." Another nun testified, "He told me simply and confidentially how he felt himself drawn to God." Father Curley adds, "A life of complete dedication to God and the things of God was his aim, but not a fearsome, tense dedication that froze affection in the beholder. His love of God had not insulated him from his fellowman."

* * * * *

FATHER SEELOS DAY IN NEW ORLEANS, APRIL 30

The second annual Father Seelos Day in New Orleans will be celebrated on Sunday, April 30, with a solemn Mass in St. Mary's Church at 11:30 A.M., followed by a dinner at Masson's Restaurant, 7200 Pontchartrain Boulevard, New Orleans, at 1 P.M. Tickets for the dinner will be \$20.00 and will be available at the Center, phone 525-2495.

THE SCHOOL OF THE CRUCIFIED

To deepen their love for God all the saints went to the school of the crucified. St. John wrote in his gospel, "God so loved the world that He gave His only Son" (3, 16). St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "I would speak of nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified" (1 Cor. 2/2). There are few meditations to equal the one made at the foot of the cross.

As we gaze upon the figure on the cross, we can ask ourselves who is he who is giving his life? It is Jesus of Nazareth, son of Joseph and Mary, as his fellow townspeople knew Him, Jesus the Son of God become man through the Blessed Virgin Mary, as St. Luke recounted, the Redeemer who would bring salvation to the world.

Why does He hang there? It is not because He is a criminal. Though He was accused of saying He was a king, He told Pilate His kingdom was not of this world (John, 18/36). He was there because it was His Father's will and His. Jesus said in the garden of Gethsemani the night He was arrested, "Do you not suppose I can call on My Father to provide at a moment's notice more than twelve legions of angels? But then how would the Scriptures be fulfilled which say it must happen this way?" (Matt., 26/53-54).

Jesus the King had a cross for His throne, thorns for His crown, nails for His scepter and footstool. Sweat, blood and spittle covered His body. What pains tortured His body and soul!

His last words were directed for the most part to those around Him and to His Father in heaven. He prayed for the forgiveness of His executioners. He promised heaven to the good thief hanging on His right. He entrusted His Mother to the care of St. John. He cried out once, "I thirst," and then refused the vinegar and gall they gave Him to drink (John, 19/28; Matt., 27/28).

Twice He prayed aloud to His Father from the Psalms, "My God, My God, why have You abandoned Me?" (22/2), and again, "Father, into Your hands I commend My spirit" (31/6). Finally He uttered a loud cry and said, "It is finished." (John 19/30). And then He died.

After his death His side was pierced with a lance and water and blood flowed out (John, 19/34). We can only repeat, Behold the heart that has loved us so much!

Joseph Elworthy, C.SS.R.

SPECIAL LETTERS

Gretna, LA

I'd like to share with you the most difficult decision that my husband and I ever had to make. My family was exposed to chicken pox at the beginning of the year. Not having the disease in my childhood, I also caught the chicken pox. During this time I went to my doctor and took a pregnancy test. The following day he called me and told me that I was pregnant. I hung up the phone and told my husband the good news. We were both very excited and were getting ready to celebrate when the phone rang again. It was my doctor advising me to seriously consider an abortion because he felt the chances of the baby being normal were very slim. He also said I would have to go to a clinic since he himself would not perform the abortion. My husband and I were shocked at his advice. We consulted with several pediatricians and their advice was the same — abort the baby because chicken pox during a pregnancy causes abnormalities. It was then we consulted with our priest. He advised us to keep the baby and have faith in God. He said that a child is God's gift. He called ours a "special child." A friend of mine who had chicken pox during pregnancy chose to abort the baby. This scared us because we did not know what to expect in the future. But our decision was final.

Eight months later on October 12, 1988, we were blessed with our beautiful and healthy baby boy, Andrew Joseph. He is perfectly normal. He is truly God's very "special" gift to all of us. Thank you, Father Seelos and the Blessed Virgin Mary for answering our prayers and guiding us in our decision and giving us a healthy beautiful baby.

New Orleans, LA

I am grateful to Father Seelos for his intercession in the delivery of my great grand-daughter. The doctor said she would have cranial synostosis, requiring skull surgery. When the baby was born by Caesarean section, she was fine — no cranial synostosis. My daughter and I feel prayer was the cause of the miracle and Father Seelos played a prominent part.

New Orleans, LA

I want to thank Father Seelos for saving my life after three major operations in the last three years. The doctors say it is a miracle that I am living today. I will continue to pray to Father Seelos.

Mail for November, 1988:

Petitions: 550 Thanksgivings: 229 Others: 533 Total: 1312
Dial-a-message: 627 Volunteer hours: 596

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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; Mrs. Angela Boudreaux and Mr. Cletus Stack, Executive Assistants.

SPECIAL NOTES

1. The Father Seelos Center offers the following:
 - a. "The Cheerful Ascetic," a biography. Price: \$10.00
 - b. "Seelos: A Cause to Rejoice," a TV documentary on Father Seelos. VHS only: \$45.00
 - c. A daily spiritual message: dial (504) 586-1803.
 - d. Pamphlets, prayer-cards, mementos.
 - e. Blessings of the sick with the mission cross of Father Seelos. Call Miss Addie Buhler: 895-6176.
 - f. Pilgrimages to St. Mary's Church, the tomb and museum of Father Seelos. For further details and appointments, call the Center: (504) 525-2495.
 - g. A prayer service for the canonization of Father Seelos is held every Sunday at 11 A.M., followed by the 11:30 parish Mass.
 - h. "Nothing Short of A Miracle," a book by Patricia Treece. In it there are two chapters about the cause of Father Seelos. Available at the Center. Price: \$7.95
2. We thank you for your cooperation in sending us the price of a subscription for one year: \$2.00. We are now well into a new year.

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