



# FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY

VOLUME XXVIII, NUMBER 5

MAY 1989

## PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

For over 120 years St. Mary's Assumption Church in the Irish Channel of New Orleans and Father Francis Xavier Seelos have been well nigh inseparable. People have come from all over the world to visit this beautiful and venerable temple of God and to pray at the tomb of His servant. The Father Seelos Museum is just a little over two years in existence, but already thousands have viewed the memorabilia of the holy priest who, we hope, will one day be canonized.



FATHER BUHLER

This month something new will be added when two Redemptorist priests who are working for the cause of Father Seelos, Father Joseph Buhler, vice-postulator, and Father Joseph Elworthy, director of the Center and editor of this bulletin, will mark the fiftieth anniversary of their ordination to the priesthood. On Saturday, May 27, they will offer a Mass of thanksgiving at 3 P.M. in St. Mary's Church.

In this Mass they will be joined by their classmates: Fathers William Mangan of Seattle, Washington, Louis Miller of Ferguson, Missouri, Paul Schwarz of Chicago, Illinois, and James Sullivan of Detroit, Michigan. Most Reverend Stanley G. Ott, bishop of Baton Rouge, will address the jubilarians after the Communion of the Mass.

All the readers of FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY are invited to attend this jubilee Mass. Afterwards there will be a reception in the garden of St. Mary's, weather permitting.



FATHER ELWORTHY

## **POVERTY: NUMBER ONE BEATITUDE**

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5/3).

The number ONE listing of the eight beatitudes is POVERTY — in its singular understanding — the POOR in SPIRIT. The poor — and millions there are — without the material "extras" of this life — do not by that classification merit the assurance of heaven. The emphasis rests on one's attitude toward worldly possessions and means of life-support. Detachment — selflessness — freedom from material goods and sensual pleasures, therein do we find the fullness of this beatitude.

Our beloved Redeemer in His life from birth to death has given us the example. Poverty is written across the whole scene of His birth in Bethlehem. He was not born at home, nor in the comforts and care of a hospital, but in the shelter of a damp smelly cave. His first friends to visit Him were the lowly shepherds. On the cross, starkly naked, bloody and scarred, our Savior, bereft of all material goods and abandoned by His friends, commends His spirit to the Father. From his pulpit of love He embraces all the shortcomings, denials and absence of material goods.

The Church has always proclaimed a love of preference for the poor. Poverty is indeed a matter of deprivation of money and what it can buy. It is also a matter of spiritual impoverishment, a lack of human rights and dignity. There is a special and pitiable form of poverty, the poverty of selfishness, the poverty of those who have and will not share, of those who could be rich by giving, but choose to be poor by keeping everything they have.

The Church has a very special love for the "poor in spirit." From the words of Christ the Church knows that the poor will always be with us. Too true it is that when the pursuit of wealth is treated as the supreme good, human beings become imprisoned in the hardening of their hearts and the closing of their minds.

Jesus told the rich young man that if he would be perfect he should sell what he possessed and give it to the poor. Unfortunately after a short reflection he left our Lord and went his way. Wealth can be an obstacle to the love of God and neighbor.

The poor in spirit realize that all things material are passing and count for little in the measure of God's promises of eternal life. They remember the assuring words of the Master, "I assure you, as often as you did it for one of My least brothers, you did it for Me" (Matt. 25/40).

John A. Hensgen, C.S.S.R.

## SPECIAL LETTERS

Chicago, IL

When I found out that my daughter was hooked on cocaine and would use up her whole check on the drug, I was severely hurt and sad. I felt as though we had completely lost her. Then I prayed sincerely — asking Father Seelos to help us. I believed in his intercession with the Lord. My daughter has not used cocaine in about 18 or 20 months. I feel great!

Baton Rouge, LA

I write this letter in thanksgiving for a favor. I had pneumonia during the holidays and was in the hospital for a week. A month later x-rays were taken and it was discovered I had a small spot at the top of the left lung and that I would have to have a cat-scan to see further.

Yesterday I went for the cat-scan and the spot was nothing more than a mole near my collar bone that showed up in the back. I have prayed to Father Seelos and the Sacred Heart since I was sick and during the cat-scan. I thank them with all my heart. I am 70 years old and I was very nervous during all this. I am so grateful.

Avondale, LA

I can't begin to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to Father Seelos for his intercession with God in my behalf for the past twenty-five years. I was first introduced to Father Seelos when my daughter was born with spina bifida and was told she would not survive. Since that day I have been praying to Father Seelos. All my prayers have been answered over the years.

God bless you, Father Seelos, and may you be canonized soon.

New Orleans, LA

I promised this letter of thanksgiving if Father Seelos would help my son through a severe depression. My son had lost all self-confidence and was talking of dropping out of school. I prayed that Father Seelos would guide him through this difficult and emotional trauma. Within a week my son showed marked improvement. He now has a more positive attitude and self-esteem and is actively pursuing a career goal.

Thanks to Father Seelos for his intercession.

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Mail, January, 1989:

Petitions: 632      Thanksgivings: 342      Other: 822      Total: 1796  
Volunteer hours: 718      Dial-a-message: 672

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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.

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## 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 of the life of Father Seelos. VHS cassette only: \$45.00
  - c. "Nothing Short of A Miracle," a book on the healing power of the saints, written by Patricia Treece. In it there are two chapters on Father Seelos. Price: \$7.95 plus postage. Available at the Center.
  - d. Pamphlets, prayer-cards, mementos.
  - e. A daily spiritual message: dial (504) 586-1803.
  - f. Blessings of the sick with the mission crucifix of Father Seelos. Call Miss Addie Buhler: 895-6176.
  - g. Pilgrimages to St. Mary's Church, the tomb and the museum of Father Seelos. For further details and appointments, call the Center: (504) 525-2495.
  - h. PRAYER SERVICE FOR THE CANONIZATION OF FATHER SEELOS: every Sunday morning at 11 A.M. in St. Mary's Church. It is followed by the 11:30 parish Mass.
2. A SUBSCRIPTION TO THE FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY IS TWO DOLLARS PER YEAR. We do appreciate your letting us know you want to continue to receive the bulletin. Please use the form below for changes of address, corrections, duplications and renewals. Please return the lower portion of this page to us.

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