



FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY

VOLUME XXX, NUMBER 8

AUGUST, 1991

AUGUST 1 — FEAST OF ST. ALPHONSUS

St. Alphonsus Maria de Liguori was the founder of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, the Redemptorists. This Congregation of priests and brothers came into existence on November 9, 1732, in Scala, a little town in southern Italy on the Amalfi coast of the Mediterranean. Before he was ordained a priest, Alphonsus was a successful lawyer in the courts of Naples. He has been declared a doctor of the Church because of his theological writings, especially in the field of moral theology. He wrote over a hundred books. His style was simple and intelligible. He was also a poet, a musician, an architect, a painter — in a word, a genius. In his memory and under his protection the first Redemptorists in New Orleans built this beautiful church. It was consecrated in 1858.



ST. ALPHONSUS CHURCH — NEW ORLEANS

HUMILITY

St. Clement Hofbauer was the first Redemptorist priest who was not Italian. He came from central Europe to Rome where he met the Redemptorists, became one of them and then carried the banner of St. Alphonsus across the Alps, first to Warsaw, then to Vienna. The greater part of his life as a Redemptorist was spent in seeking permission from the state government to make a permanent foundation of his religious congregation. He became one of the patron saints of Vienna. Once when he was in the process of building an orphanage, he stopped a man on the street and asked him for a donation. For an answer the man spat in his face. Undaunted, the saint said, "That's for me. Now give me something for my orphans." As we say, that took a lot of humility.

Humility is a difficult virtue to practice, yet, as Cardinal Newman points out, it's a most important one. Humility is the virtue that puts us in the proper relationship with God. We are all God's creatures. All our gifts and talents have been given us by God. Doubtless we have worked at developing them, but it was the Creator who made them possible and operable. Many

centuries ago St. Paul asked the Corinthians, "Name something that you have not received. If, then, you have received it, why are you boasting as if it were your own?" (I Cor. 4/7).

In the light of that quote from St. Paul, perhaps Dizzy Dean, the famous pitcher for the Cardinals Gas House Gang of the thirties, set the virtue of humility back some decades when he said, "If you can do it, it ain't braggin'."

It is difficult to know if one is humble, because as soon as someone says he is humble, pride seems to have taken over. Those of us who in years long past read the novels of Charles Dickens remember a character he created, Uriah Heep, a creature almost loathsome in his obsequiousness. He was always reminding people how humble he was; he made a mockery of a great virtue.

How necessary is this virtue for all the other virtues can be seen from Jesus' parable about the Pharisee and the tax collector who went up to the temple to pray. "The Pharisee with head unbowed prayed in this fashion: 'I give you thanks, O God, that I am not like the rest of men - grasping, crooked, adulterous - or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week, I pay tithes on all I possess.' The other man, however, kept his distance, not even daring to raise his eyes to heaven. All he did was beat his breast and say, 'O God, be merciful to me a sinner.' Believe me, this man went home from the temple justified but the other did not." (Luke, 18/9-14).

Joseph Elworthy, C.S.S.R.

SPECIAL NOTES

1. The Father Seelos Center offers the following:
 - a. "The Cheerful Ascetic," a biography of Father Seelos. 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: \$8.95 plus postage.
 - d. "The Sanctified Body," by Patricia Treece, a study of the physical phenomena that accompany persons who are close to God. Price: \$17.95 plus \$2.00 for postage.
 - e. Pamphlets, prayer-cards, mementos.
 - f. A daily spiritual message: dial (504) 586-1803.
 - g. Blessings of the sick with the mission crucifix of Father Seelos. Call: Mrs. Yvonne Sevin, 888-1250, or Mrs. Gerry Heigle, 482-4404.
 - h. Pilgrimages to St. Mary's Church, the tomb and museum of Father Seelos. For further details and appointments, call the Center: (504) 525-2495.
 - i. The 11:30 A.M. PARISH MASS IN ST. MARY'S CHURCH IS FOR THE INTENTIONS OF THE FATHER SEELOS CENTER. Veneration of the mission crucifix of Father Seelos after the Mass.
2. A SUBSCRIPTION TO THE FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY BULLETIN IS TWO DOLLARS PER YEAR. Please let us know you want to continue to receive this bulletin. Please use the form below for changes of address, corrections, duplications and renewals. Return the lower portion of this page to us.

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SPECIAL LETTERS

Ehoboth Beach, DE

I am long overdue in writing of the many blessings Father Seelos has bestowed on my family, especially my 21 year old son. He had fallen away from the Church and Our Lord. In March of 1990 I was on a visit to New Orleans. It was the Sunday before Palm Sunday and I had arranged to attend Mass at St. Mary's. My grandmother lived in that area as a child and actually went to school there in the early 1900's. I wrote in the request book and asked Father Seelos to bring our family together and to help my son find God. He has a drug and alcohol problem. Later that evening I called home from the hotel. My husband had just returned from making his Easter duty with my youngest son. He told me he was shocked to see our eldest son walk into church and go to confession, for the first time in many years. He has slowly started to pull himself up, but has had some rough times.

Then in February of this year, I was in New Orleans again and went again to St. Mary's. Again I wrote my request in the book. When I returned to Delaware I found that my son had gone off in a deep depression. I knew Father Seelos and the Blessed Mother would intercede for him. Within days of my return my son admitted himself to a Detox program and returned to church. He is now living with us and we are finally a caring family. Thank you, Father Seelos. Let me never doubt your intercession for me and my family. I hope someday to be able to attend church at St. Mary's on a more regular basis.

Creve Coeur, MO

I have been troubled for nearly two years by an unsold house that was both a worry and a financial hardship. I hesitated to pray for a buyer, because a purely financial matter didn't seem a worthy prayer to me, at first.

As time went on, though, the long delay caused more problems, and I finally prayed to Father Seelos and offered a public thanks for his aid in a successful resolution to our problems with this house. I was very blessed to find a buyer and have now concluded the sale. My worries are over.

I have always had my prayers to Father Seelos answered. He is always a comfort to me in times of trouble. This is the third time I have turned to him.

Mail, April, 1991

Petitions: 525 Thanksgivings: 278 Other: 590 Total: 1393

Dial-a-messages: 751

Volunteer Hours: 1195

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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.