



FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY

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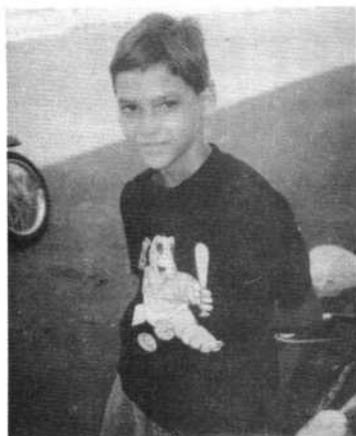
FATHER LASSO LEADS THE MASS IN MANAUS

FIFTY YEARS ON THE AMAZON

This summer your present writer was privileged to attend the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of American Redemptorists on the Amazon river of Brazil. I was there as the representative of the Redemptorist vice-province of New Orleans and also of the founding community of six. Our superior general and one of his consultors came from Rome for the event, seven Redemptorists who had served as missionaries in the region came from the United States, representatives from other Redemptorist provinces and vice-provinces in Brazil itself swelled the group of visitors for the event.

The program for the celebration was an ambitious one, something which had to be a first. It began with a journey of ten days on the great river itself. There were at least 30 passengers who slept in hammocks on the open deck where they also spent the day and ate their meals. The boat went from Manaus to Coari and back, with stops at Anama, Anori, Manacapuru, Codajaz. There were grand festivities in Manacapuru, Codajaz, and Coari. The final and principal commemoration of the fifty years was held in Manaus on a day when the temperature reading was in the sixties Fahrenheit. Almost unbelievable. Over sixty concelebrants joined the superior, Father Lasso de la Veiga in the Mass. The Archbishop of Manaus was there and also four bishops, all Redemptorists, two Brazilians, two Americans.

The reader of FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY may well wonder why such a daring and magnificent festivity was undertaken. First of all, it took place in one of the least inhabited regions of the world, on the world's greatest river, in the midst of the largest jungle, rain forest, if you will, that the world knows, and just a



ANTONIO OF COARI

degree or two south of the equator. Manaus, the capital of the state of Amazonas, was fifty years ago a city of 100,000 people. It has become a metropolis now of 1,600,000. Manacapuru and Coari were villages of 1000 inhabitants, now they are cities of 30 to 40 thousands.

Fifty years ago the stretch of the Amazon from Manaus to Coari, more than three hundred miles, was without benefit of resident priests. Fifty years later it is now a diocese (in its infancy) with its own bishop and more than a dozen priests and many religious sisters and brothers working for the scattered inhabitants of the jungle.

More than ever, the need is for more vocations to the priesthood and the religious life. I took the picture of Antonio (above) because I was intrigued with the dinosaur, maybe it's Barney, on the front of his tee-shirt. After a little conversation Antonio said he wanted to be a priest. Maybe because of the festivities he was attracted to the missionary life. Back in Manaus I showed this picture to two of our young Brazilian Redemptorists who are studying theology. "That's our cousin," they replied.

May I ask a favor of you? This month I would normally be writing something about self-denial and love of the cross. Would you please offer up the hurts and bumps and pains of your daily life for an increase of native vocations in that fruitful field just below the equator. The Lord be with you.

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 - one half hour long. VHS cassette: \$20.00 (includes postage).
 - c. "Nothing Short of A Miracle," a book on the healing power of the saints, by Patricia Treece. Two of the chapters are on Father Seelos. Price: \$8.95 plus postage.
 - d. Pamphlets, prayer-cards, mementos.
 - e. Blessings of the sick with the mission crucifix of Father Seelos. Call: Mrs. Yvonne Sevin, 888-1250, Mrs. Gerry Heigle, 482-4404, or Mr. Jack Pitkin, 524-6591.
 - f. A daily spiritual message: dial (504) 586-1803.
 - g. Pilgrimages to St. Mary's Church, the tomb and museum of Father Seelos. For further details and appointments, call the Center (504) 525-2495.
 - h. Veneration of the mission crucifix every Sunday after the 11:30 A.M. Mass in St. Mary's Assumption Church.
 - i. Every week a Mass is celebrated for the intention of the Father Seelos Center.
2. A SUBSCRIPTION TO THE FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY BULLETIN IS THREE DOLLARS PER YEAR. Please let us know you want to continue receiving this bulletin. Please use the form below for changes of address, corrections, duplications and renewals. Return the lower portion of this page to us. Include your old address.

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SPECIAL LETTERS

Metairie, LA

Seven weeks ago I developed a "mild", sore throat with a flaring laryngitis. My doctor diagnosed the problem as an acute sore throat and gave me a massive dose of penicillin to last one week. When I called to say there was no improvement, he gave me another drug for a week. Along with some relatives and friends, I challenged the treatment. Eventually I went to a specialist. Initial tests disclosed a roughness on one side of my vocal cord. The doctor predicted it would be cancerous - he was 99% sure with an alarming rate of accuracy.

I was about to have my operation for a biopsy when a good friend of mine asked me to take and keep the little gold memento of Father Seelos with me throughout the surgery. I not only did that, but, after touching the cloth to my throat, I immediately became "hungry for God". I made a genuine and sincere and, I think, an outstanding confession to the Redemptorist chaplain. He forgave me my sins (water over the dam), anointed me with the sacrament of the sick, wished me God-speed and left. I have never been more comfortable in my life (age: 67 years). Today I learned the results of my biopsy according to the lab report: BENIGN - diagnosis: "chronic laryngitis!!" Incredible but true, and my deepest gratitude to my friend, to Father Clement, to Father Seelos for interceding in my behalf, and, of course, to our Lord who smiled on His black sheep returning to the fold. I firmly believe this to be a miracle. In my own estimation I can assure you.

Dallas, TX

I have subscribed to FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY for many years. Someone had given me a copy long, long ago, and I have continued to read it and enjoy it very much. I have passed it on to others hoping they would pray that Father Seelos would be declared a saint. I also have the book, "The Cheerful Ascetic."

In 1966 my husband had cancer of the sinus which was successfully treated at the Anderson Hospital in Houston. After his trip back to Dallas where we live, we went to New Orleans to pray before the tomb of Father Seelos and to place our petition for a complete recovery on it. We still pray and thank Father Seelos for his intercession with God for his recovery. We pray that he will be soon declared a saint.

I would appreciate your prayers to Father Seelos for my health. May God bless all those who work for the preservation of St. Mary's Church.

Massapequa, N.Y.

In May my sister and I were involved in a very serious accident. It was truly a miracle that neither of us nor the driver of the other car was injured. My sister and I were wearing mementos of Father Seelos and the Miraculous Medal. We pray as a family to Father Seelos every day.

Mail, August, 1993

Petitions: 589 Thanksgivings: 259 Other: 491 Total: 1339

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Volunteer Hours: 1091

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