

FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY

VOLUME XXXII, NUMBER 3

MARCH, 1993

BISHOP OTT SAYS FAREWELL

One of Bishop Ott's last acts as bishop was to celebrate a memorial Mass for Father Seelos in the church of St. Gerard in Baton Rouge, his see city. As an auxiliary bishop in New Orleans, he often offered the memorial Mass for Father Seelos in St. Mary's on the first Sunday of October. When he became the ordinary of the diocese of Baton Rouge, he was invariably the celebrant of a memorial Mass for Father Seelos on the second Sunday of October.

For nearly two years Bishop Stanley J. Ott suffered with cancer of the liver. During that time he wrote to the Center, "Every night I say the prayer for Father Seelos' canonization." He died on November 28 and was buried in the courtyard of his cathedral on December 5.

The picture above was taken on October 10 as he left St. Gerard's Church. It was his goodbye. May this good and gentle bishop be at peace. He will be remembered. R. I. P.



(PHOTO: RUBY HEBERT)

PENANCE AND LOVE OF GOD

Many years ago there was among us in the seminary one young man who led a very exemplary life. Before he reached his majority he died a sudden death. A short biography was written about him with a view of pursuing his cause for canonization. One of the professors of the seminary read the biography and made the comment that there was no evidence in the young man's life of penance or sorrow for sin. This is not to say that there was not. His

remark merely points out the necessity of penance in our lives, no matter how close we may be to God.

The command to love God above all things with all one's heart and mind and soul is very demanding and has to be a formidable task for all of us. Yet God knows how weak and fragile we are, and how far we are from the perfection that the fulfillment of this law would push us toward.

We are familiar with the old adage, to err is human. The saints were only too conscious of their imperfections and sins. St. Mary Magdalene and St. Augustine are good examples of penance, because from being sinners they became saints. St. Peter denied his Master three times on the night He was arrested and so deep was his sorrow for that denial that it is said that his tears wore grooves on his face.

St. Aloysius Gonzaga, St. Alphonsus Liguori, St. Gerard Majella all preserved their baptismal innocence, yet to read the prayers they themselves composed would lead us to believe that they were the greatest of sinners so often did they cry out for forgiveness.

For our part, therefore, we must practice our love for God by first being sorry for our sins. No matter how great our desire to serve God by obeying His command to love Him above all things, we are all mindful of the possibility of our falling from grace. Certainly we have sinned and certainly we need to say many times over, Have mercy on me, O Lord, I am a sinner. Since we are sorry for our past mistakes, we show ourselves willing to make the great act of love, My God, I love 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. 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. 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: Mrs. Yvonne Sevin, 888-1250, Mrs. Gerry Heigle, 482-4404, or Mr. Jack Pitkin, 524-6591.
 - 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. The 11:30 A.M. SUNDAY 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 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

On January 29, 1972, I was taken to East Jefferson General Hospital with massive heart failure. It was determined that the left side (left ventricle) of my heart was damaged and not functioning. After leaving the hospital, I was put on medication and told that I could not perform any work and to avoid all physical exertion. This went on for twenty years.

In the meantime more restrictions were placed on my everyday activities. I have been on Social Security disability during the full time. I also had several periods of rapid heart beat (tachycardia), which necessitated even more and various kinds of medication. Last year I developed life-threatening high blood pressure and was informed that I had a "silent heart attack."

During the year I became weaker and weaker, and could barely walk. I became more despondent each day. On January 7, 1992, I asked my wife to take me to the Father Seelos Center to be blessed with the crucifix. Shortly after, I began to improve steadily. Three weeks later when I visited my doctor, he informed me that I no longer needed any heart medication and was able to perform any physical activity that I wished (after twenty years of total disability). All thanks to Father Seelos' intercession.

Slidell, LA

I am an LPN who has been trying to return to school for three years. My financial and parental obligations would always overshadow my efforts. Also, I have been out of school for sixteen years and was terrified to attempt the ACT again. I called several institutions which offered a refresher course, but the tuition was astronomical. I prayed to Father Seelos on Friday, October 2, 1992, at 11 A.M. and burned a candle in his name. On Sunday, October 4, I also prayed and burned a candle, but not for myself or my circumstance, but for him to be canonized. Later that day I read in a newspaper that Cable TV would be airing a program to prepare students to take the ACT.

I feel confident that I will do well on it. My financial situation is not good, but there are people worse off than I, and it seems whenever I need money for food, I pray to Father Seelos and he provides for us (through his intercession). Thank you a million times, Father Seelos. I can't wait till I can pray to Saint Seelos. I hope it is God's will that it will be soon.

Houston, TX

I have promised publication because, thanks to Father Seelos, my test results were negative. He never fails me in anything I ask of him.

Mail, November, 1992

Petitions: 630 Thanksgivings: 431 Other: 802 Total: 1863

Dial-a-messages: 806

Volunteer Hours: 1008

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