



FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY

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JANUARY, 1996

SAINT ALPHONSUS 1696-1996



Statue of St. Alphonsus in St. Alphonsus Church in Baltimore. Father Seelos was pastor, 1854-1858.

This year Redemptorists around the world are commemorating the third centenary of their founder's birth. He was born on September 27, 1696 in the kingdom of Naples. The Redemptorists are organizing a pilgrimage to Italy for this occasion. Our readers are invited to join them as they visit the venerable places in Naples associated with St. Alphonsus and the beginnings of his Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, places such as Scala on the beautiful Amalfi coast, and Pagani, Ciorani, and Materdomini. The pilgrimage will be crowned with a visit to Redemptorist headquarters in Rome and

an audience with the Holy Father. If anyone is interested in such a trip, please write the Father Seelos Center. Further information will be sent to those who ask.

“LORD, TO WHOM SHALL WE GO?”

Faith in the Christian sense is the acceptance of God's word for things revealed to us beyond our knowing by naked reason. Faith is the first step on the way to eternal life. For the believer faith is a step in the dark, perhaps more like a leap. As children, how many of us would have entered into a dark room without some reassuring voice calling us to come? If we did not recognize that voice and have confidence in the owner, we never would have entered that room.

Faith, then is our response to God's word. Faith speaks more for the person believed than for the one who merely accepts His word. When we say, I believe, we pay tribute to the God who created us and who loved us so much that He sent us His only Son to live among us, to die on the cross for us and to rise glorious and triumphant from the grave three days afterward. It is this good God whose words we take for the tenets of our faith.

A great example of faith is St. Peter. One day Peter with his brother, Andrew, and their partners, James and John, was working on their fishing gear, when this man called Jesus passed by. He invited them to follow Him and become fishers of men. Immediately, with Peter in the lead, no doubt, they left the tools of their profession, and followed Jesus, the one of commanding presence. They responded to their new vocation and never turned back.

On another occasion, Jesus appeared to them at night walking on water. In a burst of enthusiasm, Peter asked Jesus to bid him come to Him. Jesus complied

(Continued on next page)

and Peter began to walk on the water. When the water became rough, Peter lost confidence and began to sink. Jesus came to his rescue and chided him gently, "O you of little faith."

When Jesus and the apostles were in the neighborhood of Caesarea Philippi, He questioned them about His standing with the people. They replied that some thought He was Elijah, one of the prophets, or even John the Baptist come back to life. Then He put the question directly to them, "And you, who do you say I am?" There was no hesitation on the part of Peter. "You are the Messiah, the Son of God."

Of particular interest in the development of Peter's faith, is the occasion when Jesus made His promise of the Holy Eucharist. Jesus was adamant in preaching the necessity of His followers eating His body and drinking His blood. Some of his hearers thought this teaching gross, for others it was hard saying, and many walked no more with Him. Jesus then asked His apostles if they too would go away. Peter again responded for all of them, "Lord, to whom shall we go. You have the words of eternal life."

Yes, later on, Peter would be led by human weakness to deny Jesus three times before the hostile mob that surrounded the place where He was being accused of blasphemy and therefore worthy of death. One look from Jesus reminded Peter of the many times that he would be willing to give his own life in defense of the Master, and as the gospel relates, he escaped from these surroundings and wept bitterly for his sin.

As vacillating as he was on that fateful night, after the resurrection of Jesus, he would three times, almost in tears, profess his undying love for the Master and in the years to follow, would prove it by giving his life, really, in defense of his faith.

Faith puts us in touch with the infinite. It must not stop there. Beyond it there is hope and love for God and neighbor. It is God's grace that lead us to say, I believe. Why have so many not been able to bow their heads in belief, not only in our time, but also through the centuries and even in the time of Christ?

We should always and everywhere thank God for His freely given gift of faith.



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 SANCITY BULLETIN IS FOUR 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.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

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SPECIAL LETTERS

Virginia Beach, VA

This is to report a medical cure of my sister. I have been praying for her cure for some time through the prayers of Father Seelos. She has been in a nervous state for 25 years. In my opinion, she has been taking too much medication. I had hopes she would have her feet operated on, but as long as she was taking this medication, they could not sedate her. She met her limits on medication and has been undergoing shock treatments. Immediately after the first and second, she was laughing and talking to her children. It was indeed a miracle.

Gramercy, LA

Many, many thanks to Father Seelos again. He has obtained a favorable answer to my prayers. A little boy, five years old, was told by doctors that he had cancer. What a surprise the doctors had, there was no cancer.

Rayne, LA

I was working for an OB-GYN doctor for six years. I had a problem with birth control in the office, because I am Pro-life. Several years ago the doctor began inserting the Norplant. I told him I preferred not to assist him in this procedure. He abided by my wishes. Recently he started giving the Depo Provera injections for birth control. I gave in and in weakness gave two injections. After much heartache and prayer and the sacrament of reconciliation, I quit my job, but did not have another to go to. I prayed to God and asked the intercession of Father Seelos to help me find another job. After about ten days of giving my two weeks notice, I was again employed. I am presently teaching the CUA course in the morning, Monday through Fridays. Come September I am to start working in the afternoons, Monday through Thursdays, for another OB-GYN, who is a Catholic and practices only Natural Family Planning for birth control.

Venice, LA

When I graduated from St. Joseph's Preparatory College of the Redemptorists, I had hoped to be a Redemptorist. The novice master determined otherwise. I was accepted by Notre Dame Seminary and was ordained December 22, 1945. Four Finnegan vocations hailed from the Irish Channel: sister, brother, priest, monsignor. I am the only one left. Please, dear Father Seelos, let me remain in your good care with my diabetic condition and with my eye trouble. Thanks for the Redemptorist who blessed me with the crucifix of Father Seelos at Ochsner Hospital.

Father Michael Woodrow Finnegan

Mail: September, 1995

Petitions: 640

Thanksgivings: 285

Others: 360

Total: 1285

Dial-A-Messages: 761

Volunteer Hours: 1065

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