



FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY

VOLUME XXXVI, NUMBER 7

JULY, 1997

HIS MISSION CRUCIFIX



Although he was a priest for less than 24 years and spent many years as pastor and in the education of future Redemptorists, Father Francis Seelos still found time to preach parish missions in many parts of our country. In his career he preached to people in the dioceses of Alton, Altoona-Johnstown, Baltimore, Belleville, Bridgeport, Buffalo, Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Grand Rapids, Hartford, Harrisburg, Joliet, Natchez, Newark, New York, Peoria, Philadelphia, Providence, Rockville, St. Louis, Scranton, Toledo, Youngstown, Wheeling. An impressive list! Wherever he preached, Father Seelos wore this crucifix. Moreover, he preached in three languages: English, German, and French.

SURRENDER

Surrender is a sad word, even frightening at times, and so often devastating. Robert E. Lee, famous general though he was, must have felt all these emotions that fateful day at Appomattox in 1865. However, surrender does not always have to bring sadness into our lives. Surrender, in the sense of submitting oneself to the will of another, can be, under the proper conditions, a most pleasing and rewarding experience.

For example, there is Abraham, a giant figure in the history of the Jewish people. He is, indeed, as we pray in the first eucharistic prayer of the Mass, "our father in faith." When God called on Abraham to leave his homeland, his kindred, and journey to the land that the Lord would show him, he was already advanced in years. The Lord promised that the land would be flowing with milk and honey, that he would be the father of a great nation, and that he and his wife, Sara, would have a child.

After many years of disappointments and trials, their child, Isaac, was born to their complete joy. But the Lord was not finished with Abraham. Now He would ask him to sacrifice his son's life. Even then Abraham surrendered his will to the Lord and was willing to give his son back to God, all the time hoping against hope that the Lord would provide another victim. Tested again and again, even beyond our human understanding, Abraham trusted in God and in the end all God's promises to him were fulfilled.

(Continued on next page)

A second example of holy surrender to God is the Virgin Mary of Nazareth. She was visited by God's messenger, the archangel Gabriel. God had chosen her to be the mother of His Son. As soon as she learned that this would be accomplished through the intervention of the Holy Spirit, she bowed her head in surrender to the will of God, "Be it done to me according to your word." Heaven's approval was immediate. "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." When Mary was presented with her vocation, she had at best a blurred picture of what the future would be, but she trusted in God and accepted His will.

After His last meal with His apostles, Jesus went to the garden of Gethsemani to pray. While there the weight of His sufferings and death began to weigh upon Him. He was in agony; distress and sadness oppressed Him. His sweat was as blood pouring forth from His body. He prayed to His Father: "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass Me by. Still, let it be as You would have it, not as I" (Matthew 26:39). On the cross after three hours agony, Jesus uttered a loud cry and said, "Father, into Your hands I commend My spirit." Having said this, He died. (Luke 23:46).

One of the beauties of God's creation is the order of the universe. The sun, the moon and the stars move through the heavens in measurable time. On our earth the seasons follow each other in regular order. Animals follow the instincts God has given them. Acorns become oaks. All creation obeys the laws of nature.

Of all creation only human beings have the faculty of free will. Only human beings can disobey God. On the other hand, only human beings have the ability to surrender their will to that of the Creator. Only we can consciously obey the will of God. We pray that it be ever thus.

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: Yvonne Sevin, 888-1250, Gerry Heigle, 482-4404, Jack Pitkin, 524-6591, Teresa LaCour, 887-0214, Rita Kaul, 271-4520, Thad and Ethel Kuhn, 837-3957, Rosary Stoltman, 393-9423 or Marie Callahan, 525-1775.
 - 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 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 _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

SPECIAL LETTERS

Georgia

Sometime ago I wrote to ask prayers for my son who needed a good job. He found one and is progressing nicely.

Kansas

I asked prayers for a son-in-law who had a gambling habit he could not control. I sent him a Father Seelos memento several months ago and asked him to carry it in his billfold. He did so (even though he is not a Catholic, but is a believer in God's love and mercy). He has changed his life around to the point he can now pay the bills and things are much better. They have three children so things were pretty stressful for the whole family. I give full credit to Father Seelos for his change in attitude and the change in their lives. Thank you, Father Seelos, from the bottom of my heart.

Belle Chasse, LA

Recently I asked that the Father Seelos crucifix be brought to the hospital to bless my nephew who lay in a coma after a "successful brain surgery" that caused neurological trauma.

Shortly after being blessed, my nephew started showing signs that he would come out of the coma. The progress is slow but every day we see a new sign. I want to thank Father Seelos for his intercession with the Lord.

Houma, LA

I promised to write that when I went for my check-up, I would find that the cancer on my scalp just above the center of my forehead would be cleared up. I had often prayed to Father Seelos for others; this time it was for myself. My doctor confirmed on March 11, 1997 that the cancer looked like it was all gone. He will keep checking every two months. Thanks, Father Seelos, for your intercession.

Farmington Hills, MI

Please renew my subscription. I also wish to report that my son acquired a job through the intercession of Father Seelos.

Louisiana

I am writing to let you all know that I will continue to receive the bulletin from you all. I want you all to know that I prayed to Father Seelos for my oldest son who is in recovery from drugs. He has changed his life. He is a Catholic playing music and taking care of his kids. Pray for my granddaughter who is having difficulties in her marriage. May God bless you all.

Locust Grove, VA

As soon as I received the information about Father Seelos, I read all about him. I took the memento enclosed and pressed it to my stomach. I had to have colon surgery. I have a check-up every three months. I want to thank you for the memento. I am so happy I wrote.

New Orleans, LA

Last year my brother became ill and after many tests they still could not decide what was wrong with him. The doctors decided they would do a bone marrow test to see if he had leukemia. I started to pray and ask Father Seelos to intercede with God on my brother's behalf. I promised that if my brother did not have leukemia I would write this letter of thanksgiving and would promote devotion to him. My brother does not have leukemia and is recovering slowly. I thank God and the intercession of Father Seelos for my brother's health. I have asked many people to pray to Father Seelos.

Mail: March, 1997

Petitions: 795

Thanksgivings: 252

Others: 328

Total: 1375

Dial-A-Messages: 753

Volunteer Hours: 1069

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