



FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY

VOLUME XXXVI, NUMBER 8

AUGUST, 1997



THE LEGACY OF FATHER SEELOS

Being a religious with a vow of poverty, Father Seelos on his death had precious little of this world's possessions to leave to posterity. The crucifix he wore when he preached parish missions is a much venerated memento of his time with us. On Sunday, April 27, Father Richard Thibodeau celebrated the Mass on this special occasion, "Father Seelos Day in New Orleans." In the picture above he is seen blessing the faithful with this memento. Father Thibodeau is the superior

of the Redemptorist province of Denver which has vice-provinces in Brazil, in Thailand, and Nigeria. He has our thanks and our prayers.

"FATHER, FORGIVE ME"

Among the many trends that exist in our modern world, there are two which on the surface seem to be contradictory. They each have a life of their own. Contradictory as they are, it should be surprising for us to learn that individuals can embrace both and not even realize the contradiction.

The first trend we call attention to is one that can be called "rush to judgment." We notice today that immediately we receive the news of a disaster, a crime, an accident, particularly in the transportation industry, or any untoward event, a hue and cry is raised, "Who's to blame?" This cry is shrill and often made before all the details and circumstances are even known.

A second trend is almost the exact opposite of the first one. It is the refusal to accept responsibility for one's own actions and to lay the blame on someone or something else. Now when someone is accused of anything it is the rage to blame one's parents, one's educators, one's lack of education, one's poverty, one's environment. Blame everybody and everything but oneself. And we thought that "pin the tail on the donkey" was a game for children.

We remember hearing years ago the rather cruel story of the young boy who killed his parents and then begged the mercy of the court because he was an orphan. Just lately we discovered the story was no joke but a reality. Several decades ago there was an engaging comedian on TV who would laughingly claim "the devil made me do it."

When we were children at home or school and someone in authority would demand to know who had done something wrong, we were only too prone to

(Continued on next page)

point a finger at our siblings or schoolmates whether they were responsible or not. Looking for a scapegoat is a childish trait but one that unfortunately lingers into maturity.

The virtue of humility, if nothing else, deals with truth, with reality. St. Teresa of Avila is credited with saying humility is truth. We are what we are, not necessarily in the sight of others, nor even in our own estimation, but only in the sight of God.

The story of George Washington telling his father, "I cannot tell a lie; I chopped down the tree," whether a fact or not, illustrates the sense of responsibility we should all try to have.

The sacrament of reconciliation, a.k.a., penance or confession, provides a magnificent exercise in humility. Our preparation for this sacrament begins with the examination of conscience. The question we ask of ourselves is, "How do I stand before God?" And then we run through God's commandments and those of the Church, our obligations toward God, ourselves, our neighbor, the times we have acted counter to God's grace, as well as the times we have cooperated with it. Having looked at ourselves, as it were through a mirror, and in full awareness of our utter humanity, we ask God for His forgiveness and make the appropriate resolutions to improve our relationship with God and our neighbor.

Now we are ready to kneel in the confessional before the priest and confess our sinful deeds and our responsibility for them, and say, "Father, forgive me for I have sinned."

Is this the place to wonder and ask the question, could the reason be that there are fewer confessions, that we have lost not only the sense of sin but are willing to deny any responsibility for our actions?

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

Roseville, MN

In January I developed pneumococcus pneumonia and blood poisoning. I was taken by ambulance to the hospital. I received the sacrament of the sick. On the third day they did a cat scan and the diagnosis was cancer. They couldn't do a biopsy because I was too ill but finally after a month I had another cat scan so the doctor could do the biopsy. After the scan the doctor said he could not find the tumor — it was gone! Everyone in the xray department called me the miracle lady (95% of the scans like I had are cancer). I wore the memento the Center sent me every day on my gown and am still wearing it.

Yesterday I saw the lung doctor and he also called me the miracle lady. My third scan was negative. I say the prayer every night for Father Seelos to become a saint. I've been helped before.

Carriere, MS

On May 16, 1989 my husband Thomas was told he had cancer of the prostate and the cancer had reached his hip bone. Surgery was done on May 18, 1989. No pain since. Tom was blessed with the crucifix of Father Seelos at Hotel Dieu in New Orleans. We attended the anniversary Mass for Father Seelos that year and have done so since every year. We attended the last Mass Tom would be able to attend on Oct. 6, 1996. Tom passed away on Oct. 14, just eight days after that Mass.

I had an autopsy done and there was no sign of cancer in his body. We both have been devoted to Father Seelos. I continue to spread devotion to Father Seelos. I am so grateful for the miracle he gave to us by interceding with the Lord. (Tom died from an aneurysm).

Slidell, LA

My family members have been praying to Father Seelos for some time now, but this past year he has become very important and special to us. In December, 1995, my husband had been eating right, exercising at a Wellness Center three times a week, had lost weight, did not smoke, and one morning after returning from his work-out, had his first massive heart attack. He then had triple by-pass heart surgery, and after some set-backs, he seemed to be recovering nicely. However, his MUGA Scan showed irreparable damage and his doctor suggested he retire.

We were devastated, and began praying to Father Seelos, and my husband had his memento which he treasures. My husband seemed to become stronger each day and in our eyes, he can do all the things he could do before his heart attack. He repeated the MUGA Scan, and the doctor said it showed no improvement, but he did not get worse, which surprised the doctor, because he said that is usually the case. My husband never did quit his job, and even though he is battling prostate cancer and rheumatoid arthritis as well, he is still active and working out three times a week at the Wellness Center.

I, as well, have had medical problems, and was having panic attacks, and not feeling well. After many scans, ultrasounds, blood work, etc., I was told I needed a colonoscopy as well, and also that they found a mass in my abdomen. Members of our church prayed as we did as well, but my husband and I prayed especially to Father Seelos. The colonoscopy was clear, and repeated ultrasounds showed the mass gone. My panic attacks have ceased as well.

Thanks, Father Seelos, for your intercession. This is in thanks for all the favors we have received.

Mail: April, 1997

Petitions: 711

Thanksgivings: 249

Others: 365

Total: 1325

Dial-A-Messages: 747

Volunteer Hours: 1061

FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY (USPS 488-660)

is published monthly for \$4.00 per year, by

The Father Seeelos Center

2030 Constance Street

New Orleans, LA 70130-5099

Periodical postage paid at New Orleans, LA.

Postmaster: send address changes to FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY

2030 Constance St., New Orleans, LA 70130-5099

8/97

Published monthly by the Redemptorists at the Father Seeelos Center, 2030 Constance Street, New Orleans, Louisiana 70130. Telephone (504) 525-2495, Fax: (504) 523-3734. Subscription is \$4.00 per year.

In conformity with the decree of Pope Urban VIII all statements contained herein are unreservedly submitted to the judgment of the Holy See and the decision of the Sacred Congregation of the Causes of Saints.

Published with Ecclesiastical Approbation.

Rev. Albert Babin, C.S.S.R. Vice-Postulator, Rev. Joseph Eworthy, C.S.S.R. Director and Editor, Mrs. Angéla Boudreaux and Mr. Melvin Boudreaux, Executive Assistants.