



# FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY

VOLUME XXXVII, NUMBER 12

DECEMBER, 1998



## “BY THE HOLY CROSS”

Pope Paul VI once celebrated a Christmas midnight Mass in a factory in southern Italy. It was televised here in the United States. What made it memorable for me was at the end all the workers spontaneously broke out in singing their favorite Christmas hymn, “Tu Scendi Dalle Stelle.”

This hymn, heard often here at

Christmas time, was written by St. Alphonsus de Liguori, the founder of the Redemptorists.

St. Alphonsus was utterly the champion and devotee of the dogma of the Incarnation of the Son of God. His faith and devotion have filtered down to his religious sons even to the Third Millennium.

Redemptorists of my generation will remember celebrating “Little Christmas” in the novitiate on the 25th of every month. There were appropriate religious exercises, even the Infant Stations a la the Stations of the Cross, with special prayers and pictures depicting the important events of the infancy. Instead of a full-blown crib there was a statue of the Infant lying on a bed of straw with a cross in His hands.

The cross in the Infant’s hands may raise an eyebrow or two of those who have a difficulty in fathoming the interworkings of the divine and human knowledge of the divine Person who is Jesus. The Incarnation and Birth of the Son of God is a deep mystery and there is much that we cannot understand. We leave it to the inspiration of God.

However, we know from the Scriptures that in taking upon Himself our human nature He became like us in all things save sin. We also know that the Child in the humble home of Nazareth grew in grace and age before God and man. From these same Scriptures we know that when Mary and Joseph came upon Jesus at the age of twelve amid the doctors of the law in the Temple and they questioned Him, His answer was, “Did you not know that I had to be in My Father’s house?” (Luke 2:49).

What were His thoughts as He called Peter and Andrew and James and John and told them that henceforth they would be fishers of men?” (Mark 1:17). What did He think when He stood up in a sinking boat and commanded the winds and the waves to be still and they obeyed Him? (Matthew 8:23-27). How did He react

*(Continued on next page)*

when a withered hand became whole in His sight and at His word (Mark 3:1-6), or, when He bade the paralytic to walk and he walked (Mark 2:1-12), or, when He washed a blind man's eyes with spittle and the man began to see (Mark 8:22-26), or, when He told the dead young man to rise from his stretcher and the youth arose (Luke 7:11-17), or, when He said to the dead Lazarus, "Come forth," and Lazarus, dead for four days, came forth from his tomb? (John 11:1-44).

We can ask ourselves what was in His mind when He predicted several times to His disciples that He was heading for Jerusalem where he would be taken prisoner and treated inhumanly and crucified and in three days would rise again?

Was it such a far-fetched idea the artist had who painted the icon "Mother of Perpetual Help" when he had the two archangels, Michael and Gabriel, appearing to the very young Jesus with the instruments of His future death in their hands and causing Him to seek the safety of His Mother's arms?

Jesus in His Human nature practiced a life of self-denial. He was the infinite God in a human body. He accepted this limitation as a part of the human conditions. His suffering began with the flight into Egypt and only ended with His crucifixion on Calvary.

He prayed in the Garden of Gethsemani, as we must in our moment of pain, "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).

Joseph Elworthy, C.S.S.R.

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### 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, Jim Howard, 277-7949 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

### Orange, TX

My family visited the Center about a month ago to have my little girl blessed with the crucifix of Father Seelos. Fr. Joseph was kind enough to bless all five of us that made the trip from Texas, and gave us a tour of the church and the tomb of Father Seelos.

My daughter (Kaycie) was born with problems with her bladder and has had five major surgeries, the most recent being a major procedure to enlarge her bladder by using part of her colon. She was having some complications with her new bladder but since our visit she has been doing wonderful and is back in school to start the first grade. Thank you for all your help, and a special thank-you to Father Seelos for his intercession.

### Washington State

Father Seelos comes to my mind when I least expect it. He is becoming one of three of my favorite patrons I pray to. I will be praying whenever he comes to my mind for his sainthood.

### Metairie, LA

On July 4, 1997 my daughter gave birth to a premature baby weighing one pound, 15 ounces.

As my husband and I were frantically making our way through the hospital parking garage to our daughter, we found on the garage floor a cloth memento of Father Seelos...It was a cloth touched to the tomb of Father Seelos. My husband picked it up and gave it to me. When we got to the nursery I prayed to Father Seelos asking him to protect our child and pray for him to live. The baby just had his first birthday. He is 26 pounds now and healthy in every way. I know Father Seelos prayed for this baby. I think it was meant for us to find the memento.

### Metairie, LA

...I... wanted to take time to write a note regarding my nephew... As I mentioned previously, he had testicular cancer diagnosed last March. He has had several chemotherapy treatments and surgery.

Upon hearing of his condition, I contacted you, and received Father Seelos prayer cards, which I have distributed to friends and family. I have prayed the prayer daily and suggested that others do the same.

About one month ago, he was checked, and no cancer was found! Needless to say, our family and friends are very grateful and happy. I feel that our prayers and our Good Lord have made the difference.

### Pasadena, TX

Please excuse the heading and also having to type this letter but I do have trouble writing any length of time with my hand due to arthritis.

A month ago I was given a cloth memento of Father Seelos... I wear it on my brown scapular day and night.

I read about Father Seelos in a book containing many stories of priests but there was no special prayer in it. Is there a special prayer-card that you could send me so I can say a special prayer to Father Seelos?

I am 87 years of age and so thankful that I can still do my work as volunteer in four Nursing Homes here in Pasadena; drive my car in Pasadena only in spite of the fact I have an enlarged heart and a few other inconveniences. Already I notice I am receiving help since I am wearing the memento and I thank God every day for it.

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Mail: August, 1998

Petitions: 680

Thanksgivings: 239

Others: 504

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Dial-A-Messages: 737

Volunteer Hours: 1041

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