

FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY

VOLUME XXXVII, NUMBER 3

MARCH, 1998



The desert is a suitable place to think of God..

“ABBA, FATHER”

A headline in this morning's newspaper told us that this week all the planets would be visible in the skies — a veritable parade of planets. We were further told that this is a phenomenon that would not happen again for one hundred years. Four decades almost have passed since the Russians sent their first Sputnik into space and we followed with the first landing on the moon. It has been jokingly said that today there is so much hardware floating around in space that we will soon need traffic lights up there.

Most of us live in urban areas where city lights obscure the heavens. Living in less inhabited regions gives one an opportunity to study the night sky. St. Luke writes in his Gospel that in the region of Bethlehem there were shepherds living in the fields and keeping night watch by turns over their flocks. Suddenly an angel appeared to tell them that the Savior had been born in David's city.

Soon a multitude of the heavenly host was with him, and they were singing, Glory to God in high heaven, peace to them on whom His favor rests (Luke 2:8-14).

St. Matthew in his account of the birth of Christ tells us of the appearance of a star to the Magi in the east and how these men came from afar to Jerusalem looking for the new-born king that this star indicated to them. They thought Herod could tell them where to find Him. His counselors suggested Bethlehem. After leaving the city, they were overjoyed to find the star leading them to Bethlehem where they found Jesus with Mary and Joseph.

Jesus, the Son of God-become-man, grew up in a household with Mary and Joseph very conscious of its religious duties. As a Child He learned the 'sch'ma': "Hear, O Israel!, the Lord is our God, the Lord alone! Therefore, you shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength. Take to heart these words which I enjoin on you today" (Deut. 6:4-7). These words were the first words Mary repeated to Him as He lay in her lap. These words were written on their foreheads, even on the doorpost of their home. The footnote on these verses of Deuteronomy explains: these words contain the basic principle of the whole Mosaic law: since the Lord alone is God, we must love Him with an undivided heart.

(Continued on next page)

Jesus spent many a night in prayer beneath the stars. Even as a young boy in Nazareth, He probably sat enthralled at the vista provided by the Creator's hand. As he grew in wisdom and age before God and men, so did His love for His Father and His realization that God indeed was His Father and He could address Him with the familiar term, Abba, dear Father.

Father Larrañaga, a Spanish Franciscan and spiritual writer, quotes in one of his books on prayer a commentary of Joachim Jeremias in *The Central Message of the New Testament*: "We are confronted with something new and unheard of which breaks through the limits of Judaism. Here we see who the historical Jesus was who had the power to address God as Abba and who included sinners and publicans in the kingdom by authorizing them to repeat this one word, Abba, dear Father."

The first thing we must learn in fulfilling the first commandment to love God is that God has first loved us. When I was an altar boy in a church dedicated to the founder of the Redemptorists, St. Alphonsus, the sacristan was a holy Redemptorist brother, Brother Cajetan. He was sacristan for over fifty years and it is said that during that time fifty of his altar boys became priests.

In the course of his duties he had to pass many times before the Blessed Sacrament. On each time he made a reverent genuflection that was an inspiration to the thousands of people who witnessed it through the years. He lived his life very close to God. As servers we watched him pause from time to time to kneel in a pew before the Tabernacle, put on his reading glasses, open his prayer-book (in German), and breathe a heart-felt prayer, "O mein Vater!"

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, 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

Jamaica Pl., MA

Thank you for the recent bulletin. I find it very enlightening and encouraging. I have been praying to Father Seelos for the past week hoping for a cure for a very painful hip and lower backache. I live alone. I have no one I can count on even to get me a quart of milk. So I trudge out to a store to get a few things I need. The pain in my leg while I stand to wait for a bus is very aggravating. Oh I suppose a lot would pass this off as 'old age.' I am not willing to accept this as an excuse.

I have tried all sorts of remedies but they only make things worse. So, as a last resort, I am appealing to the good Father Seelos. If he has helped so many others, I am sure that he can help me also.

La Mesa, CA

I am writing to you to request a few prayer-cards and mementos. My mother, who was from Houma, LA, had been receiving your bulletin out here for many years. She passed away three years ago. My husband, daughter and I purchased her home. We enjoyed getting the bulletin and it helped me through some very difficult times. I wish to continue receiving it, and want to visit the center on my next trip down south to see my relatives.

Carriere, MS

This is in thanksgiving to Father Seelos in my son's behalf. He had successful back surgery in June after being hurt in a job-related accident five years ago. As a result of this accident he was bedridden and on crutches for five years. He had two herniated disks in his back, RSO trauma in his leg and foot. But after surgery he walked out of the hospital using a cane and walker. Praise God!

Another miracle of Father Seelos' intercession — he went back to church — after being away for many years. Thank you, Father Seelos, for interceding before God. I knew my son would walk again if only he asked for God's mercy and help and truly believed that God would help him. I promised to write the Center.

Westlake, OK

I started praying for sainthood for Father Seelos many months ago. About a month ago I was having a lot of trouble breathing on account of sinus problems. So I started praying to Father Seelos for help as I would fear I couldn't breathe and I would get very scared and my fears and anxieties would get the best of me. Since I have asked for help from Father Seelos, I now find help and comfort when I call upon Father Seelos to quiet me down. I will remain praying for his sainthood.

Lafayette, LA

My brother had an operation on June 12 for one aneurysm but three were discovered. He had a memento of Father Seelos on his identification bracelet from the time he entered the hospital until he returned home three weeks later.

We know that Father Seelos was with him every minute — and still is — because he is doing so well. Even the doctors are amazed at his progress. He has been told that he has four to five months of recovery, but with Father Seelos's help he will do fine.

I have been praying to Father Seelos since 1976, when my granddaughter developed leukemia. She is expecting her first baby next month. Thanks to Father Seelos.

Mail: November, 1997

Petitions: 680

Thanksgivings: 316

Others: 287

Total: 1283

Dial-A-Messages: 757

Volunteer Hours: 1056

FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY (USPS 488-660)

is published monthly for \$4.00 per year, by

The Father Seelos 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

3/98

Published monthly by the Redemptorists at the Father Seelos 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. Angela Boudreaux and Mr. Melvin Boudreaux, Executive Assistants.