



FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY

VOLUME XXXVIII, NUMBER 5

MAY, 1999

“AROUND HIM A CROWN OF BROTHERS”

In preparation for his feast day the Redemptorists make a novena to their founder, St. Alphonsus de Liguori. In one of the prayers we pray that around him in heaven will be a crown of brothers. In the 200 years since his death St. Gerard Majella, St. Clement Hofbauer, St. John Neumann have been added to the calendar of saints. Peter Donders, Gaspar Stangassinger, and Januarius Sarnelli have been declared blessed. Our prayers for many years have been that Francis Xavier Seelos be soon added to that illustrious list.

THE EARTH IS THE LORD'S

The question arises in our minds from time to time, are we the only intelligent beings in the

universe? It is clear that there is nothing against the possibility of other worlds such as ours. God is infinite and omnipotent and it is within His power to create intelligent beings other than ourselves. As far as I can ascertain there is no concrete evidence that He actually has done so.

Be that as it may. Modern achievements in space travel, men on the moon, an unusual exploration of Mars, have given us an opportunity to see what the relatively tiny planet Earth looks like from outer space. The view, as travel agents would say, is spectacular! Our earth shines like a veritable jewel in the heavens.

In another and more important sense, it is a jewel recognized from the highest source and authority – God himself. He paid us human creatures the ultimate divine compliment – His Son became one of us. It was thus that we, created men and women, became brothers and sisters of Jesus the God made man.

When Jesus returned to the Father He left His Church as the sacrament, the sign of salvation. The Church points to the true purpose of mankind. It prepares mortal beings for the eternal life of heaven.

Thirty years ago His Church, gathered in solemn council, considered its relationship to the world around it. We remember what St. John the Evangelist wrote about His coming to earth: “He came unto His own and His own received Him not.” Twenty centuries later His Church still faces hostility, indifference, misunderstanding, and unbelief. For this reason

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the Vatican Council II asked itself the question, what is the relation of the Church to the world it lives in?

The Council recalled truths from the first book of the Bible, Genesis, "In the beginning ... God created heaven and earth", to the first man and woman God said: "Be fertile and multiply, fill the earth and subdue it", "Let them have dominion over the sea, the birds of the air, and the cattle, and over the wild animals and creatures that crawl on the ground" (Gen. 1:1, 26, 28).

Thus the Council wrote in its document, *The Church Today*: "God intended the earth and all that it contains for the use of every human being and people. Thus as all men follow justice and charity, created goods should abound for them on a reasonable basis.

The distribution should be directed toward providing employment and sufficient income for the people of today and the future." (No. 70)

The Council renews the teaching of the Church in regard to the right to private property. "Private ownership or some kind of dominion over material goods contribute to the expression of personality." (No. 71)

The Council concludes its thoughts on our relation to the material world: "Christians who take an active part in modern socio-economic developments and defend justice and charity should be convinced that they can make a great contribution to the prosperity of mankind and the peace of the world... they should, in faithfulness to Christ and His gospel, observe the right order of values in their earthly activities. Thus their whole lives, both individual and social, will be permeated with the spirit of the beatitudes, notably with the spirit of poverty." (No. 72)

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: 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, Marie Callahan, 525-1775, or Elaine Freeman, 341-2213.
 - 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.

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SPECIAL LETTERS

Eunice, LA

In my last letter I had written to you about the healing my husband received in answer to my prayers to Father Seelos. But briefly, to refresh your memory, my husband had an open wound on his left leg that would not heal. He had undergone surgery at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital in Lafayette, La. Recovery was difficult, but through the intercession of Father Seelos he is now well and healed completely and back at work. We own an old-time grocery store and he must stand long hours.

I have received the booklet, "People Ask His Prayers," by Patricia Treece. Thank you! I treasure it!

Maybe, to clearly state the reason I am writing is because I have even greater news to impart which I never considered until I saw the picture in the booklet by Patricia Treece!

1. My husband is ill and subsequently scheduled for surgery Sept. 17, 1998.

2. We arrive at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital in Lafayette, La. in the early morning. Admissions calls us in and begin their paperwork. I am waiting in the hall and thinking, "We should have called a priest." I promptly forget about that when the preparations for surgery begin and we become embroiled in the machinations of hospital wherewithall.

3. About ten minutes before being taken down to surgery a priest arrives at our bedside cubicle and asks if we want the anointing of the sick. Joyously, we said yes. I'm thinking God heard my unsaid prayer in the hallway and gave a small thanksgiving.

4. The priest did not introduce himself, and spoke with a distinct foreign accent I could barely decipher, because he seemed so devout and intent on his job and spoke rather softly. We asked him which church parish he was working in i.e. - St. Edmond's of Lafayette or Our Lady of Fatima, etc. His reply was "My parish is not here." I took it to be not in Lafayette, La.

5. The priest proceeded to give the Sacrament of the Sick, and we prayed along. When he completed his work, he simply looked at us and we thanked him and I for one grabbed his hand and said you have really been a blessing for us and then he simply seemed to depart. I never saw him leave.

6. I really never thought about it again until December when your letter came and I saw the picture in the booklet. That picture really hit home. The picture in the booklet is an exact duplicate of the priest who came to us in the hospital!

7. Briefly, I will describe him. This priest was about 5'8" or 5'9", maybe 5'10". He was very slender, wore glasses and had a dark complexion. He did not speak unless spoken to. He seemed very determined to do the task at hand and did not touch my husband but only on the hands and forehead as is normal for the anointing.

8. I now believe that Fr. Seelos himself visited us and whether it is God inspired or not I cannot determine. But I do know that the result of all the prayers said culminated that day in Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital and my husband was healed.

In retrospect, I remember the joy and the singing down deep in my soul when that man of God appeared. If it was Fr. Seelos, I thank him by this letter and if it was not I thank God for sending us someone. Down deep in my heart, the love I have for God is far deeper than ever, but I do ask your prayers for impatience and quick temper.

...I will continue to pray for all of you and for the canonization of Father Seelos. To God be the glory of all that transpired in my life that day and every day...

Mail: January, 1999

Petitions: 751

Thanksgivings: 273

Others: 925

Total: 1949

Dial-A-Messages: 761

Volunteer Hours: 1058

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