

# NEWS

## Seelos Center



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## CURES? Child's Play for Father Seelos

By Patricia Treece

St. Patrick's Day 1986 in New Orleans was not turning out to be a good day for the Pechous family. The birth that day of their first child had initially appeared uneventful but soon the baby demonstrated serious trouble breathing. Tests on tiny Christina Fae, including a CAT scan and EKG, revealed she had suffered a massive stroke in utero.

Her father and mother, a doctor and nurse, insisted a neurologist be called in. The neurologist did his own battery of tests only to come to the same grim conclusions:

CAT scans showed a whole side of the baby's brain "blotted out." If she lived (which was not likely since more strokes should be expected), she would not talk, might not walk or, at least, would never

walk normally. And she would certainly suffer seizures. Meantime continuing episodes where she simply stopped breathing menaced the child.

A priest from St. Mary's Assumption Church, where the Pechous' were new parishioners, rushed over to the hospital and blessed Christina Fae with the missionary cross of Father Francis X. Seelos (since April 2000, *Blessed* Francis X. Seelos). When the baby eventually went home wired to all sorts

of monitors under the care of her nurse mother, she was blessed again with Father Seelos' cross.

Call it a miracle or not, Christina Fae Pechous started breathing normally; she never suffered another stroke, there were no seizures, and later tests showed none of the terrible abnormalities.



Without any treatment or medication she talked, walked, and her mental functions were like those of any other child. When she was brought back to New Orleans in 1995 from her current home in Iowa, the nine-year-old danced her latest ballet routine in thanksgiving over Father Seelos' grave in St. Mary's.

Christina is only one of many children whom God seems to have chosen to heal through the intercession of Father Seelos since the gentle, smiling Redemptorist priest's death in 1867 from yellow fever he caught while aiding other sufferers. Of course, he was also known to carry God's healing to children – and adults – during his lifetime, too.

*Excerpt from article that first appeared in Patricia Treece's column of February 8, 2002 in The Tidings, the archdiocesan newspaper of Los Angeles, CA.*

*"We come to know the great religions not so much by their official teachings or practices, but by the stories they continue to tell."*

— SUSAN ROSS ON REVIEWING KENNETH L. WOODWARD'S *THE BOOK OF MIRACLES*

*You are invited to the Annual Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos Memorial Mass  
Rev. Don Miniscalco, C.Ss.R. Presider and Homilist  
Sunday, October 6<sup>th</sup>, 11:30 a.m. at St. Mary's Assumption Church,  
New Orleans, Louisiana  
Reception after Mass*

## A Message FROM THE EDITOR

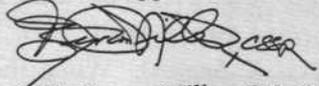
A letter from his sister awaited Father Seelos on October 31, 1853, when he arrived home in Pittsburgh from an outmission. With so much business to tend to upon his return, he was not able to read his mail until eleven o'clock that night. When he did, the sorrowful news from his family in Füssen, Germany informed him of his father's death.

At the time of his father's death, Francis Seelos saw him in a dream, dressed in beautiful priestly vestments. Francis commented, "Father occupies a very high place in heaven, and he is in a position to obtain graces for us."

The memory of his beloved father seemed to influence the choice of the sermon Father Seelos preached the morning after he received the sad news, All Saints' Day, 1853. Preaching on the Beatitudes, Seelos must have taken consolation in the words, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted."

Father Seelos was stationed in New Orleans when word reached him on November 6, 1866, that his mother had died on September 27th. The community offered the customary intercessory prayers for Redemptorist mothers during eight days, and Seelos was celebrant at a Solemn Requiem Mass for his mother on November 14. The good people of Saint Mary's Assumption Church took up a collection of twenty-five dollars for a second Mass, besides other Masses.

On the Feast of All Souls, November 2, the Redemptorists are privileged to offer Masses for all deceased family members and friends who support the Blessed Francis Seelos Cause.



Fr. Byron Miller, C.Ss.R.



The grave of Fr. Seelos' parents and some of his siblings in Füssen. The Seelos family generously gave their son to God.

*"ONE SINGLE MASS gives more honor to God than all the penances of the saints, the labors of the apostles, the sufferings of the martyrs and even the burning love of the Blessed Mother of God."*

*Saint Alphonsus Liguori,  
Founder of the Redemptorists*



Enrollment in the Saint Joseph Mass League is a way to ensure that your loved ones will be remembered in six Holy Masses celebrated each day by the Redemptorists.

They also share in the blessings of educating Redemptorist Seminarians and the Missionary work to which the League is dedicated.

Saint Joseph is the Patron of a Peaceful Death. As the Protector of the Holy Family, Saint Joseph was chosen for this Mass League to highlight the Catholic belief that we are all indeed brothers and sisters to Jesus.

Please call 1-800-464-2555, ext. 425 for annual or perpetual All Souls' Day enrollments.

## DID YOU KNOW ????

*Saint Katharine Drexel (1858-1955) is the only born citizen of the U.S. to be beatified or canonized. Kateri Tekakwitha & Elizabeth Ann Seton are the only others who were born in what is now the U.S. and both were born before the U.S. became a country of its own. Pope John Paul II canonized Drexel on October 1, 2000. The following is an excerpt from the very first quarterly newsletter, The Peace-Maker (April-June, 1964), published by the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament to promote the Cause of Mother Katharine:*

Reverend Nicholas B. Ferrante, of the Motherhouse of the Redemptorist Order in Rome, has been named Postulator for the Beatification Cause of

Mother Katharine Drexel. The Vice-Postulator is also a Redemptorist Father, the Reverend Francis J. Litz, of St. Peter's Church, 1019 North Fifth Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. It will be the task of Reverend Father Litz to assemble all



Rev. Nicholas B. Ferrante, C.Ss.R. (left) and Rev. Francis J. Litz, C.Ss.R.

writings and other information in preparation for the ordinary process, which has just been opened in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

Father Ferrante and Father Litz were similarly associated in advancing the cause of Bishop Neumann, Fourth Bishop of Philadelphia, whose Beatification took place on October 13, 1963, the Holy Father Pope Paul VI proclaiming the saintly prelate Blessed John N. Neumann.

It is of interest to note that the canonist who aided Mother Katharine when in Rome in 1907 for the Approbation of the Rule of her Congregation, was also a Redemptorist, the Reverend Joseph

*Continued on page 3*

M. Schwarz. In later years Mother Katharine was often heard to express her gratitude for the assistance rendered by Reverend Father Schwarz on that occasion, and attributed to his unflagging labors the success of her mission for she had the happiness of returning to Philadelphia with the approval she had sought for her Constitutions and the joy of having knelt at the feet of the Holy Father, now St. Pius X and heard him say: "I bless your Constitutions."

[It is of further interest to note that Francis Seelos was directly responsible for influencing the vocation of Reverend Joseph M. Schwarz to the Redemptorists in 1867!]

## Seelos Center NEWS

A monthly newsletter for friends of Blessed Francis X. Seelos, C.Ss.R.

### Vice-Provincial Superior:

Very Rev. Thomas D. Picton, C.Ss.R.  
Vice Provincial - New Orleans

### Seelos Center Executive Director / Editor:

Rev. Byron Miller, C.Ss.R.

### Seelos Center / Shrine

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Visit our Web site at [www.seelos.org](http://www.seelos.org)

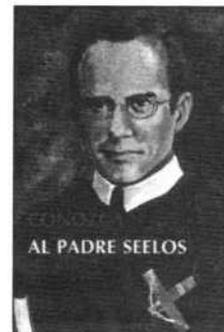
### Seelos Center News

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## Meet Padre Seelos

Are you willing to help introduce Father Seelos to the Spanish-speaking in your community and parish? This 32-page pamphlet, *Cbnozca Al Padre Seelos* ("Meet Father Seelos"), was written to document miracles through Father Seelos' intercession during his lifetime and the decades following his death. Special bulk rate of 50/\$11 (includes p/h).



## "With Him is Plentiful Redemption"

(Psalm 130:7)

### The Seelos Center offers the following services:

- Pilgrimages to St. Mary's Assumption Church, the Shrine and Museum of Blessed F. Seelos in New Orleans. For details and appointments, call the Center at 504-525-2495.
- A Daily Spiritual Message. Call 504-586-1803.
- Blessings of the Sick with a Mission Crucifix of Blessed F. Seelos in the Greater New Orleans area, please call:
  - Gerry Heigle (E. Jefferson) 504-482-4404
  - Jack Pitkin (Uptown/Innecity) 504-524-6591
  - Teresa LaCour (E. Jefferson) 504-887-0214
  - Rosary Stoltman (Westbank) 504-393-9423
  - Jim Howard (St. Bernard & Arabi) 504-277-7949
  - Elaine Freeman (Westbank) 504-341-2213
  - Ethel Kuhn (Ochsner) 504-837-3957
  - Bill and Sunny Schulz (Mandeville) 985-792-5394
  - Carmelie Mancuso (Slidell) 985-641-6999
  - Mary Jo Stewart (Slidell) 985-643-5548
  - Pam Crutchfield, R.T. (Covington) 985-892-6560
  - Ethel Gallagher (Reserve) 985-536-1052
  - Dan Montz, L.P.C. (Houma/Thibodaux) 985-446-1805
- Veneration of Blessed F. Seelos' Mission Crucifix every Sunday after the 11:30 am Mass in the historic St. Mary's Assumption Church (Josephine and Constance Streets).
- Weekly Mass celebrated for the intentions of the Seelos Center. If you have Special Intentions, please list them in the space provided on the enclosed envelope.



### The Seelos Center / Seelos Foundation Office offers the following devotionals:

(Please allow up to 2 weeks for delivery of item(s) requested):

- "Seelos: A Cause to Rejoice," an informative documentary on the life of Blessed F. Seelos; 30-minute VHS cassette. (Suggested donation: \$17.00 - includes postage.)
- "A Life of Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos," a new 108-page paperback biography by Carl Hoegerl, C.Ss.R. & Alicia von Stamwitz. (Suggested donation: \$9.00 - includes postage.)
- Nothing Short of a Miracle*, a 207-page paperback book by Patricia Treece on the healing power of the saints; two of the chapters feature Father Seelos. (Suggested donation: \$15.00 - includes postage.)
- Messengers: After-Death Appearances of Saints & Mystics*, a 343-page hardbound book by Patricia Treece on the authentic appearances of the holy dead sent as God's messengers. Chapters on Fr. Seelos; photos included. (Suggested donation: \$24.00- includes postage.)
- Seelos Medals: Blessed F. Seelos medal, made of nickel silver. Round (3/4" diameter), with loop, antique finish, finely crafted in the United States. (Suggested donation: \$3 each or 2/\$5(+\$1p/h).
- Pamphlets and prayer cards of Blessed F. Seelos, available in English, Spanish and Vietnamese.
- Audio cassette of a spiritual conference talk on God as Father and Blessed F. Seelos, given by Father Charles Mallen, C.Ss.R. (Suggested donation: \$7.00 - includes postage.)
- A Blessed F. Seelos vigil candle will burn near his tomb or in the Seelos Museum at St. Mary's Assumption Church, New Orleans for an offering of \$3.00.
- First, Second and Third-Class relics of Blessed F. Seelos. Please contact the Seelos Center, 504-525-2495

# Testimonials

## Camillus, NY

My granddaughter was born in May 2001 with a tumor in her mouth just above the gum line. After almost a year of continuous colds, sinus and ear infections, a team of nine doctors examined her and concluded that she had no front teeth on the top, would require surgery to remove the tumor and as a result of the many infections, was thirty percent deaf.

It was at this time that I heard about Blessed Seelos on EWTN and was drawn to request a relic. After I received it, I immediately began a novena to Blessed Francis and touched the relic to my granddaughter's mouth. Ten days later, dental X-rays showed four front baby teeth and the surgeon could no longer find the tumor in her mouth. We have an appointment with an audiologist in two weeks and I am confident that she is no longer deaf either. I have been praying in thanksgiving to Blessed Seelos ever since.

## Braintree, MA

In February, I was operated on to remove 4 metastases from synorial cell sarcoma. They were located near my heart, between my lungs, and two were thought to be in the lower left lobe of my lung. The surgeon felt he could remove all four, but that in the process he would have to remove my lower left lobe (33% of my left lung). Also, there was a 10% chance that the nodule near my heart would have spread, and that he would be unable to get clean margins.

I prayed asking Fr. Seelos to intercede for a successful outcome. I wore a cloth relic of his, along with a medal of him on my surgical gown. When I awoke from surgery I was thrilled to discover that the two nodules previously thought to be in my lungs were actually outside the lung, so they only had to take out 3% of my lung. The other two nodules were removed and I was declared as having "no evidence of disease." In May I had my first 3-month follow-up and it looked great. Thank you, Fr. Seelos.

## Baton Rouge, LA

I just moved back to the USA from Norway. I lived there for 12 years and after being raised Jewish and practicing that faith, found myself drawn to the Catholic Church. I was baptized on October 7, 2001.

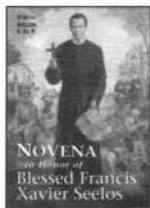
In 1978 or '79 I was diagnosed with diabetes and had trouble controlling it from the very beginning. Over the years I was hospitalized a few times in one kind of a coma or another. My everyday routine in Norway involved two different types of insulin shots six or seven times a day for a total of about 190 units of insulin per day. I have done this for about 15 years. In talking with Sister Francis, a Poor Clare nun, she mentioned Fr. Francis X. Seelos, for she knew we were moving to Baton Rouge.

One day in a chapel in Norway, I sat down and had a conversation with Fr. Francis. I told him of my challenges, my shortcomings, as I know them, and asked if he could help me. I knew in a flash that he was going to help. There was no doubt whatsoever, no conditions, no promises made, just a conversation and the knowledge that I would never take medication again. I brought all of the items needed for my diabetes with me to Baton Rouge, but have not taken one shot or had one day of illness since I have been here. I feel excellent and continue to talk with Fr. Francis on a regular basis. I have no idea how the workings of proving someone is a saint is done but I can tell you I speak with one every day!

## Portland, OR

I want to report a grace through Fr. Seelos' intercession. A week ago I had a fall on the area where surgeons had recently made a second dialysis access. With fear I felt the arm and found the buzzing noise (which indicates the fistula is functioning properly) was absent. Several times I tried, but no buzz. I went for my relic of Fr. Seelos. I held it and prayed fervently. Tried again. A big buzz which remains. Thanks be to God and Fr. Seelos' prayers.

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**Have a new address**       **Receiving more than one copy of the newsletter**

(please return enclosed envelope with your correction(s))

OR CALL: 800-464-2555 Ext. 425 (Please allow a minimum of 30 days to process your changes.)

**The Seelos Museum, Shrine and Gift Shop are now open on Saturdays!**

New Hours of Operation: Monday - Friday 9 AM - 3 PM • Saturday - 10 AM - 3:30 PM  
Tours available during the hours of operation - Other times by appointment. (504) 525-2495

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