

SEELOS CENTER

News

2030 Constance Street ❖ New Orleans, LA 70130
(504) 525-2495 ❖ www.seelos.org

National Shrine of Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos

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The Saint of the Mission Band

Lent is a season for parish missions, those special preaching and spiritual exercises conducted by missionaries for the purpose of renewing and strengthening the spiritual life of the faithful and for the conversion of lapsed Catholics. Saint Alphonsus Liguori, founder of the Redemptorists, in establishing his Congregation in 1732, stressed this activity for his religious.

Redemptorists had been giving missions and retreats from their earliest days in America in 1832. By 1851, a special band was organized exclusively for conducting English missions. In that band were several well-known convert priests, including Isaac Hecker, who later left the Redemptorists to found the Paulists.

To Francis Seelos' credit, during his time on the missions, the prestige of the Redemptorist missionaries in America reached new heights and the demand for their missions was great. No other Father could make such a favorable impression on the missions, said one of his companions. The warm-hearted Irish people called him "the saintly-looking Father." He had all the qualities needed for work on the missions. He was an effective speaker; people came for miles to go to confession to him; and at all times he was able to associate pleasantly with others.



Detail of original oil-on-canvas Stations of the Cross, Seelos Museum, New Orleans, by Brother Max Schmalzl, C.Ss.R. (1850-1930). (Photo credit: Diane C. Garcia).

When he mounted the pulpit, tall, slight, and ascetic-looking, his listeners were immediately attracted by his friendly glance, his gentle manner of acting, and his kindly tones. His voice was loud and clear, and he spoke in a vigorous and lively manner, often making expressive gestures. Once he was on the missions, his sermons were more often in English than in German.

The material of his sermons was simple; a child could understand them,

so well were they worked out. They were less distinguished for their deep argumentation than for their evident sincerity, and their power to move the will. He prepared well, as the hundreds of pages of his sermons illustrate; and he wrote them out beforehand. So-called extempore speaking, however, found little favor with him; he criticized those who attempted to give rough, hastily prepared talks to the faithful.

Averaging over twenty-three weeks a year, Fr. Seelos labored tirelessly on the missions. Time and again he marvelled at the working of God's grace on souls attending them: "Our missions here in the West are getting on well. The assistance of power from above is plainly visible, so that we are often humbled at seeing the great mercy and goodness of God." Father Seelos loved giving missions since his central pastoral concern was bringing people back to God and increasing the fervor of those always in God's grace. ✠

Text adapted from Cheerful Ascetic, by Michael J. Curley, C.Ss.R.

"Only one glance at the cross, only one glance at the sorrowful Mother, must fill us anew with courage & comfort, even if our sufferings should be ever so great, provided we want to be true disciples ..."

-- Francis X. Seelos

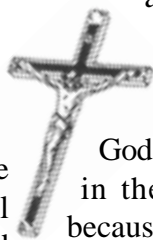
Message from the Editor

KNOCK ON WOOD!

The confreres gathered around Father Seelos on his deathbed were not emotionally prepared for his final words: "I know that I have not lived as I should. I fear that I have often scandalized you by my faults and imperfections. But I now on my deathbed beg your pardon for the scandal I have given you." One Father murmured, amid the audible sobs in the room, "If a saint speaks so, what will become of us poor devils, when we come to die?"

Few will deny that the Catholic Church in the United States has undergone a few hard knocks in recent years.

Lent is a time of humble recognition that we have not lived as we should. It is a time of begging pardon from God



and from one another for the scandal that we have caused by our faults and imperfections.

I am of the strong opinion that God wills Father Seelos' canonization in the foreseeable future, not only because he is so deserving, but because the U.S. Church is in dire need of a good priestly role model at this point in her history.

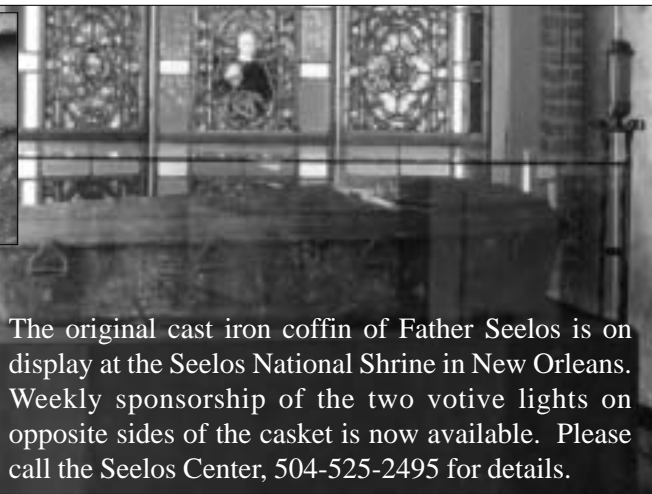
During the forty days of Lent then, in a spirit of penance and healing, let us behold the wood of the cross upon which hung our salvation. Let us also "knock on wood," with the prayerful request that Father Seelos will soon become a saint!

Fr. Byron Miller, C.Ss.R.



"You will gain more by receiving scorn peacefully than if you fasted for a week on bread and water. It is good to humble ourselves; but it is much more worthwhile to accept the humiliations that come to us from others."

-- St. Alphonsus Liguori



The original cast iron coffin of Father Seelos is on display at the Seelos National Shrine in New Orleans. Weekly sponsorship of the two votive lights on opposite sides of the casket is now available. Please call the Seelos Center, 504-525-2495 for details.



The National Seelos Shrine is an official member of the New Orleans Visitors Bureau.



Of one thing we are certain: Father Seelos was an effective and well-liked preacher. For instance, when the new church of St. Michael in Baltimore was blessed on December 26, 1859, the Redemptorist Provincial himself called on Fr. Seelos to preach the sermon for this solemn occasion. Father Seelos' sermon was titled "The Meaning of the Temple of God." It is said that "there was such a concourse of people that they reached down to Broadway."

The Seelos Center offers the following services:

◇ **Pilgrimages** to St. Mary's Assumption Church, Shrine & Museum of Bl. F. Seelos in New Orleans. For details & appointments, call the Center at 504-525-2495.

◇ **Daily Spiritual Message.**
Call 504-586-1803.

◇ **Blessings of the Sick** with a Mission Crucifix of Blessed F. Seelos in New Orleans & other areas. Please call:

East Jefferson

Gerry Heigle: 504-482-4404
Teresa LaCour: 504-887-0214

Ochsner

Marie Giorlando: 504-288-9977

Uptown/Innecity

Jack Pitkin: 504-524-6591

St. Bernard & Arabi

Jude Noote: 504-271-8481

Westbank

Elaine Freeman: 504-341-2213
or 504-328-0648
Rosary Stoltman: 504-393-9423

Baton Rouge

Gloria Bacque: 225-767-8432

Covington

Pam Crutchfield, R.T.: 985-892-6560

Houma/Thibodaux

Dan Montz, L.P.C.: 985-446-1805

Lafayette/Abbeville

Rita King: 337-984-4607

Mandeville

Bill & Sunny Schulz: 985-792-5394

Reserve/LaPlace

Deacon Percy Vicknair: 985-652-0039

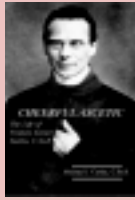
Slidell

Carmelie Mancuso: 985-641-6999
Mary Jo Stewart: 985-643-5548

◇ **Veneration of Blessed F. Seelos' Mission Crucifix** every Saturday after the 4 p.m. Mass & Sunday after the 11:30 a.m. Mass in historic St. Mary's Assumption Church (Josephine & Constance streets).

◇ **Weekly Mass** celebrated for the intentions of the Seelos benefactors. Please list Special Intentions in the space provided on the enclosed envelope.

The Seelos Center offers the following devotionals:



Cheerful Ascetic: Life of F.X. Seelos, a 480-page hardbound biography by Fr. M. Curley that captures Seelos' piety & personality. Index/photos. (Donation: \$22.95 + 6.95 p/h)

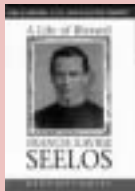
◇ **"Seelos: A Cause to Rejoice,"** an informative documentary on the life of Bl. F. Seelos; 30-min. VHS cassette. (Donation: \$17 - includes p/h)



Nothing Short of a Miracle, a 207-page paperback book by Patricia Treece on the healing power of the saints; two chapters feature Fr. Seelos. (Donation: \$15 - includes p/h)



Apparitions of Modern Saints, a 293-page abridged & updated paperback version of the book formerly entitled *Messengers* by Patricia Treece on the authentic appearances of the holy dead sent as God's messengers. Chapters on Fr. Seelos. (Donation: \$17 - includes p/h)



A Life of Blessed Francis X. Seelos, a 108-page paperback biography by Fr. Carl Hoegerl & Alicia von Stammwitz. (Donation: \$9 - includes p/h)



Seelos Medals: Made of nickel silver, round 3/4" dia. with loop, antique finish, finely crafted in the U.S. (Donation: \$3 each or 2/\$5 + \$1 p/h)

◇ **Pamphlets & Prayer Cards** of Bl. F. Seelos, available in English, Spanish & Vietnamese.



Audio Cassette of a spiritual conference talk on God as Father & Bl. F. Seelos, given by Fr. Charles Mallen, C.Ss.R. (Donation: \$7 - includes p/h)

◇ **A Bl. F. Seelos vigil candle** will burn near his sacred resting place in St. Mary's Assumption Church, New Orleans, for an offering of \$3.

◇ **First, Second & Third-Class Relics** of Bl. F. Seelos. Contact the Seelos Center, 504-525-2495.

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



New

Introduce Youth, ages 7 through 12, to Father Seelos in "Willy Finds Victory: A Blessed Francis Seelos Story" by Joan Stromberg (110 pages, with illustrations). \$11, includes p/h.

Lenten Quotable Quote from Father Seelos

"Special sufferings are actually the trials through which a true spouse of Christ makes herself worthy of her Beloved. After Samson had killed the lion, he found on his return, in the mouth of the dead animal, a large and sweet honeycomb. So also when the pleasure-loving animal in us is put to death through unremitting prayer, the daily fulfilling of our duty, constant self-denial and carrying of our cross, then everything becomes sweet; then we understand the value of suffering. Then a gentle and joyful aura radiates from our whole person, because it gives expression to that peace which the world does not have, does not give, and does not know. It is the joy that our loving Redeemer gives to his followers, a peace that is the real sign of perfection and holiness."

Valentine Gifts for Loved Ones!

.999 Fine Silver Seelos Medals

Round (3/4" diameter) with loop; brushed image with polished reverse and polished edge. Marked with .999 FS on reverse top. \$39 (+ \$3 p/h)



Cherub Marble Paperweights

Made from 100% natural marble. Feel the quality! "Old World" look depicting "Praying Cherub" and "Pious Cherub" from St. Mary's Assumption Church High Altar, New Orleans. Approx. 4" x 4". \$26 (includes p/h).



Cherub Cards

Detail of St. Mary's Assumption Church High Altar

Gift-boxed sets of 20 cards/envelopes. Each card measures 5-1/2" x 4-1/4"; blank on inside; scripture verse on back. \$10 (includes p/h).



TESTIMONIALS

Covington, LA

A couple of years ago, my mother was diagnosed with an aortic valve needing replacement. At the time her health was not good enough to undergo the surgery so we chose to wait. In March 2004 she went into congestive heart failure and we almost lost her. Again in April, being much worse, we almost lost her again. At that point, she underwent open heart surgery at the age of 80 to replace the aortic valve in her heart. With the intercession of Fr. Seelos, she came through the surgery miraculously. All doctors did not offer much hope because of her age and health. Last month, Mom was rushed to the hospital with gall stones and now needs her gall bladder removed. Again we offer it up to Fr. Seelos to intercede for us. I feel truly blessed by Fr. Seelos' intercession and I thank God every day for all he has done for my family.

Bellaire, TX

I am a lay member of Bl. Mother Teresa of Calcutta's group, but now am joining in your Redemptorist spirituality too. Bl. Francis Seelos' life inspired me so much to try to be cheerful. I like his specialness in the confessional, gentle and ever forgiving. I also like his ability to work long hours; I had slacked off on that.

Belleville, IL

I gave a relic holy card of Blessed Francis Seelos to a friend in Minnesota. She is Lutheran and believes in good prayer. She had a skin cancer removed and was to go back for the second spot on her leg. After many prayers the second cancer disappeared!

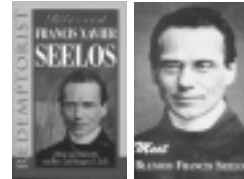
Beach Haven, NJ

I would like to relate a gift given to me after praying to Blessed Francis Seelos. I was scheduled to have a total knee replacement in November. In September 2003 I had surgery on my left knee. The surgeon realigned my knee, which dislocated and he secured the tendons with two pins. After months of bending this knee after surgery, I was told by the surgeon that because of my age, my knee just refused to stay in place. A friend of mine who is a nun gave me a prayer card of Bl. Francis and told me to pray to him. I faithfully prayed the prayer each day and rubbed his image on my knee. I just asked the Lord, if it was His will, to please put my knee back in position through the intercession of Bl. Francis. X-rays later showed that the knee was back in position and surgery was not required. There is no other explanation other than praying to Bl. Francis that this knee went back into its position! Praise God and thank you Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos for your intercessions!



LEFT: 24-pg. "People Ask His Prayers"
\$2 (includes p/h)

RIGHT: 27-pg. "The Blessed Immigrant"
\$2 (includes p/h)



LEFT: 24-pg. "Bl. Francis X. Seelos, Redemptorist"
\$2 (includes p/h)

RIGHT: 36-pg. "Meet Bl. Francis Seelos"
\$2 (includes p/h)



LEFT: 48-page Guided Retreat with Bl. Francis Seelos.
\$5 (includes p/h)

RIGHT: 32-page Seelos Novena with sturdy cover.
\$3 (includes p/h)

Did You Know? South Ranks High on "Generosity Index"



As reported by the Associated Press, Southern states, so often near the bottom of national economic rankings, continue to place high in at least one category: charitable giving. The Boston-based Catalogue for Philanthropy annually ranks the 50 states on how much residents donate to charity in relation to their income. In 2004, Louisiana ranked fourth, up three places from 2003 in what the group calls its Generosity Index. Of the states in the top 10, six are Southern states, with the top ranked being Mississippi for the eighth year. The bottom 10 are all from the Northeast and Midwest.

Sarah Comiskey, program coordinator for the Louisiana Association of Nonprofit Organizations, said Louisiana residents' generosity is tied to their Southern heritage, which places an emphasis on religious values that include helping those in need.

Seelos Center News

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

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