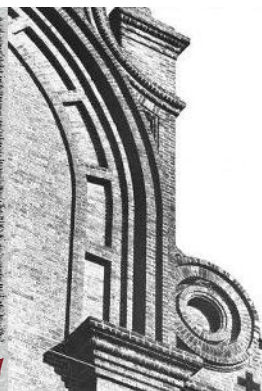


# SEELOS CENTER NEWS

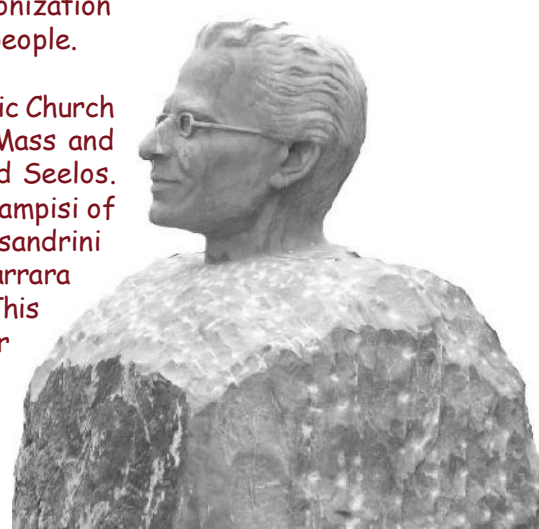
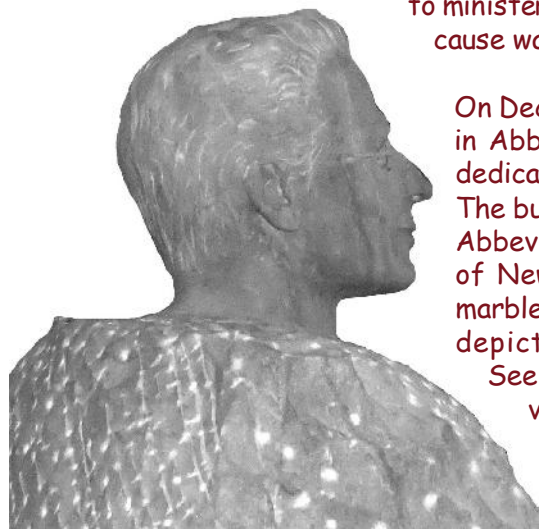
*National Shrine of Blessed  
Francis Xavier Seelos*  
*In the Redemptorist Church  
of Saint Mary's Assumption*  
2030 Constance Street (504) 525-2495  
New Orleans, LA 70130 (504) 525-2499



*Volume XLVIII Number 2 February 2009*

*www.seelos.org*

Cajuns are the ancestors of several thousand French-Catholics who found a home in southern Louisiana, after being deported in 1755 by the new British rulers of Canada. With the same determination that marked their fight to stay together as a people of faith, the Cajuns lived a communal, isolated existence in the past, and are known for their distinctive cuisine, music, and love for life. They are also known for their tremendous love for the Catholic faith! 1843 was the year that the city of Abbeville on Vermilion Bayou was founded by a Capuchin missionary; that same year, the first Redemptorists came to Louisiana, and one of their prime mission fields became "Cajun" country in the southwest part of the state. Father Seelos succumbed to yellow fever in New Orleans before his missionary activities allowed him to minister in Acadiana, but his subsequent canonization cause was embraced wholeheartedly by its people.



On December 13, 2008, St. Theresa Catholic Church in Abbeville was filled to capacity for a Mass and dedication of a statue in honor of Blessed Seelos. The bust was donated by Larry & Sharon Campisi of Abbeville, and was sculpted by Franco Alessandrini of New Orleans, who crafted it from Carrara marble in the Tuscany region of Italy. This depiction of the ever-cheerful Father Seelos now greets visitors in the main vestibule of the church. He appears right at home among loving and lovable Cajun-Catholics!



**FROM ABBEVILLE  
TO ANNAPOLIS:  
SEELOS  
DEVOTION  
CONTINUES  
TO GROW!**



Mary, Queen of Peace Church in Mandeville, LA was dedicated on October 5, 2008. The parishioners, and pastor, Rev. Ronald Calkins, maintained the custom for the sacred mysteries of the Faith to be celebrated over relics. Those of Blessed Seelos were chosen & repositied below the hand-carved Italian altar.

**New Plaque in St. Mary's Church, Annapolis MD  
Installed in January 2009!**

*A portion of the text reads: "He was pastor of St. Mary's and rector and prefect of students in the Redemptorist seminary here in 1857 and 1862-63. Under him, the elementary school was founded and African-Americans and immigrants were cared for. During the Civil War, he and other Redemptorists visited military hospitals, Camp Parole, and Fort Monroe. ... The window above, installed in 1978, depicts Father Seelos instructing Redemptorist students in the Carroll Gardens ...."*



## MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

*Why am I here?* A less profound answer to this question is that, strictly speaking, I am at the Seelos Center because my predecessor needed a knee replacement! Especially during Lent, we are reminded that there is a time to be born & a time to die, a time to reap & a time to sow. All things happen for a reason -- which can trigger other things to happen in time as well. Strictly speaking, Father Seelos was assigned to New Orleans to take the place of a Redemptorist who was sent to Annapolis when three other priests drowned there in a boating accident. Even a tragic accident can trigger things in God's divine plan! To the one surviving priest, Seelos wrote, "After having escaped such dangers, your life belongs to God in a more special manner." Father Seelos provides a profound answer and challenge to those who question why they are still here, when others are not.

Byron Miller, C.Ss.R.



From Most Reverend Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R., Superior General of the Redemptorists in Rome, regarding the publication, *Death, Where is Your Sting: Blessed Francis Seelos, C.Ss.R. & His Edifying Encounter with Yellow Fever:*

*"Beyond my personal fascination with Seelos, I find your book valuable for two reasons. First, the account of his final days illustrates in dramatic fashion the [worldwide Redemptorist] sexennial theme, 'Giving our lives for abundant redemption,' showing that this ideal is not a theory to be mastered but rather a way of life -- and death. While Redemptorists are inspired by Luke 4, 16ss, I think that an equally important text for us is the hymn to Christ in Philippians (2,5-11). Blessed Seelos teaches us how the Redemptorist way of discipleship cannot avoid kenosis, if we wish to have the 'same attitude that was in Christ Jesus.' I think that this book will appeal to an audience beyond the Congregation. As the baby-boomers age and grapple with the "eternal truths," popular culture displays an increasing interest in death and dying. Novels, self-help books and films, especially, seem to want to grapple with the Big Questions. The voice of Seelos should be part of this crucial conversation."*

*Develop a Deathbed Mentality!* "Imagine waking up every day and asking yourself the simple question: 'What would I do today if it was my last?' Then think about how you would treat your family, your colleagues and even those who you don't know. Think about how productive and excited you would be to live every moment to the maximum. The deathbed question alone has the power to change your life." -- Robin S. Sharma, *The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari*

## Seelos Welcome Center Update

There was a small town with two Catholic churches, one staffed by a Jesuit, the other by a Redemptorist. The popular Jesuit priest urgently needed funds to erect a new church. He sent appeals far & wide, and one appeal found its way to the Redemptorist. The two had been good friends for years, and so the Redemptorist wrote: "Dear Father, you will appreciate the fact that I cannot assist in building your new church, financially or otherwise; but I take great pleasure in enclosing my check for ten dollars toward tearing down your old one!"

We urgently need funds to erect a new Seelos Welcome Center. You have been our good friends for years, and this appeal by me far & wide for the remainder of this year may already sound tiresome to you. However, if you can assist in building the new welcome center, please designate "SWC" on your response; if you cannot assist financially, would you take great pleasure in asking those popular Jesuits or others to do so?

Seelos Center Director

*Built as School Sisters of Notre Dame Convent circa 1939, this 3-story building is presently being converted to a Seelos Welcome Center to include exhibit space & orientation theater for visitors, offices for staff, gift shop, Seelos archives & chapel.*

*Cost of project is approximately \$3.5 million; roughly \$2 million has already been secured for rehabilitation of the building! The remaining \$1.5 million is our needed goal.*

*Please visit [www.seelos.org](http://www.seelos.org) for further information.*



## Seelos Center Services

☞ **Pilgrimages** to St. Mary's Assumption Church, Seelos Shrine & Museum. Call the Center at 504-525-2495 or 525-2499.

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

☞ **Blessings of the Sick** with a Seelos Crucifix in designated area hospitals. Please call:

### East Jefferson

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

### Ochsner

Mark/Monica Surprenant 504-895-5371

### Uptown/Innecity

Jack Pitkin: 504-524-6591  
Dennis Waldron: 504-442-6336

### Westbank

Elaine Freeman: 504-341-2213  
Rosary Stoltman: 504-393-9423

### Baton Rouge

Gloria Bacque: 225-767-8432  
Marie Giorlando: 225-615-7888

### Covington

Dr. Ann Logarbo: 985-886-0218

### Houma/Thibodaux

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

### Lacombe/Abita Springs

Billy Bachemin: 504-232-0349

### Lafayette/Abbeville

Rita King: 337-984-4607

### Mandeville

Bill & Sunny Schulz: 985-792-5394  
Pam Crutchfield: 985-966-0358

### New Iberia/Berwick/Baldwin

Rachel Gonsoulin: 337-224-7855  
Fred Roy: 337-380-0646

### Pearl River

Gail Garay: 985-863-7562

### Ponchatoula/Hammond

Gasper Corpora: 225-294-5938

### Shreveport/Bossier City

Tom & Marjorie Rivers: 318-797-3116

### Slidell

Carmelie Mancuso: 985-502-7325  
Mary Jo Stewart: 985-502-9033

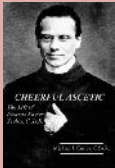
### St. Bernard/Arabi

Patricia Noote: 504-756-4163

☞ **Veneration of Bl. Seelos' Mission Crucifix** in St. Mary's Assumption Church at Josephine & Constance St.

☞ **Weekly Mass** celebrated for Seelos benefactors. Please include Special Intentions in the enclosed envelope.

## Seelos Center Devotionals



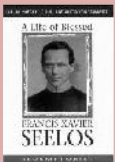
**Cheerful Ascetic**, 480-pg. hard-bound biography by Fr. M. Curley that captures Seelos' piety & personality; index/photos (Donation: \$30, incl. p/h)



**.999 Fine Silver Seelos Medal** Round, 3/4" dia., with loop; brushed image with polished reverse & edge. Marked with .999 FS on reverse top. (Donation: \$58 - includes p/h).



**Willy Finds Victory: A Blessed Francis Seelos Story**, Introduce youth, ages 7 - 12, to Fr. Seelos in this 110-page illustrated book by Joan Stromberg (Donation: \$13, incl. p/h)



**A Life of Blessed Francis X. Seelos**, 108-page paperback biography. (Donation: \$12 - 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)



**Seelos Perpetual Mass League:** one-of-a-kind lasting remembrance for you or for someone dear, living or deceased. (Donation: \$25, contact Seelos Ctr. or website for enrollment)



**Seelos, Tireless Intercessor**, a 68-min. documentary on Seelos' miraculous life; seen on EWTN. (Donation: \$25 DVD / \$10 VHS - incl. p/h)



**Death, Where Is Your Sting?**, tender account of Seelos' final weeks of life as told by witnesses of his death to yellow fever. Seldom revealed details transport us to the bedside of a true martyr. Hardcover, 175 pp., photos. (Donation: \$24 - incl. p/h)



**Sincerely, Seelos**, the 201 collected letters of Fr. Seelos. Hardcover, 512 pgs., illustr. (Donation: \$35 - incl. p/h)

☞ **A Seelos Vigil Candle** will burn near his sacred resting place in Seelos Shrine, New Orleans, for an offering of \$4.

☞ **Seelos 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>-Class Relics/ Seelos Pamphlets & Prayer Cards** in English, Spanish, Vietnamese. Call Seelos Center, 504-525-2495 or 2499.

Please allow up to 2 weeks for delivery.



## A SAINT AMONG US: MAGGI'S STORY

Maggi is a devotee of Francis Seelos. And for good reason. Six years ago doctors gave her 6 months to live. "I'm as healthy as an old goat," Maggi said with a hearty laugh. "God still had another mission for me & that was to take care of my husband." She has done exactly that, but first, someone had to take care of Maggi. That someone, she believes, was Seelos. In 2000 Maggi learned she had stage three colon cancer that had spread to her lymph nodes. Surgery & 6 horrible months of chemotherapy followed after which she was told her Cat scan "looked good." For the next couple of years Maggi thought she had dodged the bullet. Then, something wasn't right. She wasn't recovering as expected. Wasn't responding to medications. Another Cat scan was ordered & she was devastated to learn her colon cancer had returned. And it had returned with a vengeance. She was briefly released from the hospital but would soon return so the doctors could determine what, if anything, could be done. The day before the exploratory surgery she went to Sunday Mass. Afterward she received a blessing with a Seelos relic. It just so happens that Fr. Martin Lawrence, a New Orleans native who had grown up with the Seelos legend, was in attendance for that blessing. Good priests prayed. Good doctors explored. But there was nothing good about the news Maggi heard when she awoke from surgery. "We're sorry, there is nothing that can be done. You have 6 months to live." Though she'd been given her death sentence, Maggi still clung to hope & to Seelos, and asked everyone around her to pray that the biopsy would come back negative. She even asked her oncologist. He responded firmly, "They know what they saw in there and we are 99% certain it is cancer. You'd better be prepared for the worst day of your life when those results come back." The results came back. Not one test, but three. They all said the same thing. No cancer, no cancer, no cancer. It was more likely the best day of her life.

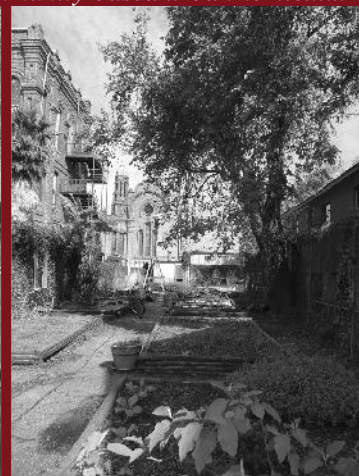
[Written by editor Joe Benton, in *The Star* (Vol. 15, #3, Fall 2008), the newsletter of Stella Maris Catholic Church, Sullivan's Island, SC -- founded in 1845.]



**Lenten Recommendation: Anne Rice's first autobiography, Called Out of Darkness: A Spiritual Confession -- an inspiring faith conversion, with evocative descriptions of growing up in New Orleans, & Anne's personal memories in the parish with the Redemptorists, Mercy Sisters & School Sisters of Notre Dame. Hardbound/245 pages. Also, receive a complimentary souvenir issue of Liguorian magazine featuring an "Interview with Anne Rice." \$30 donation (incl. p/h).**



**Did You Know ... the Seelos Shrine is a sacred space that provides green space as well! In 2002 the Seelos Center acquired an empty lot approximately 30 x 129 feet, at 925 Jackson Avenue, one block from St. Mary's Assumption Church. Since that time, it has been used by Parkway Partners, a civic organization that sponsors such programs as "Community Gardens," "Adopt-a-Neutral Ground," "Save Our Trees," & "Sow & Grow: School Yard Gardens." The Seelos Center is proud to do its part in allowing for needed community-based urban horticulture projects!**



## EVANSVILLE, IN

I have been free of cancer since my surgery a year ago. I prayed, wearing Bl. Seelos' relic, and agreed to follow my doctor's advice when he suggested another colonoscopy. Another miracle was granted when the doctor told me he removed two small polyps and I was cancer free. He told me to return after three years! Thanks to Bl. Seelos for granting my prayers.

## ST. LOUIS, MO

Several months ago, I was diagnosed with a serious blood problem, the opposite of leukemia. I was scheduled for numerous tests including a bone marrow biopsy, which was postponed for an unrelated problem. Last week, the doctor announced that my platelet level had gone down so significantly that he was discharging me. Thanks be to God! I wear a 2<sup>nd</sup> class Seelos relic every day and give one to those in need. They always end up thanking me.

## AMITE, LA

I have arthritis, which makes me unable to move comfortably until late in the morning. A few visits to the chiropractor helped for a little while, but the pain returned. Upon my daily attendance at Eucharistic Adoration, I began praying for Fr. Seelos' intervention for my back. My pain level used to be about an 8 on a scale of 10; now it is only a .5 (if I think about it at all). Yes, my problem is still present, but it is nowhere near the pain I used to suffer. I am not on medication, and all I do is walk on the treadmill at least twice a week. All I know is that once I dedicated myself to daily adoration, and included intercessions from Fr. Seelos, I started feeling so much better.

# TESTIMONIALS

## BATON ROUGE, LA

I was in the hospital 18 times in 23 months and had 93 transfusions! During one of my hospital stays, a priest gave me a Bl. Seelos prayer card and relic. I have said this prayer every day & I have not been in the hospital since November 2007. I have MDS (Aplastic Anemia) & Crohn's disease, which can cause leukemia. There is no cure for what I have, but anything is possible through God, & I thank Bl. Seelos for his prayers for me.

## DALLAS, TX

I had a problem in my family where my granddaughter was taken away after 9 years with me. I asked Fr. Seelos for a miracle and got his picture for my wall to help. Now she is home. It took over a year for my miracle but at last my granddaughter is home!

## HARAHAN, LA

I was diagnosed with advanced arthritis (for my age, 50) several years ago. I had a total knee replacement on my right knee & knew it was a matter of time before needing the other knee replaced. However, when I scheduled the second knee replacement, I also had a lot of pain in my right heel. My second knee surgery was successful, but my heel pain returned with such intensity that I was near the point of serious depression. Every night, I prayed to Fr. Seelos, holding his relic on my heel. I prayed to him while undergoing physical therapy; then after 3 months the heel pain gradually left me. I am very grateful to God & Fr. Seelos for his intercession. I feel it is such a joy & gift from God to be able to simply walk pain free. I will never take for granted this wonderful gift!

## LONG ISLAND, NY

Two years ago, my daughter was diagnosed with cancer. I obtained a Bl. Seelos relic and prayed every day. I still do. We kept the Seelos relic in our room at the hospital. She is doing well; no sores in her mouth, nor did she get a fever. Now, she is home and it's our best Christmas ever.

### *Bust of Francis Seelos*

Created by artist Franco Alessandrini & his wife, Margaret. Plaster with deep gold finish, weighing over 5.5 lbs. Handcrafted in New Orleans. Measures approx. 11.5"H x 8"W x 5.5"D. Donation: \$97 (incl. p/h)



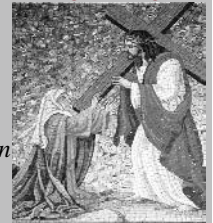
### *Cherub Cards Boxed Set*

Cherub Detail of Saint Mary's Assumption Church High Altar. Gift-boxed set of 20 cards/envelopes. Measures 5-1/2" x 4-1/4"; blank on inside; scripture verse on back. \$10 (incl. p/h)



### *Praying the Way of the Cross CD*

Prayers & Music by St. Alphonsus Liguori, Redemptorist Founder. Featuring Liam Neeson, acclaimed Irish-American actor. \$22 (incl. p/h)



Seelos Center News

A monthly newsletter for friends of BL. FRANCIS X. SEELOS  
 Denver Provincial Superior:  
 Very Rev. Thomas D. Picton, C.Ss.R.  
 Seelos Center Executive Director / Editor:  
 Rev. Byron Miller, C.Ss.R.  
 Seelos Center Administrator: Joyce Bourgeois  
 Assistant Administrator: Nick Punch  
 Seelos Center News (USPS 4472) published monthly  
 by the Redemptorists / National Shrine of Bl. F.X. Seelos  
 Subscription is \$12 per year.

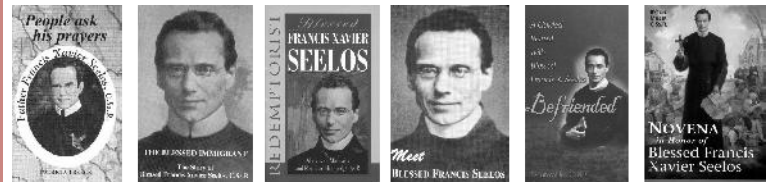
Dear Father Byron: In my own way, I want to support the cause of Blessed Francis Seelos in gratitude for Graces Received & Prayers Answered. \$\_\_\_\_\_ to be used for:

- the ministry & maintenance at the National Shrine of Bl. Francis Seelos.
- the Seelos Scholarship Fund to support Redemptorist Seminarians.
- item(s) designated below:  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

my Mass Intention(s):  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

*All contributions to the Seelos Shrine are income tax deductible.*

## ENJOY THE COMPANY OF FR. SEELOS



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