

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 3 March 2009

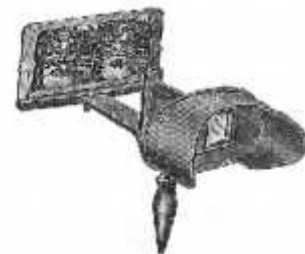
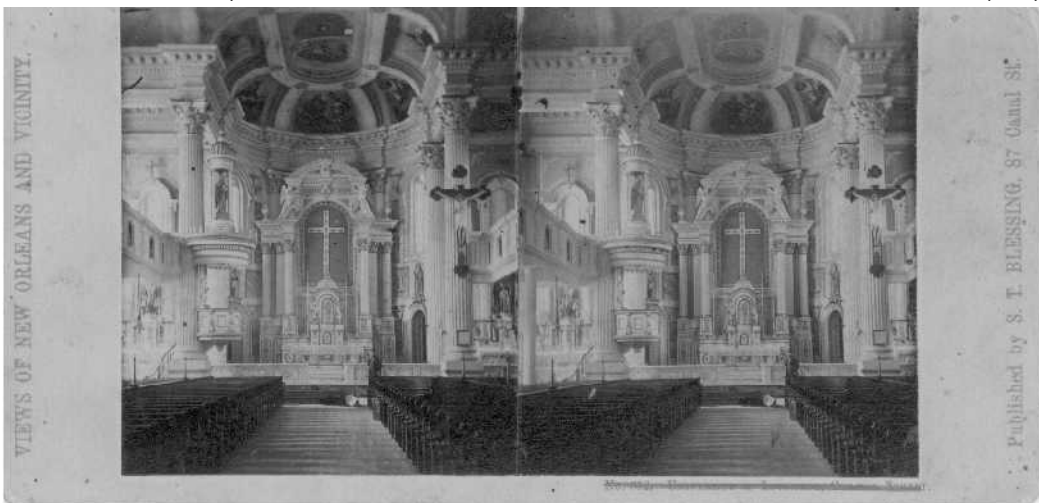
www.seelos.org

The Stereoscope Series
Part II of III

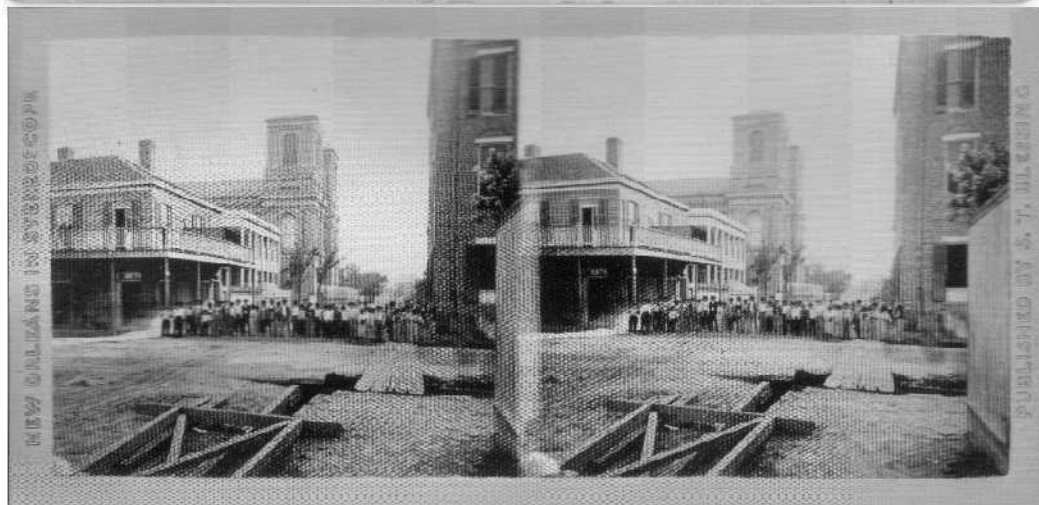
The Sanctuary as Seelos Saw It

Yellow fever took not only a physical toll, but a spiritual toll as well. People of the church congregations neglected their religious duties, not going to Mass or confession, and not receiving communion. They were either confined to their homes with the dread fever or were afraid to venture from their homes, out of fear of contacting the disease. Feeling the need to bring the people back to the spirituality neglected during the epidemic months, the Rector approved and introduced Saturday evening devotions in St. Mary's Assumption Church. These devotions, consisting of saying the rosary & the litany in honor of the Blessed Virgin, under whose patronage the church was placed, continued long after the eventual eradication of the disease.

The Archbishop, also seeing the need for spiritual renewal, requested the Redemptorists to conduct missions in various parishes. Visiting Redemptorists [in 1854] conducted a mission in St. Alphonsus Church, in which 2,000 parishioners & friends attended during the course of two weeks. This spirit of renewal increased the attendance at Sunday Mass, making it necessary to add two more Masses to the existing schedule. A direct result of the mission was the need to build a new church as St. Alphonsus Church could no longer accommodate the increased attendance. (Excerpt from *The German Catholic Churches of New Orleans 1836-1898*, by Raymond N. Calvert, 1986)



Before computers, or even television, 19th & early 20th century home entertainment could be found in stereoviews. Between 1850 & 1910, few middle-class American homes were without a stereoscope and a selection of views. It was an intimate medium that could be enjoyed individually or in small groups. Through a stereoscopic viewer, one could be transported to some faraway, exotic place, like New Orleans during Carnival.



Fr. Seelos' ability to speak 3 languages, English, German & French, was especially useful in New Orleans, where the Redemptorists actually had tri-lingual ministry: St. Alphonsus Church for the English-speaking, St. Mary's Assumption for the German-speaking, and Notre Dame de Bon Secours for the French-speaking. Seelos was mainly responsible for the pastoral care of St. Mary's; however, only two days after his arrival in New Orleans, he baptized a child in St. Alphonsus Church. A few months later, Seelos' zeal was put to good use beyond the confines of St. Mary's, to include hearing confessions in English for the two-week mission given at St. Alphonsus Church in 1867. These stereoviews by S. T. Blessing depict the interior & exterior of St. Alphonsus Church essentially as Seelos would have seen it. The city streets at what is now Constance & Josephine have improved slightly since then!

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Christianity is always somewhere in decline, suggested Catholic author Evelyn Waugh in the 1940s, & "always Providence has another people quietly maturing to relieve the decadent of their burden." Waugh believed Americans were destined to provide that relief, for "providence is schooling and strengthening a people for the historic destiny long borne by Europe."

Since Waugh's prediction in the 1940s, it is arguable whether American Catholicism has already matured and is itself presently in decline. But this much, we are certain: if Providence determined American Catholics to inherit the destiny long borne by Europe, it was immigrant European Catholics who helped America arrive at its point of maturity! If indeed Providence passed the torch from Europe to America, it was Catholicism by immigrants from Europe that helped strengthen our initial flame!

A century before Waugh made his prediction, a young Francis Seelos wrote to his cousin in the 1840s: "With a great depth of interest, you have probably heard that Providence has called me to a distant land. Willingly and with the happiest of dispositions, I am following this call If I had to depend only on my own strength, I would lose all confidence and courage in such an undertaking. But when I think of the help of God ... I feel strong and powerful enough to work in the vineyard of the Lord."

Always Christianity somewhere is in decline; perhaps to some degree that is true today for western Europe or North America. If so, may Providence be quietly and powerfully at work to provide saintly relief in the vineyard of the Lord, as it had in Francis Xavier Seelos!

Byron Miller, C.Ss.R.



My name is Tina and I am 13 years old. My mom, dad, and I toured your church and we also prayed and got prayed for. I have been trying to gain weight for the past two years because average 8th grader is 80-100 lbs., and I was only in my 50s. In only a week after our visit I gained 5½ lbs! I am now weighing 62½ pounds! --Mamou, LA



You are Invited

to the 21st Annual

*Blessed Francis Seelos Mass
in New Orleans*

SUNDAY, APRIL 26, 2009

1:00 p.m.

St. Mary's Assumption Church

SEELOS WELCOME CENTER UPDATE

Built as a 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, staff offices, gift shop, Seelos archives & chapel -- and an "answer to prayers" for anyone who has ever endured long lavatory lines at the Seelos Masses!

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 for further information.

To Build It Up, We Must First

Break It Down ... Into THIRDS!

✂ 1/3 of the goal (\$500,000) is hoped from ONE potential donor source (individual, foundation, grant, organization, or other).

✂ 1/3 of the goal (\$500,000) is hoped from TEN potential donor sources (individuals, foundations, grants, organizations, or other), that can each contribute a total of \$50,000 by December 31, 2009.

✂ 1/3 of the goal (\$500,000) is hoped from ALL OTHER potential donor sources (individuals, families, foundations, grants, organizations, such as Knights of Columbus Councils, & others), that can each contribute various amounts, of which no sum is too small, by December 31, 2009.

**CAN YOU PLEASE HELP
ACCOMPLISH THIS GOAL?**

Please designate "SWC" on your offering so that we may honor your intentions.

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

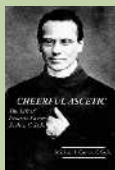
St. Bernard/Arabi

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



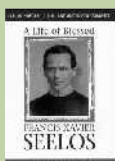
Cheerful Ascetic, 480-pg. hard-bound biography by Fr. M. Curley that captures Seelos' piety & personality; index/photos (Donation: \$30, incl. p/h)



.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)



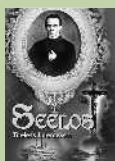
A Life of Blessed Francis X. Seelos, 108-page paperback biography. (Donation: \$12 - includes p/h)



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. Hardbound, 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 1st, 2nd & 3rd-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: JANET'S STORY

Janet is a healer. She is a certified Healing Touch practitioner and has a bachelor's degree in Nursing & Management. She has dedicated her entire life to healing others, so when fate turned the tables and she became the patient, she turned to Seelos. "I'm Irish. I'm Catholic. And I believe in the power of prayer to heal. Prayer is not second best to anything," she said. An abnormally large mass was found in Janet's left breast during a routine physical. Her doctor was more than alarmed & insisted on an immediate biopsy. That would be the first step, in all likelihood, to invasive & radical surgery. Janet respectfully declined. She felt this could be reversed using an alternative approach to healing such as organic diet, exercise, energy work & prayer. She told the doctor she'd come back in a year. As a practitioner of Healing Touch, Janet would now have to practice what she preached and set about to do just that. The International Healing Touch website defines its philosophy as "A relaxing, nurturing energy therapy. Gentle touch assists in balancing your physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being ... [it] works with your energy field to support your natural ability to heal ... works in harmony with standard medical care." Janet is one of over 86,000 nurses & health professionals who use Healing Touch in both hospitals & private practice. While it is considered "new" to many people, it is in fact, based on proven research. During her year of self-treatment, Janet became aware of Seelos and sought out his blessing. She wore his relic, she says with a smile, "24/7." A year passed and now it was time for her second breast examination. "Your left breast feels the same as your right one," her internist said. A mammogram with a sonogram was ordered. The results indicated cancer in one view, yet in another view it was absent. An MRI was ordered and five days passed before Janet got the results. She spent those days with long walks by the ocean and went deep into her faith with prayer. Her mantra was repeated over & over: "I don't have cancer. I know I don't have it. Father Seelos please pray for me." Janet says she had a spiritual validation when the results came back. "When they told me I didn't have cancer, I already knew it."

[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.]

SEELOS BIRTHDAY MASS SUCCESS!

"Thank you for the beautiful Healing Mass. I had a wonderful day. It was a blessed day for all who attended. My brother-in-law just found out he has lung cancer; he couldn't come, but his son, daughter & granddaughter came, & we all prayed for him." -- Jeanerette, LA

On Sunday, January 11, 2009, the annual Seelos Healing Mass was celebrated by a multitude of people in need of healing & by people representing those who were too ill to come. Attendance at this Mass in the 8 years since it was inaugurated, has quickly outnumbered the other Seelos Masses -- belying those who believe the Sacraments of Penance & Anointing are of little relevance today!



Fr. Eugene Harrison & the Sacrament of Anointing; Joanie Hartson proclaims the Scripture. (Photo credit: Bill Coskrey)



MYERSTOWN, PA

For the past 4 years, my husband & I have been fulltime RV travelers. We sold all our earthly treasures, left family, friends & our parish home where we had both been very active, and began our journey to serve the Lord wherever we were led. We incorporate pilgrimages to Catholic shrines, basilicas and cathedrals in our travels, and it was not by accident that we were led to the Seelos Shrine last September. Joyce Bourgeois [Seelos Center Administrator] was filled with a plethora of information regarding Bl. Seelos. Praise God, as she has a beautiful & loving soul. It was a grace meeting her! I was led into the shrine and spent my time there as an intercessor; by the time I reached Fr. Seelos' casket, my heart felt as if it had outgrown my body. I experienced a beautiful, hypnotically wonderful aroma in the air; I was totally at peace and had no fears or concerns. I knew without a doubt that I was filled with the Holy Spirit, and in some way, Fr. Seelos was interceding on my behalf.

UNDISCLOSED LOCATION

My daughter had her first child in 2008, after a very difficult pregnancy. This should have been a happy time, but each doctor's visit brought more bad news – a cyst on her brain, her stomach on the incorrect side, & possible chromosome problems. My mother introduced me to the wonders of Fr. Seelos. She visited his shrine and obtained a first class relic for my granddaughter. We both prayed to him & burned his candle in our kitchens. Extensive testing during the first 24 hours of my granddaughter's birth showed the cyst gone and no chromosome problems. We continued to pray. The hole in her heart that was discovered was extremely

TESTIMONIALS

small and they expect it to close on its own. Her stomach location poses no problems. She had malrotation of her intestines and underwent surgery at 5-1/2 weeks. Although the doctors were fantastic, Fr. Seelos deserves so much credit for the good health of our "miracle baby," now a year old.

NEWPORT, RI

Fifteen years ago our home was destroyed and our baby severely lead-poisoned as a result. At the time everyone thought it was contractors' neglect. The man last seen at the sight which caused this horror left town the next day. We have been searching for him for 15 years. On January 10, 2009 my husband & I watched the television movie on Bl. Seelos. Neither of us had heard about him before. We also heard the next day was his birthday. So on January 11, we prayed together for Bl. Seelos to intercede to our Lord on our behalf for a miracle. On January 12, the man that we have been searching for walked right in front of our truck; we now have a new beginning in the case.

WOODSTOCK, VA

Last September I visited the Seelos Shrine. It was an answer to my prayers. My daughter-in-law recently learned that her breast cancer spread into her sternum. I was astonished to see the reliquary of Fr. Seelos' actual sternum, & so I put her health into Fr. Seelos' care. (She was 4 months pregnant when originally diagnosed; it is because of Fr. Seelos' prayers, among others, that I have a beautiful & healthy year-old grandson now!) The shrine staff was so helpful & friendly. One volunteer even drove us to a nearby church so that we wouldn't miss Mass.

WATERLIET, MI

We prayed that the adoption of a 2-year-old girl would become a reality, even though everything was against that happening. This week my son & his wife received news that the birth-father consented, after two years of trying to get him to agree. All our prayers to Blessed Seelos have been answered. Thankyou, dear Fr. Seelos. I'm so excited & happy. I'm 90-years-old and love this little girl so much. I'm going to try in my own way to let people know about Fr. Seelos.



LENTEN RECOMMENDATIONS



Praying the Way of the Cross CD

The 14 Stations are taken from the classic text by St. Alphonsus Liguori, Redemptorist Founder. The Prayers are accompanied by the sacred hymns of this great saint. Featuring Liam Neeson, acclaimed Irish-American actor. \$22 (incl. p/h)

Called Out of Darkness: A Spiritual Confession

Anne Rice's first autobiography is 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).



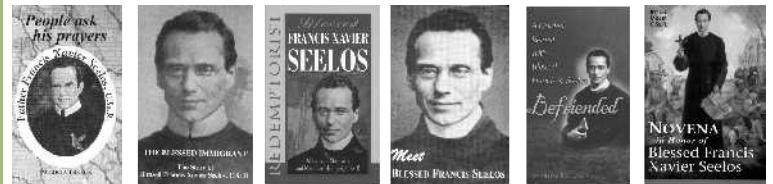
Dear Father Byron: In my own way, I want to support the cause of Blessed Francis Seelos in gratitude for Graces Received & Prayers Answered. \$_____ to be used for:

- the ministry & maintenance at the National Shrine of Bl. Francis Seelos.
- construction of the new Seelos Welcome Center during '09.
- item(s) designated below:

- my Mass Intention(s):

All contributions to the Seelos Shrine are income tax deductible.

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