



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

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www.seelos.org

SEELOS VOLUNTEERS: HALF-CENTURY OF EVERYDAY SAINTS

In the early 1900s the cause for [Seelos'] canonization was first introduced in Rome. Diocesan investigations into his life were made in Augsburg, Baltimore, Pittsburgh and New Orleans. His remains were exhumed and identified. In 1910 the Holy See returned the process to the Redemptorists with the recommendation that more work should be done; but the matter was allowed to become inactive.

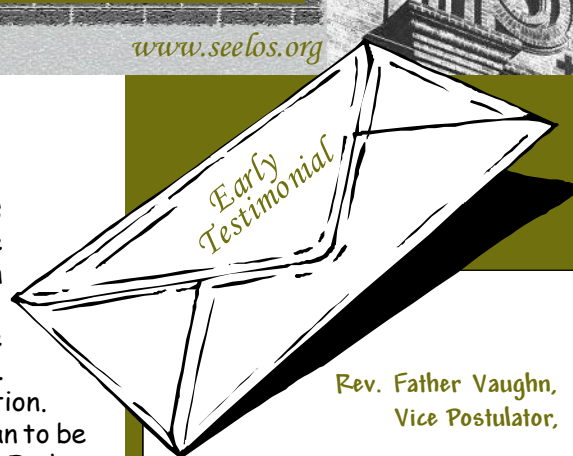
Devotion to Father Seelos waxed & waned as the years rolled on. In June 1959 Father Paul Baudry, newly-appointed Vice Provincial Superior, arranged with Father Nicola Ferrante, CSSR (1910-1986), the postulator for causes of saints in Rome, to have Father John Vaughn appointed as vice postulator of the cause of Father Seelos. This began the second phase of the cause of canonization of the servant of God.

In September, 1960 Father Vaughn had 100,000 prayer cards with a picture of Father Seelos printed. He was able to do this with donations received from friends. A memorial Mass for Father Seelos was held in St. Mary's Church in October, 1960, beginning a tradition that continues to the

present. At first the crowd was small, but in later years the church has been filled with devotees.

In 1963 the people were urged to make a holy hour in St. Mary's Church for the canonization. A monthly newsletter soon began to be published promoting devotion to Father Seelos and giving an inspirational spiritual message. A volunteer group was formed to do the necessary work of gathering names, addressing envelopes, making mementoes of Father Seelos, etc. Through the years these volunteers have been faithful and devoted workers for the cause. ... These good people visit the sick in hospitals and homes, praying to Father Seelos for healing; they make crocheted mementoes; they come to the center to help with the daily mail, with the monthly mailing of the newsletter; and they do many other chores which are part of the running of any office.

(Working for Plentiful Redemption: A History of the New Orleans Vice-Province, Gerald Bass, CSSR, 1995)



Rev. Father Vaughn,
Vice Postulator,

The last week of July 1958, my nephew accidentally shot [a companion] in the eye with a bee bee. Dr. Ellis, 812 Maison Blanche Building, was called to Hotel Dieu to care for the eye. He advised the parents that if the bleeding did not stop, he would have to remove the eye. On hearing this I turned to Father Seelos and begged him to ask God to please spare this boy's eye -- to let this be one of his miracles, and I would make known this favor. The boy's eye was spared. He has scar tissue that the doctor checks periodically. I am still praying to Father Seelos for him.

[name withheld]



"We have a small office on the second floor of the 'tower room' in St. Mary's. We are quite crowded, but in spite of this we are still able to accomplish a bit. As of June 23, 1962, we have made 115,036 relics. These were made by volunteers under the leadership of Miss Odile Legendre." -- Seelos Newsletter, July 1962, Vol. 1, No. 3

"There is a group of devoted clients who meet each Wednesday to recite the Rosary -- begging the intercession of Father Seelos for their own needs and praying that the cause for his canonization will progress rapidly. This group is headed by Mrs. Joseph Foss, and numbers about 30. Anyone interested in attending, please phone JA-2-3897." -- Seelos Newsletter, August 1962, Vol. 1, No. 4



Fr. John Vaughn,
C.Ss.R.

MIRACLES HAPPEN TO OTHER PEOPLE

I was mystified over miracles until an instant and extraordinary healing occurred in my own life. I always thought miracles happened to other people. It was literally a shot in the dark the night I asked Father Seelos for his intercession. I was desperate and dangling at my wit's end. In my wildest dreams I never expected such an immediate and profound answer to such a feeble prayer. But, by God, that is exactly what I got.

I had painted myself into a pretty messy corner. People do that sometimes, and I learned I could be a pretty good painter. It seems I inherited a gene from my hearty ancestors: a particular taste, and a high tolerance, for anything 80 proof. Scotch was in my DNA. I was not a social drinker. I was a serious drinker. Good stuff in moderation, but I'd passed moderation years ago. I was now using alcohol because of increased depression and depressed because of increased alcohol. Every day I sank deeper into my personal abyss until I could no longer see its top, or even remember how I fell in. Many people are still there. Some never get out. Miraculously, I did. Father Seelos pulled me out. It defies all logic that a 20-year alcohol addiction could be broken overnight, simply through prayer. But that's what happened. Heaven knows how? Only heaven and Francis Xavier Seelos knows.

I never swore off drinking. No promises. I knew that would fail. I was advised that a two-week program at a detox center might help. I didn't know what to do. I only knew

two things for certain. One, if I was going in I was taking Seelos with me, and two, such a drastic step would require a drink. [After 2 nights at the center] no one was going to believe this story. A debilitating burden had instantly been lifted. Disappeared. Gone. I only knew this: something extraordinary happened to a very ordinary man and there was a message there. I simply had to "let go." Let go of the past. Let go of self. Let go of ego. God cannot fill a hand that's already full.

That was 4 years ago and what was true then is still true today. I've never struggled with a desire for alcohol. Not one day. I didn't change my lifestyle and I didn't avoid bars or cocktail parties. In fact, I'm around alcohol more now than when I drank. My behavior didn't have to change. I only had to believe in what I believed.

I still ask myself daily, and have for the past 1,470 days, what happened in that sparse, little room? My pastor told me it was the "Holy Spirit." He said it was "Grace." Thus far, his explanation has withstood the test of time. I could falter tomorrow, but I can't imagine it, because as unworthy as I am, I believe he is right. Unmerited grace got me here. Amazing grace.

Miracles do happen to other people. And I thank God and Father Seelos every night that I'm one of those people.

[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 1845.]

WHAT'S AN 'ASCETIC' & WHY WAS FR. SEELOS CONSIDERED A CHEERFUL ONE?

An *ascetic* adheres to the practice of severe self-denial & rigid abstinence, usually for religious reasons. It is one who lives an austere life, avoiding human pleasures & vices. Because ascetics are so hard on themselves, they may often appear dour, making the appellation, "Cheerful Ascetic," a contradiction in terms. However, the title "Cheerful Ascetic" was fittingly accorded to Father Seelos. His contemporary wrote: "None of us ever saw him idle for a moment. He never went visiting, never sat talking in the parlor, but was always to be found either in his cell writing or praying, or else in the confessional, in the schools, or on sick calls. Indeed, he literally killed himself with labor, mortifications, and exertions. Nevertheless, he was the most cheerful and humorous of the community."

What is the secret of ascetics like Seelos who willingly sacrificed "home, parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God" (cf. Luke 18), without sacrificing their joy? Perhaps the answer is found in the words of the Irish poet, Patrick Kavanaugh: "The resurrection of Jesus was a laugh freed forever and ever. It's a laugh that echoes through the lives of the saints."

Byron Miller, C.S.R.

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/Innercity

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

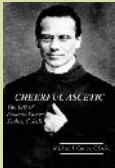
St. Bernard/Arabi

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



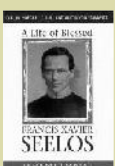
Cheerful Ascetic, 480-pg. hard-bound biography by Fr. M. Curley that captures Seelos' piety & personality; index/photos (Donation: \$30, incl. p/h)



.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).



Seelos Rosary Ring: Made in Italy, great gift for First Communion in honor of Mary for the month of May. (Donation: \$3, incl. p/h)



A Life of Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos, 108-page paperback biography, illustrated. (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.

2009 ANNUAL APPEAL - STATEMENT OF INTENT

Yes, I am able to support the Seelos Shrine and Canonization Cause through my prayers.

Yes, Father Byron, I want to support the cause of Blessed Francis Seelos in gratitude for Graces Received & Prayers Answered. \$_____ to be used for this specific need:

- the ministry at the National Shrine of Bl. Francis Seelos.
- completion of the new Seelos Welcome Center, now under construction.

Name _____

THANK YOU!

Address _____

Please cut & return to:
National Shrine of
Bl. Francis X. Seelos
2030 Constance Street
New Orleans, LA 70130

City _____ ST _____ ZIP _____

- Visa
- Mastercard
- Discover

Exp. Date: ____ / ____ / ____ Last 3 digits on signature line: ____

Signature: _____

Special \$20 offering to enroll mothers, living or deceased, in Perpetual Mass League only during the month of May in honor of Mother's Day!

Special \$12 offering to enroll mothers, living or deceased, in One-Year Mass League

A gift of \$125 will continue to allow our hospital blessers to distribute complimentary rosaries, Seelos pamphlets, & other spiritual items to the sick & bedridden.

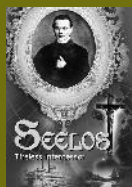
A gift of \$50 will help defray the monthly operational costs for the Seelos Daily Dial-A-Message, which averages 3,700 calls a year.

Due to the U.S. Postal Service price increase this month, a gift of \$12 will help defray the cost of printing & mailing this newsletter for one year.



Please consider the
National Shrine of
Blessed Francis Seelos
for your employer
matching gift program.
Fed. Tax ID #72-0576253

A gift of \$1,000 will go directly to the 2009 renovation of a new Seelos Welcome Center. Built as a School Sisters of Notre Dame Convent circa 1939, this 3-story building adjacent to the church is presently being converted into a visitor center to include exhibit space, orientation theater, staff offices, gift shop, Seelos archives & chapel. The completion date is mid-summer! \$1.25 million is our needed goal. Visit www.seelos.org for more info. Our gift to you in return is the documentary on the life of Fr. Seelos.



68 min. DVD

68 min. VHS

(Please specify format preference)

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
Vice-Postulators: Frs. John Vargas & Byron Miller

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BUSH, LA

My husband was diagnosed with throat cancer in 2008. It had spread to his lymph nodes. We immediately started praying to Bl. Seelos. I pinned a 1st class relic to his pillow & he is wearing a Seelos medal and Marian scapular, & I say the Seelos Novena every day. We also went to the Seelos healing Mass in January. My husband has finished all his treatments. APT Scan this week showed he's almost cancer-free; radiation should kill off the rest of the bad cells. The doctor is very encouraged. We are so very thankful to Blessed Seelos for interceding for us to the Lord. Even though he is not a saint yet, I know he will be.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

In July 2008 I woke up suddenly with severe pain in the right side of my head & face that was later diagnosed as an "incurable," very rare disorder called trigeminal neuralgia, in which pain occurs with simple activities such as talking, smiling, chewing, laughing or crying. Often called "suicide disease," neurologists believe it's the most painful disorder in existence. Nothing totally relieves the pain. Friends who were visiting New Orleans brought back a 1st class relic of Bl. Seelos for me. After my pastor formally blessed me with this relic, I began to notice an improvement in my trigeminal neuralgia that afternoon! I could move my facial muscles with less pain; thus smiling was easier & talking was less painful. Over the following weeks, I tested myself on different

TESTIMONIALS

textures of food and gradually found that chewing was becoming less painful. I am almost completely healed, thanks to our Blessed Savior answering the prayers of the "tireless intercessor," Blessed Seelos.

REDLANDS, CA

I'm an 85-year-old widow that was diagnosed with stenosis. I went to the hospital for a simple same-day surgery; during that operation, my surgeon tore the spinal sack. I had 3 operations in 9 days to correct this condition, & was left with several after effects (headache, dizziness, incontinence, weight loss, etc.). I had Bl. Seelos' 1st class relic with me in the hospital at all times & I prayed to avoid a 4th operation. Bl. Seelos answered my prayers; I was able to go home. I'm grateful to him that I can take care of myself, drive, & go to church daily.

RAYNE, LA

My father was diagnosed with lymphoma in October. We were told this past Christmas would be our last with him & that we were lucky to have him for a few months afterwards. Guess what? Dad is doing so well, he's cutting his lawn and doing all the normal chores he had done in the past. I attribute this to the intercession of my beloved friend, Fr. Seelos. So many people told me that they prayed to Fr. Seelos and also went to the shrine to ask him to intercede to give my father more time on earth.

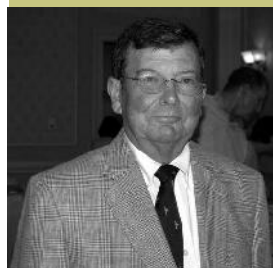
BRADENTON, FL

Our dear friend, Fr. Don Miniscalco, C.Ss.R., told us to visit Blessed Seelos' shrine and ask for a blessing before our daughter was to undergo cancer surgery in New Orleans. We did get a blessing at the shrine and her surgery was successful. Her little girls are truly God's gift after our daughter had a bone marrow transplant in 1993 and was told that she would never have children. Yes, I can't resist bragging on Bl. Seelos' intercessions. Isn't our God a generous one!

SATSUMA, AL

A liver biopsy performed on our daughter indicated that she has Primary Sclerosing Cholangitis (PSC), a long-term disease that slowly damages the bile ducts inside & outside the liver. It is progressive & eventually results in cirrhosis of the liver, causing liver failure & the need for a transplant. Medications can slow the progress of the disease, but there is no cure for PSC at this time. The expected time frame from diagnosis until transplant is 20 years. A priest blessed her with his 1st class relic of Bl. Seelos. Six months later, when she was not taking any medication, I concluded that we must go to Fr. Seelos' shrine. So we took a trip to the shrine in June 2008, where we were prayed over. She has continued to improve and her latest 6-month blood test in January 2009 was the first in 8 years to be completely in the normal range without medications. Praise to God & thanks to Fr. Seelos for his intercession.

Walk by the lake. Do you hear the water chortle 'Alleluia,' lapping up against the shore?" (David Philippart)



MAURICE "BUBBY" HARTSON III

was the ordained deacon who for years assisted at the Seelos Memorial Masses. He was a member of the Seelos Shrine Board of Directors from 2000-2002, Project Lazarus chaplain for nine years, & administrator of St. Michael Special School.



These adapted verses from Robert Lowry provide a fitting tribute:

*Shall we gather at the lake,
Where bright angel feet have trod;
With its crystal tide forever
Alongside the throne of God?
Yes, we'll gather at the lake,
The beautiful, the beautiful lake;
Gather with the saints by the lake
That rests by the throne of God.*

*Before we reach the shining lake,
Lay we ev'ry burden down;
Grace our spirits will deliver,
And provide a robe and crown.
Yes, we'll gather at the lake,
The beautiful, the beautiful lake;
Gather with the saints by the lake
That rests by the throne of God.*

Bubby is anchored in a safe harbor now with Fr. Seelos & the saints, recounting stories at the throne of God about "the one that almost got away!"



- Please delete me from your mailing list.
- Please delete multiple mailings to this address.

Kindly return in the enclosed envelope with any corrections or call 504-525-2495 or 2499 or e-mail to bmiller@seelos.org Allow a minimum of 30 days to process your address change request.

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ADDRESS

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