

# SEELOS CENTER NEWS

*National Shrine of  
Blessed Francis  
Xavier Seelos  
In the Redemptorist Church  
of Saint Mary's Assumption*

*Volume XLIX  
Number 2*

*www.seelos.org*

919 Josephine Street

New Orleans, LA 70130

(504) 525-2495 / (504) 525-2499

February 2010



*"The beautiful Mass was truly one of the most moving experiences I have ever had the honor of participating in."*

*-- Metairie, LA*



## SEELOS WARMS THE CROWD

An arctic cold front affected New Orleans in the days leading up to the 9th annual Seelos Birthday Healing Mass on January 10, 2010. But inclement weather didn't prevent a thousand people from gathering inside Saint Mary's Assumption Church to generate its own special kind of warmth in the spirit of Blessed Francis Seelos!



Photo Credits: Bill Coskrey & Cindi Archambo-Kohls

## FATHER FIREFIGHTER

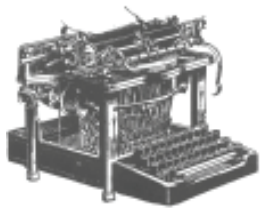
Father Seelos was an immigrant. Like hundreds from southern Germany he arrived in America in the early 1840s with little more than a solid Catholic faith and a great devotion to the Mother of God. But his faith was most extraordinary. He wanted to be a priest. His hope was to keep alive the glorious faith of his fellow immigrants. So many lost 'it' in the mad wild rush for gold that hit America in the Forties.

In the late 1840s, the Know-Nothing Party which Horace Greeley called "that swindle," bared its greatest venom. Anything European, and especially anything Catholic, must be destroyed. Shortly after Father Seelos' arrival the bigots set fire to St. Philomena's new school building in Pittsburgh. One passerby discovered the flames shooting out of the structure. Father Seelos, the young priest at the parish, had to handle the situation. Quelling the blaze, however, was only half his job. He had also to pacify his own broiling Germans who wanted to avenge St. Philomena's honor right there and then. His firmness and ability won him wide praise not only from his stein-swinging parishioners but from all parts of the city. Not surprising, after all, since it was said that Father Seelos was more eloquent in sermons on the mercy of God and our Lady than in preaching about judgment and hell.

Rev. Donald MacKinnon, C.Ss.R. ministers to the community of Lao Khmu principally on the U.S. West Coast.

On the night of March 8, 1845, a fire threatened to burn down Saint James rectory in Baltimore. "Suddenly during that night, the fire alarm went off, and as I opened my eyes, the room was all lit up, and I could no longer be in doubt about the danger. At the entrance to the chapel and the church, I could see that the house of a German Catholic carpenter, right next to the church, was in flames from top to bottom, and at every moment threatened to set fire to our house and church. Quickly the Blessed Sacrament was brought safely out of the church into the garden. Soon afterwards, the father superior told me that the American fire chief was no longer afraid of any more danger. From then on, a place was assigned to me at an entrance to the house, where I could stay quietly and thank God and also think of you, dear mother. I must give the credit to you and the combined prayers of so many devotedly concerned persons that things are going so well for me, and that I love my vocation so much...."

*F. X. Seelos in a letter to his parents & family, Baltimore, 1845*



## MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

*"Times are not good here. The city is crumbling into ashes. It has been buried under a lava flood of taxes and frauds and maladministrations so that it has become only a study for archaeologists. Its condition is so bad that as I write about it, as I intend to do soon, nobody will believe I am telling the truth. But it is better to live here in sackcloth and ashes, than to own the whole state of Ohio."* -- Lafcadio Hearn in a letter to a friend in Cincinnati, after Hearn moved to New Orleans in the 1870s

During the Civil War, the U.S. Customs House on Canal Street in New Orleans was the headquarters for General Benjamin "Beast" Butler; now it houses other parasites as a popular insectarium! During the years of Reconstruction, opportunists and profiteers came from elsewhere to make fortunes, mostly in collusion with politicians who had otherwise profited quite nicely without them. If Reconstruction politics in postwar New Orleans was difficult enough, the return of a yellow fever epidemic in 1867 seemed too much to bear, especially on those whose resistance to the disease was compromised by their postwar poverty. By 1874, Louisiana was bankrupt with a \$53 million debt that only further intensified the plight of the poor.

Yet, despite such adverse conditions, non-natives like Father Seelos could say, "It is good to be here in the sunny and warm south ... Here is my home ... Here I'll rest my bones in the grave, for I think I have wandered enough," and Lafcadio Hearn could write how good it is to live here in sackcloth and ashes.

Lent begins with last year's palms crumbled into ashes. It is a time to focus on the human condition, to assess any self-fraudulent maladministrations. It is an opportunity for Reconstruction, especially for those who feel spiritually bankrupt.

"All are from the dust and all turn to dust again" (Eccl. 3:20). After wandering enough through this life, we rest our bones in the grave, and what we leave behind is a study for archaeologists. Faithfully speaking, of course, we are all "non-natives" -- because our Risen Lord has secured our true home elsewhere!

*Byron Miller, C.S.R.*

### ST. MARY'S ASSUMPTION CHURCH



A hawk circles above the bayou to see only what it may eat. A huron breaks the still water like a silk step that breaks an emerald mirror. Every animal in nature is hungry and alone.

On Bourbon Street, a drunk has a ring in his nose, a silver haired matron recalls the styles of 1938, Willie dances for tips, bottle caps on his toes; and the river still bends and the hawk still waits.

At the Sazerac, murals decorate the polished wall. In one, a boy can't believe how babies get born. Across the Quarter, a steamer blares its horn. Listen to the clarinet sing above the body's call.

Lord, have mercy on us, clots of Adam's blood. Hear Father Seelos. He was a light above the mud.

-- Robert Klein Engler, author & poet, 2010

### Seelos Center Services

☞ **Pilgrimages** to St. Mary's Assumption Church, Seelos Shrine & Museum. Call Center: 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:

#### 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: 225-753-3800  
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

Gaspar Corpora: 225-294-5938

#### Prairieville/Gonzales

M/M Claude Bourgeois 225-673-6688

#### Shreveport/Bossier City

Tom & Marjorie Rivers: 318-797-3116

#### Slidell

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

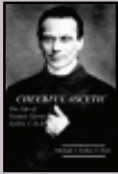
#### St. Bernard/Arabi

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 your favorite Valentine in the month of February. (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)



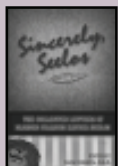
**Seelos Perpetual Mass League**: one-of-a-kind lasting remembrance for you or for someone dear, living or deceased. (Donation: \$25, contact Seelos Ctr. or website for enrollment)



**Seelos, Tireless Intercessor**, a 68-min. documentary on Seelos' miraculous life; seen on EWTN. (Donation: \$25 for DVD - 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 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.

## DID YOU KNOW?

**THIS NEWSLETTER IS RECEIVED IN ALL 50 STATES. THOSE WITH THE MOST & LEAST SUBSCRIBERS ARE:**

- |                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. LOUISIANA    | 45. W. VIRGINIA |
| 2. TEXAS        | 46. N. DAKOTA   |
| 3. PENNSYLVANIA | 47. HAWAII      |
| 4. MISSISSIPPI  | 48. ALASKA      |
| 5. NEW YORK     | 49. UTAH        |
| 6. FLORIDA      | 50. WYOMING     |

**CAN YOU IDENTIFY ANYONE WHO WOULD BENEFIT FROM KNOWING ABOUT FR. SEELOS & HIS SPIRITUALITY?**

**IF THEY WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE THIS NEWSLETTER, KINDLY INCLUDE THEIR NAME & ADDRESS IN THE ENCLOSED ENVELOPE.**

### Seelos Center News

A monthly newsletter for friends of BL. FRANCIS X. SEELOS

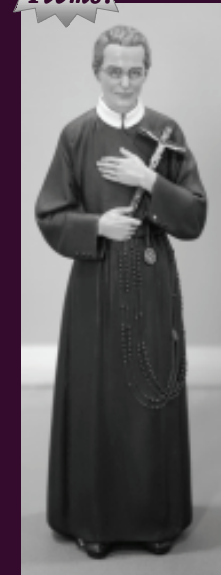
Denver Provincial Superior:  
Very Rev. Thomas D. Picton, C.Ss.R.  
Seelos Center Executive Director / Editor:  
Rev. Byron Miller, C.Ss.R.  
Seelos Center Administrator: Joyce Bourgeois  
Vice-Postulators: Frs. John Vargas & Byron Miller

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Subscription is \$12 per year.



**NEW SEELOS WELCOME CENTER LANDSCAPING IN PROGRESS!**

**New Items!**



**THE SEELOS CENTER IS PLEASED TO OFFER AN EXCLUSIVE 8 1/2" STATUE OF BL. FRANCIS SEELOS BY ROMAN INC., A LEADING PRODUCER OF INSPIRATIONAL GIFTS. FINE DETAIL, RESIN-STONE MIX**

- Wood-Tone Finish (\$38, incl. p/h)
- Bronze Finish (\$38, incl. p/h)
- Hand-Painted Finish (\$38, incl. p/h)
- 1 Statue (specify finish) + Seelos DVD (\$60, incl. p/h)

## CHOICE PICKS FOR LENT



**Willy Finds Victory: A Bl. Francis Seelos Story**

*Willy is on a mission. He is determined to find his sister's husband and take his place as a soldier in the Union Army before it's too late. Will he do so before the big battle? When Willy searches a hospital, he finds cheerful Father Seelos instead. Can Father Seelos help him with his mission? Introduce youth, ages 7 - 12, to Father Seelos in this 110-page illustrated book by Joan Stromberg. \$13 (incl. p/h)*

### Praying the Way of the Cross

PRAYING THE WAY OF THE CROSS  
FEATURING LIAM NEESON



Music, Lyrics and Prayers by St. Alphonsus Maria Liguori  
Prayers led by the Reverend Byron Miller, C.Ss.R.  
LITTLE LAMB MUSIC

*The 14 Stations are taken from the classic text by Saint 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 account, 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 (incl. p/h).*



## MEMPHIS, TN

I am so thankful to Bl. Seelos that the tumor on my thyroid is benign after my biopsy. I had asked him to go to Jesus & the Blessed Mother for me & I am so grateful for this kind consideration.

## LOCKPORT, NY

I received the "Seelos: Tireless Intercessor" documentary last year just before my brother's kidney failure and diagnosis of Multiple Myeloma. Many persons have received help from Fr. Seelos to fight cancer. We prayed with confidence that he would intercede for healing. My brother went into remission six months after diagnosis and treatment at Roswell Park Cancer Institute. He just had another good check-up in December. We thank Fr. Seelos for his intercession & pray for his sainthood.

## ASTON, PA

While praying in a local chapel, I found a Fr. Seelos card on a window sill and picked it up as I exited. My visits to any church have been remote, despite being brought up in the Church. I am in my fifth year of college with 3 children. I started to pray to Fr. Seelos for help in passing my last nursing courses in college. I was an honor student for four years, but I'm now failing my last course needed to graduate. Due to finances I cannot repeat the semester. I prayed to Fr. Seelos & passed my last exam. I am still praying and even sneaking his card in with me for my exams. He's given me hope & faith again after all these years.

# TESTIMONIALS

## LAFAYETTE, LA

My husband & I were blessed with Fr. Seelos' cross while at a healing Mass, praying for a broken family relationship. Our prayers were answered and I want to acknowledge Fr. Seelos' powerful intercession.

## BELLINGHAM, MA

I had been suffering terribly from May to November with severe knee pain. The doctor drained my knee twice in a span of about two months. The pain would subside but would come back. Finally, I asked Bl. Seelos to please heal my knee. I applied my relic to my knee & said the prayer twice a day. That was the "prescription" I used to get better. Soon I was able to move more freely without much pain and sleep without pain medicine. My goal was to be able to kneel pain-free at daily Mass. I praise & thank Jesus for hearing Bl. Seelos' intercession for my healing. May you be a saint very soon, my special friend in heaven.

## CARLSBAD, CA

My niece & her husband visited New Orleans. At my request they went to the Seelos Shrine and were enthralled. He still carries the relic I gave him when he got his cancer (now under control). My niece was raised Catholic, and for the last 20 years believes in God, but that's it. She wants to go back to the Shrine, and wants me to come with her!

## MORRIS TOWNSHIP, NJ

My sister had breast cancer in 2004. After a double mastectomy & aggressive chemo, she was cancer-free for years. Then it metastasized & recurred in 2008, resulting in a tumor in her spine, which the doctors removed surgically and with radiation. She was told that it was only a matter of time before it would resurface again. Recently, she was experiencing discomfort in her back, and a CAT scan revealed a growth on the spine. The doctors told her it was a tumor right below the location of her previous one. She was scheduled for an emergency MRI the next day. The night before, I prayed specifically to a holy priest I had heard of on EWTN, as well as seeing a book on him at my mother's. My request was that the tumor would be gone completely through his intercession. The next day, my sister & her husband went for an MRI & blood tests. They had already told the children that the cancer had come back & they were prepared to start the treatment. The results of the MRI showed that there was no tumor. The blood tests came out fine also. The doctors explained that there must have been a technical glitch with the CAT scan & that her back pain must have been muscular. None of us believe there was a glitch. We believe it was due to Jesus, primarily through Bl. Seelos' intercession. When I told my sister of my request to Bl. Seelos, she was in tears. She told me that he had just come into her life in the past year & she had obtained his relic. By chance, it seemed at the time, when she was visiting St. Mary's in Annapolis she ran straight into a picture of him hanging on the wall there, which, looking back, was not a coincidence.

**HOW TO FIND US:** We've relocated to our new facility adjacent to the Shrine at 919 Josephine Street -- near the corner of Constance & Josephine, 1 block away (& across the courtyard) from our old site. From US-90, take the Tchoupitoulas exit to Josephine St. Or, from St. Charles Ave. take Jackson Ave. to Annunciation (turn left) & turn onto Josephine.

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.
- furnishing & completing the new Seelos Welcome Center.
- item(s) designated below:

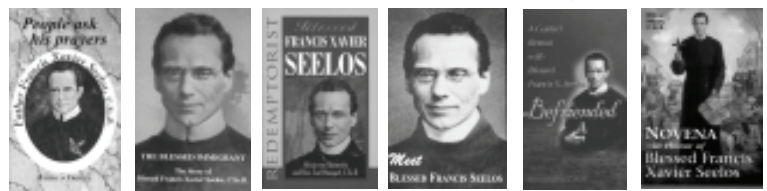
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- my Mass Intention(s):
- \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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



Please view our website as we celebrate our 200,000<sup>th</sup> visitor!



## ENJOY THE COMPANY OF FR. SEELOS

Make a Self-Guided Retreat with Bl. Seelos: All 6 for \$13, incl. p/h

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](mailto:bmiller@seelos.org) Allow a minimum of 30 days to process your address change request.

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