



VOLUME 76

SEELOS CENTER NEWS

JUNE 2021

from the National Shrine of Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos, C.Ss.R.

Dear Devotees of Blessed Seelos,

There are a number of important days of celebration in June. The first is Father’s Day — the day we remember with affection our own fathers whether they are living or deceased. It is a worthy day of remembrance. In the Church, there are some special feast days — Corpus Cristi, Solemnity of the Sacred Heart, The Birth of John the Baptist, Saints Peter and Paul. But for this letter, I’d like to draw your attention to June 27, the Feast of Our Mother of Perpetual Help.

In 1866, Pope Pius IX entrusted the ancient icon to the Redemptorists with the instruction to make her known. Over the years, this has been done. In a number of cities, the devotion had grown to the extent that there were special NOVENA buses to bring the large number of faithful to Perpetual Help devotions. In a great number of churches, the icon can be found in a place of honor.

Perpetual Help is a “One who shows the Way” icon. Mary is the one who presents her son to us. Her right hand points toward Jesus; the left hand lifts him to us. Her eyes, tender yet intense, are directed toward us, inviting us to enter into the icon.

Mary is called “Perpetual Help” because she is always there to help us on our own journeys into God. The Feast of Our Mother of Perpetual Help is worth celebrating well.

Blessed Seelos died in 1867, so he didn’t know the challenge of the pope to make Our Lady of Perpetual Help known. Copies of the icon had not yet reached the United States. Nonetheless, he was wholeheartedly dedicated to Mary. In a letter to a lady who sought his direction, he wrote: “O this Refuge of Sinners, O this motherly Advocate, will certainly not forsake you. I always hold fast this dear, dear Mother and know for sure that she will not let me down.”

Mary, Mother of Perpetual Help, pray for us!



Fr. Richard Boever, C.Ss.R.

Director, National Shrine of Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos, C.Ss.R.

A FATHER’S DAY PRAYER



God our Father, we give You thanks and praise for fathers young and old.

We pray for young fathers, newly embracing their vocation; may they find courage and perseverance to balance work, family and faith in joy and sacrifice.

We pray for our own fathers around the world whose children are lost or suffering; may they know that the God of compassion walks with them in their sorrow.

We pray for men who are not fathers but still mentor and guide us with fatherly love and advice.

We remember fathers, grandfathers and great grandfathers who are no longer with us but who live forever in our memory and nourish us with their love.

Amen.

“THE LAST DAYS OF FATHER SEELOS”

This account is taken from the writings of Father Neither, who was present for the death of Blessed Seelos. He himself was just 27 years old. He wrote the account on October 15 to the seminarians in Annapolis who revered him.

The death of Father Francis Xavier Seelos was the severest blow which our whole community and in fact the whole Congregation sustained. It was noticed on the 17th of September that Fr. Seelos looked unusually depressed, jaded and pale. All perceived the clearest marks of the yellow fever in his eyes. Father Rector immediately ordered him to bed. As all the Fathers and Brothers had particular reasons for being attached to him, especially our good Father Rector, who had been his novice in Pittsburgh twenty years ago, everyone in the house vied with one another in the attention they showed him.

After the ninth day of his sickness, when the fever usually passed, he was found to be so weak and exhausted that we all became seriously alarmed. His prostration seemed unnatural. While in the act of conversation, he frequently dozed away. He continued to become hourly more feeble and listless. Toward the third week of his illness, his mind began frequently to wander. In his wanderings, he invariably spoke about church, prayers, retreats, confessions, etc. From early dawn till late at night, the pious faithful pressed around the altars and mission cross weeping and praying that God might yet spare the life of the “beloved saint”. On the streets, the Fathers

were incessantly stopped by weeping faithful who inquired about him. At the door, there was a continual stream of lamenting inquirers. Even the daily city papers, such as the Times, the Crescent, and the Picayune contained daily reports about the health of Father Seelos.

When in a delirium, Father Seelos was asked by Brother Louis Kenning, who would never leave his side, whether he wished for anything to eat, the good, delirious Father smiled, as was his invariable custom, and said: “No, dear Brother, I want nothing to eat but I want Holy Communion.”

On Wednesday, October 2 at 12:30 o'clock, we were all summoned to his bedside. His breathing had become slower and slower. We recited the prayers for the dying. Then Father Rector, bathed in tears, requested him to once more bless us and the whole Congregation, especially our American Province. He instantly raised his feeble hand and imparted the desired blessing. After the prayers, he seemed to gather wonderful strength. He said,

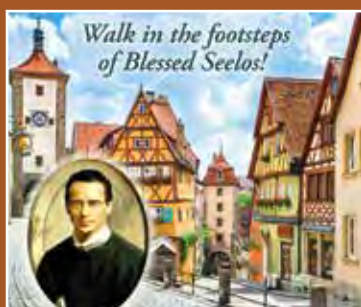
“I am now beginning to know what a happiness it is to live and die as a Redemptorist. I know I have not always lived as I should. But now, on my deathbed, I beg your pardon for the scandal I have given you.” Oh, how our heart ached on hearing his humble apology. God knows, he never disedified any one of us, but only put us to shame by the brilliant example of his virtues.

Finally, at 4:30 in the afternoon, October 4, it became evident that his death agony was about to begin. The prayers for the dying were again recited. Our dear Father

remained conscious to his last breath. His eyes were fixed on the crucifix and a supernatural brightness appeared to illumine his dying countenance. We sang his favorite hymns - German hymns to the Mother of God. While we were singing, his holy soul quietly abandoned its earthly home and hastened to the embrace of its heavenly Bridegroom.

At 8 AM the following morning, the Solemn Requiem was chanted in St. Mary's Church. After the “Liberia” the whole immense congregation pushed toward the corpse in hopes of obtaining a last glance of their beloved Father. Fathers, Brothers and altar boys were engaged for about half an hour in touching hundred of rosaries, books, etc., to the body. A little before twelve the remains of our dear Father were lowered into the vault before the altar of St. Alphonsus, at the side of the large mission crucifix with the life-size statue of our Mother of Sorrows beneath it. He is universally called “Der heilige Pater Seelos” (the saintly Father Seelos). Even after his burial, from morning to

night, no one left the church without first kneeling at his tomb. Their love and devotion has not yet abated.



★ ALPINE EUROPEAN PILGRIMAGE ★

Join Fr. Rich on a journey through Bavaria, Austria and Switzerland: Heidelberg, Rhine Valley, Lucerne, Füssen, Salzburg, Altötting, Marktl am Inn, Munich, Augsburg, Rothenburg, and attend the Passion Play of Oberammergau.

11 DAYS: SEPTEMBER 6 – 16, 2022

To learn more or to reserve your space, visit SEELOS.org/alpine-pilgrimage.

Blessings for the Sick

Hospital visits with a Seelos Crucifix

(Only family members may request)

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Anne Batt (504) 458-0310
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GRACES RECEIVED & PRAYERS ANSWERED

ETNA, PA

Thank you, Fr. Seelos, once again. You asked the Dear Lord for a miracle. We prayed to you and Jesus heard you and us. I had a fractured shoulder due to an accident. The injuries were severe and the fractures on my forearm had to heal

before surgery. We prayed and asked one of your volunteers to place a request at Fr. Seelos Shrine that I wouldn't need surgery. The shoulder healed to the amazement of the surgeons. They called it a miracle. Thank you Fr. Seelos!

STARKSBORO, VT

Recently, I needed abdominal wall reconstruction surgery as a result from a prior failed mesh surgery to help with my Krohn's disease. Surgery took 15 hours and was successful until I became septic. I was placed on a ventilator and experienced dangerously high and low blood pressures. I suffered a pulmonary embolism, was placed on a ventilator for 31 days and then admitted to the ICU

for 10 days. I could not walk, talk or write for some time. My friend gave me a first class relic of Blessed Seelos that I kept by my bedside while in the hospital. I believe I am a living miracle and am most grateful. I had an overwhelming support circle and was blessed to have several people praying for me and my family. I think I was extra blessed having Fr. Seelos' relic by my bedside.

GRETNA, LA

My sister-in-law, Alison, was born with a liver that was distended and reattached at birth. It degraded steadily throughout her life. At the age of 45 and on the verge of death, she was prayed with at the Seelos Shrine. She was then miraculously gifted

with a liver. That was two years ago. She currently lives in North Carolina with her husband and two children, teaching elementary school and leading a productive life.



Submit Your Testimonial Online!

Your words offer encouragement to others in need of Seelos' intercession.

www.SEELOS.org/submit-a-healing-or-favor



SHRINE, MUSEUM & WELCOME CENTER HOURS

Monday-Saturday 10am-2pm | Please see SEELOS.org for visiting guidelines.

HOT IN THE SHOP ~ STRONG IN FAITH & LOVE

Visit SEELOS.org to view all of the items available for sale in the Gift Shop.



2ND CLASS RELIC BLACKWOOD ROSARY – \$50

Handsome rosary with blackwood beads, a medallion with a relic of Bl. Seelos, Our Mother of Perpetual Help medals, and a crucifix with inscription. Comes in a gift box.



WOODEN ROSARY BOX – \$16

2.5” wooden box with gold plated cross and latch. Pair it with a Seelos relic blackwood rosary for a unique and thoughtful gift.



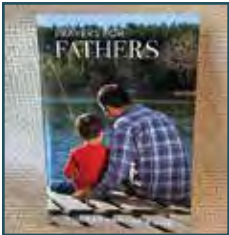
LEATHER BRACELETS – \$7 EACH

Choice of brown or dark brown leather with a quote from the Bible or black leather with a silver cross. Makes a great gift!



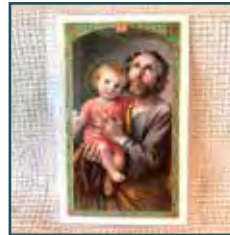
“ST. JOSEPH THE PROTECTOR” BOOKLET – \$7

This collection features Scriptures, prayers, maxims and a rule of life to help fathers connect with our Lord and be a blessing to all those entrusted to their care.



“PRAYERS FOR FATHERS” POCKET PRAYER BOOK – \$5

Reflections on preparing for fatherhood, dealing lovingly with teenage children, and taking time to rest in the Lord. Also features prayers to St. Joseph and St. John Paul II.



ST. JOSEPH PRAYER CARD – \$1.50

Laminated prayer card features an image of St. Joseph cradling Baby Jesus on the front and a “prayer to St. Joseph to obtain a special favor” on the back.

Quantities are limited. Prices listed above **include** shipping / handling. Prices online and in the Welcome Center Gift Shop may vary.

SUPPORT THE MISSION OF THE SHRINE



LIGHT A CANDLE: A vigil candle will burn near Seelos’ sacred resting place for an offering of \$3-\$4. Please visit SEELOS.org/light-a-votive-candle.



REQUEST A RELIC: 3rd Class Relics are available in either laminated prayer cards or as a crocheted memento for an offering of \$2 each. 2nd Class Relics are also available upon request and are complimentary.



SHOP ONLINE: Items in the Gift Shop are available at SEELOS.org/gift-shop.

VISIT SEELOS.ORG OR CALL (504) 525-2495 TO ORDER

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The ministry and maintenance of the Shrine My 1-year newsletter subscription renewal (\$12)

Other: _____

Make checks payable to “National Shrine of Blessed Francis Seelos”.

Please remove change my name and address as follows:

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