



VOLUME 78

SEELOS CENTER NEWS

AUGUST 2021

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

Dear Devotees of Blessed Seelos,

So often I am asked about the journey toward canonization of Blessed Seelos that I thought I'd give you a bit of the history that has been going on for the past 154 years since his death to our present day.

Francis Xavier Seelos passed from this life into eternity on Friday, October 4, 1867, in the early evening, surrounded by his confreres. Immediately after his death, he was clothed in the priestly purple vestments and laid out for visitation in St. Mary's Church. The toll of the church bells let the faithful in the area know that he had passed from this life. All night, the faithful came to pay their respects to this holy man, and they prayed for him and to him for his intercession in their needs. They touched books, rosaries, and other articles to his body. They knew there was something very special about him, and they wanted to continue his holy presence among them.

The solemn funeral Mass was celebrated the next morning and he was laid to rest under the altar of St. Alphonsus and the statue of Our Mother of Sorrows, which he had blessed the previous July.

It was reported that his intercession was felt as early as three days after his death, on October 7.

The journey toward the canonization of Francis Xavier Seelos has been long, at times interspersed with periods of inactivity. It has been the devotion of the faithful that has kept his cause progressing.

The journey toward the canonization of Francis Xavier Seelos has been long and, at times, interspersed with periods of inactivity. It has been the devotion of the faithful that has kept his cause progressing. It began with Brother Louis Kenning's account of the death of the holy man. He attended to Fr. Seelos throughout the death process. Two years later, he wrote to Rome urging the Redemptorist authorities to start collecting materials concerning Seelos for the future possibility of canonization. The letters of Fr. Seelos were collected by Fr. Bernard Beck, C.Ss.R. in Pittsburgh. Frs. Joseph Wuest, C.Ss.R. and Joseph Wissel, C.Ss.R. wrote the first biography of Father Seelos. Twenty years after Blessed Seelos' death, Fr. John Berger, C.Ss.R. was charged with writing a more thorough biography. He died before it was completed, but Fr. Peter Zimmer, C.Ss.R. brought it to completion.

In 1898, Fr. Joseph Wissel was appointed the first vice-postulator of the cause for canonization for Francis Seelos. Between 1900 and 1903, he collected the

testimonies of seventy-six witnesses who could attest to Father Seelos' virtue. In 1903, Francis Xavier Seelos' body was also exhumed and examined. The metal coffin was opened and filled with water. Only bones remained. These remains were once again reposed in a wooden coffin, sealed by the Archbishop of New Orleans and reburied in the sanctuary of St. Mary's Church. This crypt was marked by a carved marble slab.



Fr. Seelos' metal coffin on display at the Shrine

Fr. Wissel's investigation, along with the collection of the writings of Father Seelos, were sent to Rome where all was examined by the Promoter of the Faith (then known as the Devil's Advocate). The

conclusion of the investigation stated that there was nothing against faith or morals in any of the materials presented. Further testimonies concerning the holiness of his life were gathered at Pittsburg, Baltimore, and New Orleans in the United States and at Augsburg in Bavaria. These were gathered into a "Summarium" in 1908.

Despite this activity, nothing further developed until 1933 when Cardinal Amleto Giovanni Cicognani, then Apostolic Delegate to the United States, came to know of the lives of both St. John Neumann and Blessed Seelos. The Cardinal wrote to the Redemptorist Superior General in Rome that more investigation into the lives of these two Redemptorists was warranted. Later, Cardinal Cicognani published a book entitled *Sanctity in America* and included an account of Father Seelos.

Even in the long years of silence, devotion continued to flourish for Blessed Seelos among the faithful. The publication *Seelos and Sanctity* began in 1959, once again promoting the cause of Seelos. In 1969, Fr. Michael Curley's biography *Cheerful Ascetic* was published, and the devotions seeking the intercession of Father Seelos continued to increase over the years.

In 1983, Bishop Stanley Ott, the Bishop of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, inquired into the progress of Blessed Seelos toward canonization, and the Redemptorist postulator in Rome, Fr. Nicolas Ferrante C.Ss.R., took up the cause diligently. Fr. Carl Hoegerl, C.Ss.R. was appointed to gather the information in 1984 in order to move the cause along further. His work

was invaluable. In 1994, Fr. Hoegerl and two other theologians were appointed to a commission by Archbishop Schulte of New Orleans to prepare a report concerning Fr. Seelos. It was found that all was in order, and nothing was overlooked for the continuation of Seelos' cause. The Congregation of Saints affirmed the process and gave an affirmative vote for the cause. In 1999, eight theologians gathered to report that the Servant of God, Francis Xavier Seelos, had indeed practiced heroic virtue.



Angela Boudreaux

Next, the case of Angela Boudreaux was presented to Rome as a possible miracle. In 1966, a malignant tumor was found to have invaded 90% of her liver. She was given next to no hope of recovery and weeks to live. She prayed for Seelos' intercession in her healing and made a rapid recovery. In 1971, a surgical procedure unrelated to the liver malignancy showed that her liver was normal. On January 5, 2000, the events surrounding Angela's recovery were determined to be miraculous.

With the decree of the heroic virtue declared and the acceptance of Angela

Boudreaux's cure as a miracle, on January 27, 2000, Pope St. John Paul II promulgated both the heroic virtue of Seelos and the miracle. He then notified the Redemptorist Superior General of the Redemptorists in Rome that Seelos was to be beatified. The date was set for April 9, 2000, and October 5 was to be observed as his feast day. Fr. Byron Miller, C.Ss.R. saw to the construction of a shrine to house the relics of Blessed Seelos in St. Mary's Church and to renovate the former School Sisters of Notre Dame Convent into a welcome center to receive the many pilgrims who visit the Shrine.

To be canonized a saint, a second unexplained happening attributed to the intercession of Blessed Seelos would have to be presented which, in turn, Rome could declare to be a miracle. The cause of Seelos continues. In New Orleans, the National Shrine of Blessed Seelos receives a constant flow of pilgrims begging for the intercession of Blessed Seelos in their needs. Fr. Gil Enderle, C.Ss.R. serves as the vice-postulator of the cause of canonization and is charged with gathering information from a great deal of data into a case which can be reviewed by Rome as a possible miracle. We await the day when our Blessed Seelos is officially declared to be a saint in the church.

Fr. Richard Boever, C.Ss.R.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fr. Richard Boever, C.Ss.R." The signature is written in a cursive style.



Walk in the Footsteps of Blessed Seelos

Join Fr. Rich for a tour of Bavaria ~ September 6 - 16, 2022

Now Accepting Reservations ~ (504) 525-2495 ~ seelos.org/alpine-pilgrimage



The Seelos pilgrimage brochure urges participants to register before July 31, 2021 because tickets for the Passion Play are in great demand. You may register for the trip after the suggested date but the best seats will be made available on a first-come, first-served basis and our travel agent can't guarantee the best seats after that date.

Blessings for the Sick

*Hospital visits with a Seelos Crucifix
(Only family members may request)*

JEFFERSON / ORLEANS

EAST JEFFERSON GENERAL HOSPITAL

Gerry Heigle (504) 482-4404
Anne Batt (504) 458-0310
Norris Plaisance (504) 235-1961

OCHSNER (KENNER)

Linda DiMaggio (504) 287-8732
Wendy Whittaker (504) 722-0089

OCHSNER (JEFFERSON)

Mark / Monica Surprenant (504) 895-5371
Norris Plaisance (504) 235-1961
Marie Giorlando (504) 568-0522

UPTOWN / ORLEANS PARISH

Dennis Waldron (504) 442-6336

CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Dennis Waldron (504) 442-6336

WESTBANK

Elaine Freeman (504) 341-2213
Mary Grace Orsag (504) 367-7515
Tori Winters (504) 237-2962

LOUISIANA

ABBEVILLE / ERATH / LAFAYETTE

Boniface "Boni" Suire (337) 937-5675

ALEXANDRIA

Deacon Bill / Joan Travis (318) 664-7069
Mary Ann Reddoch (318) 277-0545

BALDWIN / FRANKLIN

Patti Ibert (337) 828-0141

BATON ROUGE

Gloria Bacqué (225) 753-3800

COVINGTON

April Mayo (985) 892-1828
Dr. Ann Logarbo (985) 886-0218

HOUMA / THIBODAUX

Debbie Badeaux (985) 438-4096
Margo Battaglia Clement (985) 637-6056
Deacon Rod Fonseca (504) 320-7450
Sheila Fonseca (504) 320-9807

IOTA

Anne Ritter (337) 254-8451

LAKE CHARLES

Lisa Verrette (337) 274-4810

LULING & SURROUNDING AREA

David Fauchaux (504) 908-4120

MANDEVILLE

David Brumfield (985) 234-9355
Lisa and Eric Johnsen (985) 640-1677
Kathy Newcomb (225) 978-9284

NEW IBERIA / ABBEVILLE / JEANERETTE

Rachel Gonsoulin (337) 224-7855

OPELOUSAS

Suzanne Pitre (337) 351-8489

PONCHATOULA / HAMMOND

Gaspar Corpora (225) 294-5938

PRAIRIEVILLE / GONZALES

Deacon Claude Bourgeois (225) 337-0945

SHREVEPORT / BOSSIER CITY

Tom and Marjorie Rivers (318) 797-3116

SLIDELL

Billy Bachemin (985) 288-7006

OUTSIDE OF LOUISIANA

KATY, TEXAS

Lauren Johnson (281) 851-1321
Donna Johnson (713) 826-4191

GRACES RECEIVED & PRAYERS ANSWERED

EUNICE, LA

In 2015 I had surgery for endometrial cancer. 30 hours after surgery I coded. In April 2021, I had a mastectomy. During both surgeries the surgeons carried a Blessed Seelos relic in their pockets. In May, while meeting with my new oncologist, he stated that I almost died after the first surgery, that my heart had stopped and the situation was dire. I said

that I knew how close I came to death. 30-40 minutes before I coded and my heart stopped, I was blessed with the Seelos cross. As I coded, I was in and out of consciousness. During aware moments I was in a state of the most beautiful peace. I thought, "I am not afraid." Thank you God and Blessed Seelos for interceding for my life.

ZACHARY, LA

My husband went to a retina specialist in July, receiving miraculous news. Here's what happened. His first retina detached, requiring emergency surgery in April 2018. Less than 12 months later, inexplicably his other retina detached, requiring another emergency surgery. The next day was another emergency surgery to the same eye due to complications. He went through daily visits for weeks to drain fluid from eye and many mini procedures, much pain and missed work, and the fear of not having sight. Our

parish priest gave us a relic of Blessed Seelos which my husband kept with him. A few weeks ago, his doctor did extensive testing to both eyes and concluded that he'd never seen eyes with that extensive damage make this full of a recovery. My husband told him it was because he was a good doctor. The doctor said, "No, this is way beyond me." I say the prayers and little relic of Blessed Seelos that's been sitting beside his chair this entire time is the reason. Praise God!

TEMPE, AZ

Thanksgiving for favors granted. Blessed Seelos was the 6th pastor of my home parish in Cumberland, MD. On April 20, the same day Fr. Seelos arrived in America, I prayed to Blessed Seelos after being discharged from the hospital. I had surgery to repair a fractured femoral ball in my hip socket. Off oxycodone only

a few days after leaving the hospital, the pain subsided quickly and I made a speedy recovery. By June 9, I regained my flexibility and was able to walk without assistance. I am improving every day and am able to carry out my daily activities again. I am also starting a new job – Thank you, Fr. Seelos!



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 ~ STUDENTS OF SEELOS

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



“WILLY FINDS VICTORY: A BLESSED FRANCIS SEELOS STORY” BOOK – \$12

This middle-school book is about a boy who sets out to find his sister’s husband during the Civil War and meets Father Seelos along the way.



ASSORTED YOUTH PAMPHLETS – \$3 EACH

These pamphlets offer prayers and guidance for small children through college-aged young adults.



TEACHER’S PRAYER, STUDENT’S PRAYER & TEEN CREED CARDS – \$1 EACH

These laminated cards offer prayers of comfort for teachers, students and teenagers. Each features a beautiful illustration on the front.



SPORTS BRACELET & POCKET TOKEN SET – \$8

Choose from black woven bracelets featuring a cross and football, basketball, baseball or soccer beads. Set comes with a matching token that says “With God all things are possible.”



TEACHER APPRECIATION CARD & POCKET TOKEN SET – \$4.50

This set is a small token of appreciation for the special teachers in your life.



ST. THOMAS AQUINAS POCKET PRAYER TOKEN – \$3

This token features an image of St. Thomas Aquinas on the front and a prayer for students 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 \$2.50 each. 2nd Class Relics are available in small envelopes for an offering of \$2.50 each.



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

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

SEELOS CENTER NEWS (USPS 4472) is published monthly by the Redemptorists at The National Shrine of Blessed F. X. Seelos.

Seelos Center Director: Fr. Richard Boever, C.Ss.R.
Seelos Vice-Postulator: Fr. Gilbert Enderle, C.Ss.R.
Staff: Jan Brown, Dawn Dawson, Heidi Groat,
Patricia Norman, Marilyn Olivard, Shelly Raynal
Denver Provincial Superior: Very Rev. Stephen
Rehrauer, C.Ss.R.

The National Shrine of Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos, C.Ss.R. is a member of the National Association of Shrine and Pilgrimage Apostolate.

DONATION & CONTACT INFORMATION FORM

I would like to support the Seelos cause by donating \$_____ to be used for:

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:

Name: _____

Address: _____