



Christ
is among us

VOLUME 130

SEELOS CENTER NEWS

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

DECEMBER 2025

Dear Devotees of Blessed Seelos:

There is a Redemptorist tradition begun by Saint Alphonsus Liguori called the “little Christmas.” On the twenty-fifth day of each month, our communities would pause to honor the birth of the Lord. One custom was to place an almost life-sized statue of the Christ Child in the chapel, a visible reminder that the mystery of Christmas is never far from us. Saint Alphonsus wanted us never to forget that Christmas is more than a single day each year. It is the mystery of a God so full of love and mercy that He chose to dwell among us, and still does.

As we begin the season of Advent, it might feel early to think about Christmas. Yet St. Alphonsus’ little Christmas reminds us that the mystery of the crib is alive every day. The Infant in the manger is the God who still draws near to the poor, the weary, and the brokenhearted. Each Advent moment becomes an invitation to recognize Christ already among us.

Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos celebrated his first Mass on Christmas Day in 1844. How fitting that the Eucharist, the living continuation of the Incarnation, marked the beginning of his priestly life. For Seelos, God’s closeness was never abstract or distant; it was tender and personal. His joy came from believing that in every trial and moment, God was near: in his farewell to family, in the uncertainties of a new country, in his ministry to the sick and dying. Seelos was always open to God’s presence unfolding in his life.

While we shouldn’t rush through these days of Advent, the tradition of the little Christmas can help us live the season more deeply. Each day we are called to welcome the Christ Child into our homes, our work, and our hearts. Especially where life feels messy or uncertain, Christ is there. May the crib open our hearts to Love, and remind us that Love has already come.

A Blessed Advent... and a Merry Christmas,



Aaron L. Meszaros, C.Ss.R.

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

DECEMBER DAY OF PRAYER SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION



Monday, December 8
St. Mary's Assumption Church

Join us on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception for a day of prayer, reconciliation and fellowship.

10:45 am - Confessions
11:00 am - Rosary
11:30 am - Mass

★ To learn how you can ★
volunteer from home or at
the Shrine, call (504) 525-2495.

The Four Pillars of Redemptorist Spirituality

Excerpts courtesy cssr.net

At the very heart of the spirituality of Saint Alphonsus is love: God's love for us and our love for God in response. Saint Alphonsus was overwhelmed by God's love for him and for all of us, and for Alphonsus, this was especially manifest in Jesus. **Jesus is the unshakable sign and proof that God loves us.** The spirituality of Saint Alphonsus focuses on the love of God

shown in Jesus, who shared our human condition; who suffered, died, and rose; who continues to be present among us; who gave his own mother to intercede for us. The spirituality of Saint Alphonsus is about God's self-giving love and presence shown in Jesus. Redemptorists have traditionally summarized that in the words *crib, cross, altar, and Mary*.

CRIB: The mystery of the Incarnation

Jesus, the Redeemer, is God become human in the Incarnation.

From the writings of Saint Alphonsus:

My dearest Jesus, if it is true that ownership is acquired by gift, then you are truly mine since the Father has given you to me. You were indeed born for me; you were given to me. As Scripture says: "For a child has been born for us, a son given to us" (Isa 9:6). Therefore I can justly say to you: "My God and my all!" And since you are mine, everything that belongs to you is also mine. (See Rom 8:32) Therefore your precious blood is all mine, your grace is mine, your paradise is mine; and since you are mine, who can ever take you away from me? Amen.

ALTAR: The Eucharist

Jesus Christ continues to make his loving and saving grace available to us in the Eucharist.

From the writings of Saint Alphonsus:

My loving Jesus, you can give us no greater proofs of your love than those which you have already given us. You have given your life for us—and you have bequeathed yourself to us in holy Communion, that we may be nourished with your own flesh and blood. How can we see all these testimonies of your love and fail to love you in return? I thank you for giving me the time and opportunity not only to regret the offenses I have committed against you but also to love you for the rest of my life. Help me, my Jesus, to reject and expel from my heart each and every affection which is not directed toward you, so that from this day forward I may not desire, nor seek, nor love anyone but you alone. My God, whom shall I love if not you, who are my supreme good? Amen.

CROSS: The mystery of Redemption

Jesus redeemed us by emptying himself, becoming a servant, and accepting all the consequences of human life—including a dishonorable death.

From the writings of Saint Alphonsus:

Was it possible that God, the creator of all things, would have been pleased to die for love of his creatures? Yes, it is through faith that he has done so, "as Christ loved us and gave himself for us" (Eph 5:2). The earth, the heavens, and all nature with astonishment witnessed Jesus, the only begotten Son of God, the Lord of the universe, die in intense pain and anguish, like a criminal on a disgraceful cross. Why? For the love of humanity! Lord, I have known your Passion and not only have I not loved you, but I have frequently offended you. Pardon me, I beg you, and remind me continually of the death you have suffered for love of me, so that I may never again offend you, but may always love you... My crucified Jesus, I want to be yours alone now and forever, and I will love no one else but you. Amen.

MARY: Mother of the Redeemer

God consoles us through the intercession of his mother, Mary, to whom Jesus entrusted us from the cross.

From the writings of Saint Alphonsus:

O most beautiful Lady, I rejoice in seeing you so dear to God because of your purity and beauty. I thank God for having preserved you from every stain of sin; and since you are so loved by the Holy Trinity, do not refuse to look with love upon me, a sinner. Obtain for me from God pardon for my sins and eternal salvation. Look down upon me and change me. Draw my heart to you so that from now on I may truly love your Son and you. You know that I have placed my hopes in you, my dear mother, so do not abandon me! Help me in life through your powerful intercession, and come to my aid, especially at the hour of my death. Amen.

Blessings for the Sick

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

JEFFERSON / ORLEANS

CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL
Dennis Waldron (504) 442-6336

EAST JEFFERSON GENERAL HOSPITAL
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Amy Morel (504) 416-5018
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Sheila Fonseca (504) 320-9807
Elena Guida (228) 596-3085

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

GRACES RECEIVED & PRAYERS ANSWERED

ST. LOUIS, MO

I am a widow of 82 years, and in the months of November 2024 to March 2025, I experienced one of those periods where life seems to be a parade of overwhelming problems, anger, rejection, and pain. Then I read my *Seelos Center News* about the April healing mass in New Orleans, and I was just called – there is no other word for it – to go and be healed of this terrible malaise and hopelessness I was feeling. I arranged everything quickly and very expensively as I needed a driver, companion, and special reservations due to my disabilities.

Everyone at the center was thoughtful, helpful, and generous; and that whole day was the most profound spiritual experience of my life. Sitting in the front

pew at St. Mary's, unable to stand in line for the blessing, the priest brought me the Seelos cross, and I held it to my heart and wept with relief and hope. We prayed together for a few moments.

Since that day, my physical problems have not healed – but I had absolutely the real healing I needed – to believe in a good life ahead of me; to know I could manage any physical impairment; that I would feel no more breakdown of my spirit; that I would be happy and contented with not only the past but my present and future too. I am a new person. For me, that was true healing. I will always honor Father Seelos for this wonderful experience. I will go again to every healing mass I can possibly attend.

FAIRHOPE, AL

Many years ago, my mom bought a cross at the Seelos Shrine which was touched to his casket before it was encased in glass. The cross has since been passed around to many people who have experienced healing.

Recently, I was diagnosed with stage 3B rectal cancer. I now have the cross with me, and have also attended a Seelos Healing Mass. All my cancer scans have been clean and at present, I am cancer free. Thank you, Blessed Seelos!

IOTA, LA

Preliminary medical reports indicated I had a thoracic artery aneurysm along with blockage. Immediately, I began praying with a first class relic of Father Seelos. After several cardio tests, all

showed negative results along with other screenings that were all in normal range.

Blessed Seelos, thank you for your intercession.

Shrine Christmas Holiday Closure

The Shrine and Welcome Center will be closed for the Christmas holiday Wednesday, December 24 - Saturday, December 27, 2025.



SHRINE, MUSEUM & WELCOME CENTER HOURS
Monday-Saturday 10am-2pm

REDEMPTORIST 2026 DAILY DEVOTIONAL



This leatherette book features daily scripture readings, inspirational reflections, notes on the saint of the day, prayers, psalms, the rosary, Divine Mercy Chaplet, Redemptorist novenas and devotions. This book is a collaborative effort from Redemptorists around the world which brings a unique spirituality into your everyday life.

\$35 ~ Call (504) 525-2495 or visit seelos.org/gift-shop to order

HOT IN THE SHOP ~ ADVENT & CHRISTMAS



NEW! CHRISTMAS NOVENA PRAYER KIT – \$16

This kit features a “Christmas Novena” booklet by St. Alphonsus Liguori, a laminated prayer card with a stained glass image of the Holy Family on the front and Prayer to Obtain Favors on the back, and a 2½” acrylic cardinal ornament with Czech glass beads.



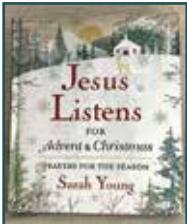
2026 REDEMPTORIST OMPH DEVOTIONAL CALENDAR – \$14

Features shrines and images of Our Mother of Perpetual Help in Redemptorist houses and ministries across the U.S.



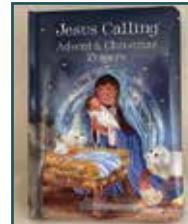
“PEACE” ANGEL ART HEART – \$24

This 4” tall Art Heart and key set features an angel and the inscription “Peace.” Can hang from included cord or stand using decorative key.



“JESUS LISTENS FOR ADVENT & CHRISTMAS” – \$27

Prepare your spirit for the Savior’s coming with prayers, reflections, Scripture verses and words of hope.



“JESUS CALLING: ADVENT & CHRISTMAS PRAYERS” – \$16

Children’s book includes Advent calendar of prayers and the Christmas story.

Quantities are limited. Prices 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-\$5. Visit seelos.org/light-a-votive-candle.



REQUEST A RELIC: Relics are available for an offering of \$2.50 each at SEELOS.org/gift-shop.



INCLUDE US IN YOUR ESTATE PLAN: There are several options for including the Shrine in your estate plan. Visit seelos.org/charitable-giving to learn more about charitable giving.

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



SEELOS CENTER NEWS (USPS 4472) is published monthly at The National Shrine of Blessed Seelos, a ministry of the Redemptorist Fathers and Brothers.

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The ministry and maintenance of the Shrine My 1-year newsletter subscription renewal (\$15)

Other: _____

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

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