



VOLUME 120

# SEELOS CENTER NEWS

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

FEBRUARY 2025

Dear Devotees of Blessed Seelos:

Not to show my age, but when Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos was beatified on April 9, 2000, I wasn't even in high school yet. I was familiar with the Redemptorists at age fourteen, having grown up in a Redemptorist parish. However, at that "tender age," I had not yet heard of the man who had become a beacon of hope to so many—Francis Xavier Seelos.

The year 2025 is a significant milestone for us! While we are celebrating a Jubilee Year as pilgrims of hope, we are also marking the 25th anniversary of Blessed Seelos' beatification. Fr. Byron Miller, C.Ss.R., former Vice Postulator for the Canonization Cause of Blessed Seelos, once remarked that a beatification anniversary might seem "of little relevance in the total scheme of things." After all, isn't beatification just a step before canonization? But as Fr. Miller wisely points out, we celebrate this milestone out of gratitude to God for the gift of Blessed Seelos—a brother and friend who teaches us to live with joy and unwavering hope in God.

*As we embark on this Jubilee Year, the Seelos Shrine will host a series of prayerful and joyful celebrations. We invite everyone—near and far—to join us in these events, whether in person or online.*

The best way to honor this special year is by sharing our devotion to Blessed Seelos with our families, friends, and faith communities. By spreading his story, prayers, and example of cheerful trust in God's will, we can bring hope to the world.

We invite you to join us in this year-long celebration by visiting the Shrine, participating in our online events, or engaging in personal prayer and reflection. Together, let's honor Blessed Seelos by being instruments of hope and joy in our communities, just as he was in his time. We look forward to celebrating with you and spreading the message of hope that Blessed Seelos so beautifully exemplified.



*Aaron L. Meszaros, C.Ss.R.*

Aaron L. Meszaros, C.Ss.R.  
*Director, National Shrine of Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos, C.Ss.R.*

## MOURNING LOSS IN NEW ORLEANS



On January 1, 2025, during the early hours of World Day of Peace, a terrorist attack claimed the lives of fourteen people in New Orleans.

This tragic act has deeply affected both local and global communities.

On January 7, Fr. Aaron Meszaros, C.Ss.R., Director of the Seelos Shrine, visited the makeshift memorial on Bourbon Street, where he offered prayers and lit a candle on behalf of the Blessed Seelos community as a symbol of peace, hope, and healing. Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims of this attack and their loved ones.



# Understanding Plenary Indulgences

By Rev. Tim Watson, with excerpts from ewtn.com and usccb.org

*Hope does not disappoint;* these are the first words of Pope Francis' proclamation of this Jubilee Year. These words are found in St. Paul's Letter to the Romans 5:5. A Jubilee Year is proclaimed every 25 years. Pope Francis calls all of us to be Pilgrims of Hope—his desire is "For everyone, may the Jubilee be a moment of genuine, personal encounter with the Lord Jesus, the 'door' (cf. Jn 10:7.9) of our salvation, whom the Church is charged to proclaim always, everywhere and to all as 'our hope' (1 Tim 1:1)."

## WHAT IS A PLENARY INDULGENCE?

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is twofold: 1) confessing and seeking forgiveness for a sinful act, and 2) removing the remnants of that sin by doing penance, either on Earth or in Purgatory. A plenary indulgence takes away that penance after fulfilling specific conditions laid out by the Catholic Church. The Jubilee Year offers us the opportunity to receive one plenary indulgence each day of the year.

## HOW IS THE CATHOLIC CHURCH ABLE TO DO THIS?

The merits of Jesus because of his Passion, Death and Resurrection are infinite and inexhaustible; add to that the tremendous value of the prayers and good works of the Blessed Virgin Mary and all the saints. These merits are before God as means of extinguishing, pardoning and restoring the damage that evil does. This Treasury belongs to the Church and can be used by the Church to remove the punishment for all sins that have been confessed.

## HOW TO GAIN A PLENARY INDULGENCE

To gain a plenary indulgence for a sin, one must be in a state of grace (a Catholic). It is also necessary to perform prescribed

work to which the indulgence is attached, such as fasting, abstaining from futile distractions, volunteering, or donating money to the poor. And finally, we must fulfill three conditions, preferably on the same day or within several days of the indulgence work: 1) Confession, 2) Communion, and 3) pray for the intentions of the Supreme Pontiff (the Pope) before the Blessed Sacrament at a designated Pilgrimage Site. In New Orleans, the Seelos Shrine is a Pilgrimage Site (check your local diocesan website for information about your area).

If there are no Pilgrimage Sites nearby, you may perform a Spiritual work of mercy (to counsel the doubtful, instruct the ignorant, admonish sinners, comfort the afflicted, forgive offences, bear patiently those who do us ill, and pray for the living and the dead) or a Corporal work of mercy (to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, welcome the stranger, heal the sick, visit the imprisoned, and bury the dead).

## GAINING A BONUS INDULGENCE

Despite the rule that only one plenary indulgence can be obtained per day, the faithful who have carried out an act of charity on behalf of the souls in Purgatory, if they receive Holy Communion a second time that day, can obtain the plenary indulgence twice on the same day.

Through this double act, a praiseworthy exercise of supernatural charity is carried out, through that bond by which the faithful still journeying on this earth are united in the mystical Body of Christ, with those who have already completed their journey.

This Jubilee Year began on December 24, 2024 and ends on January 6, 2026. Let us take full advantage of the year to draw closer to Jesus and become holier people.

## 2025 JUBILEE: PRAYER FOR THE YEAR OF HOPE

Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos, in word and deed, you were a living sign of hope. As a Pilgrim of Hope, you left all behind to bring God's grace to those most in need of God's abundant love and liberating mercy. Help us, too, to be witnesses of hope in our homes and communities. Open our eyes to see and our ears to hear the cry of those who long for God's abundant grace — the sick, the young, the elderly, the poor, the imprisoned, the migrant, and the refugee. As Pilgrims of Hope, make our hearts open to God's transforming grace, that we may be instruments of peace and messengers of the good news of the Gospel. May the grace of the Jubilee reawaken in us, Pilgrims of Hope, the yearning for heavenly treasures and pour over all the earth the joy and peace of our Redeemer. To you God blessed in eternity, be praise and glory for ever and ever.

Amen.

Rev. Aaron Meszaros, C.Ss.R.

## 2025 JUBILEE: SEELOS SHRINE EVENTS

Thursdays, 11:30 am: Mass at the Seelos Welcome Center, 3rd floor

Every Wednesday, February 12–April 9: 25th Anniversary Seelos Beatification Nine-Week Novena

April 6: Seelos Healing Mass and Anointing of the Sick

April 9: Jubilee Day of Prayer

April 18: Walk of the Nine Churches

August: Jubilee Day of Prayer

October: Seelos Healing Mass and Anointing of the Sick

November: Jubilee Day of Prayer

## 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**  
Anne Batt (504) 458-0310  
Amy Morel (504) 416-5018  
Matt Morel (504) 416-6073  
Norris Plaisance (504) 235-1961

**OCHSNER (JEFFERSON)**  
Amy Morel (504) 416-5018  
Matt Morel (504) 416-6073  
Norris Plaisance (504) 235-1961  
Monica Surprenant (401) 207-5521

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

**ORLEANS PARISH**  
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Matt Morel (504) 416-6073  
Dennis Waldron (504) 442-6336

**WESTBANK**  
Elaine Freeman (504) 341-2213

### LOUISIANA

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Deacon Bill & Joan Travis (318) 664-7069

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**BATON ROUGE**  
Gloria Bacqué (225) 753-3800

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

**IOTA**  
Anne Ritter (337) 254-8451

**LAFAYETTE / ABBEVILLE / ERATH**  
Boniface "Boni" Suire (337) 937-5675

**LAKE CHARLES**  
Lisa Verrette (337) 274-4810

**LULING & SURROUNDING AREA**  
David Faucheaux (504) 908-4120

**MANDEVILLE / SLIDELL**  
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**  
David and Joan Diaz (504) 715-6642

**PRAIRIEVILLE / GONZALES**  
Deacon Claude Bourgeois (225) 337-0945

**SHREVEPORT / BOSSIER CITY**  
Tom and Marjorie Rivers (318) 797-3116

### OUTSIDE OF LOUISIANA

**MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST**  
Elena Guida (228) 596-3085

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

## GRACES RECEIVED & PRAYERS ANSWERED

### MANDEVILLE, LA

Several months ago, I was in mass sitting behind a beautiful young family with five children. The mom was in a wheelchair. The family touched my heart because this was a weekday mass and they were in church. They had their hands full with five young children and the mother in a wheelchair. During mass, I felt God prompting me to give my Seelos relic to the mother. I did not want to give her my relic. It was given to me over 10 years ago after the passing of my beloved father in law. God told me, "It was never yours to keep." After

mass, through so many tears, I tapped the mom on the shoulder. I told her I wanted her to have my relic. She smiled at me with such joy – a smile I will never forget. She looked at me as I was crying and said, "you are glowing." Which was strange because I felt like a wreck. Her doctors said she may never walk.

I recently ran into the family. The mother was walking and holding her daughter! God is good and so is Blessed Seelos. Amen.

### NEW ORLEANS, LA

Recently my 80-year-old friend had a stroke and was hospitalized. I called the Seelos Shrine to request that a prayer partner come to the hospital and pray

with her. After a prayer and blessing with the Seelos cross, she felt better and was able to go home three days later. Thank you, Fr. Seelos for blessing my friend.

### MIAMI BEACH, FL

In 2023, my parents took a trip to New Orleans from Miami, FL. During their trip, my father woke up confused one morning. He was taken to the hospital where doctors found that a sinus infection had spread to the right frontal lobe of his brain. He underwent open craniotomy and the doctors were astounded at the rapid progression of infection all over his brain. He was in the ICU and was not waking up, opening his eyes or following commands.

Two days later, I went to visit the Shrine of Blessed Seelos. That afternoon, PT/OT came to evaluate my father. As they rolled him onto his side, I noticed a priest outside my father's room holding

a Father Seelos relic crucifix. My father then opened his eyes and reached for my brother and I. The therapists sat him up, and the priest came into the room and prayed over my father with the relic. He was able to stand, take a few steps, and state his name. Everyone in the room was astounded and crying.

My father was transferred to Inpatient Rehab a few days later and was discharged back to Miami after two weeks. He has made a 100 percent recovery. Recently, his last MRI showed brain is completely free of infection. Thank you Father Seelos for your intercession and Jesus Christ for your Divine Mercy.

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

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## Prayer to St. Valentine

O glorious advocate and protector, St. Valentine, look with pity upon our wants, hear our requests, attend to our prayers, relieve by your intercession, the miseries under which we labor, and obtain for us the divine blessing, that we may be found worthy to join you in praising the Almighty for all eternity: through the merits of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

*psalm91.com*

## HOT IN THE SHOP



### NEW! ROSARY OF ABANDONMENT SET – \$41

*Jesus, you take over! Hand your cares and worries over to God with this set featuring a “Rosary of Abandonment” pamphlet and a Heaven Sent one-decade rosary made in New Orleans.*



### ANGEL GIFT SET

– \$13

Features a booklet about angels and their roles as God's holy messengers, and a pewter token with wings in the shape of a heart.



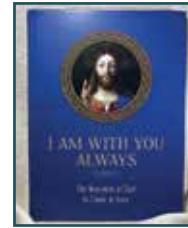
### SEELOS HEMATITE AUTO ROSARY – \$17

Designed to hang from a rear view mirror, this one-decade rosary features hematite beads and a color Seelos medal.



### “GRIEVING: A BEGINNER’S GUIDE” BOOK – \$19

Features daily meditations from St. Alphonsus.



### “I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS” BOOK – \$31

This book reminds a broken heart that there is always hope in Jesus Christ, for He alone is victory over death.

*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](http://seelos.org/light-a-votive-candle).



**REQUEST A RELIC:** Relics are available for an offering of \$2.50 each at [SEELOS.org/gift-shop](http://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](http://seelos.org/charitable-giving) to learn more about charitable giving.

**VISIT [SEELOS.ORG](http://SEELOS.ORG) OR CALL (504) 525-2495 TO ORDER**



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## 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 Xavier Seelos”.

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