



Bring your worries, your hopes  
and your fears to *Our Mother*

VOLUME 136

# SEELOS CENTER NEWS

JUNE 2026

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

Dear Devotees of Blessed Seelos:

In high school, I joined the debate team. Let's just say it was not my gift. Each competition filled me with nerves, and week after week I found myself discouraged. Looking for peace, I began going to church every Tuesday evening, the night before debate competitions. In our Redemptorist parish in Grand Rapids, I would sit before the icon of Our Mother of Perpetual Help and ask for her intercession. I prayed for calm, courage, and peace of heart. Her gentle gaze seemed to meet mine each week.

I cannot say my debate record improved much. In fact, my losing streak mostly continued. But something greater happened. Through those Tuesday devotions, I came to know Mary not simply as a figure in a painting, but as a mother who continually leads us to her Son. I discovered the quiet strength of trusting that we are never alone.

Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos died just over a year after the icon of Our Mother of Perpetual Help was entrusted to the care of the Redemptorists. While we do not know the extent of his familiarity with the icon itself, we do know the depth of his love for Mary. Like St. Alphonsus, Seelos understood Mary as a mother always near to God's people, especially in moments of fear, uncertainty, suffering, and need.

That is why the icon continues to speak so powerfully today. Mary does not draw attention to herself. She points us to Jesus. Her loving gaze reminds us that God's mercy is stronger than anxiety, fear, and even our failures.

*This month, I invite you to spend a few moments with Our Mother of Perpetual Help. Bring her your worries, your hopes, and your fears. Ask her to lead you more deeply to Christ, who never abandons his people.*

If you have a moment, come visit us. Not far from Blessed Seelos' reliquary is the gaze of Our Mother, always ready to help us.



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

Aaron L. Meszaros, C.Ss.R.

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

## CELEBRATE OUR MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP

~ FEAST DAY JUNE 27 ~



**Friday, June 26**

**3:00 pm ~ Prayer Service  
and Reflection**

*St. Mary's Assumption Church*

**Saturday, June 27**

**11:00 am ~ Procession with  
the Icon of Perpetual Help**  
*Begins at St. Mary's Chapel  
(1516 Jackson St.) and ends at  
St. Mary's Assumption Church*

**12:00 pm ~ Mass**  
*St. Mary's Assumption Church*

# Understanding the hidden messages in an iconic image

The icon of Our Mother of Perpetual Help is one of the most recognized images in the Catholic world. Painted in the style of an Eastern Christian icon, it has inspired devotion for centuries and today is entrusted to the care of the Redemptorists. More than a beautiful painting, it is often called a “visual Gospel,” proclaiming Christ’s redemption and the hope found in God’s mercy. The icon invites us to look deeply into the mystery of Christ’s suffering and saving love.

The icon centers upon the Child Jesus, who looks toward the instruments of his future Passion carried by the archangels Michael and Gabriel. The cross, nails, spear, sponge, and crown of thorns remind us that Jesus fully entered into human suffering in order to redeem the world. In his fear, the Child clings to the hand of his mother, even losing a sandal as he leans toward her. Mary does not turn him away from the cross. Instead, she supports him – literally with her hands, and figuratively with faith, tenderness, and trust.

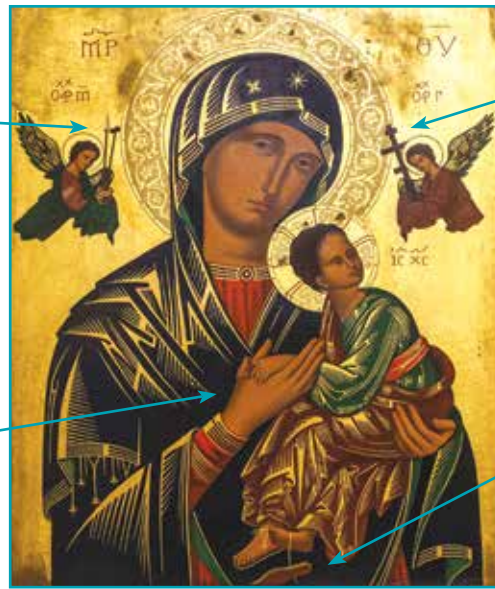
That is why the icon is also a message of redemption. Mary’s hand points toward Jesus, never toward herself. As



*St. Michael holds the spear, sponge, and crown of thorns.*



*Mary holds Jesus' hands while also presenting Him to us.*



*This icon is located inside St. Mary's Assumption Church near the entrance to Blessed Seelos' reliquary room.*



*St. Gabriel holds the cross and nails.*



*Jesus loses one of His sandals as he flees into the arms of his Mother.*

Redemptorists often say, Mary is the one who leads us to her Son. Fr. David Louch, C.Ss.R., writes, “The very centre and focus of her life is Jesus Christ. Through Mary we can come to her son.” (“Rediscovering Mary,” CSSR News, May 2019). In the icon, her gaze looks outward toward us, inviting every person to place their lives into the hands of Christ the Redeemer.

The icon also speaks a profound message

of hope. In a world marked by fear, division, anxiety, and uncertainty, Mary reminds us that we are never abandoned. St. Alphonsus Liguori taught that true devotion to Mary always brings us closer to Jesus Christ. For generations, people have turned to Our Mother of Perpetual Help in moments of struggle and need. Beneath her gentle gaze, they continue to discover the same truth: God’s mercy is always greater than our fears.



## MEET THE NEW DIRECTOR OF THE SEELOS SHRINE, FR. BINH TA, C.Ss.R.

On June 30, 2026, Fr. Binh Ta, C.Ss.R. will become the new Director of the Seelos Shrine. Fr. Binh (pronounced “Bin”) is a Redemptorist missionary of the Denver Province. In 1979, at the age of 16, his family fled Vietnam by boat as political and religious refugees. After nearly a year in a refugee camp in Indonesia, they resettled in Houston, Texas.

While studying electrical engineering, Fr. Binh discerned God’s call to religious life and joined the Redemptorists in the summer of 1985. During his initial formation, he spent a year ministering among Southeast Asian refugees in Palawan, Philippines. He professed perpetual vows as a Redemptorist in 1993 and was ordained a priest shortly thereafter.

Fr. Binh holds a Bachelor of Arts from St. Mary’s University, a Master of Divinity from Oblate School of Theology, and a Doctor of Ministry in Intercultural Spirituality from Catholic Theological Union. His ministry has included parish leadership, youth and young-adult outreach, community organizing, administrative leadership, formation work with seminarians and religious students, and university chaplaincy. Throughout his ministry, Fr. Binh has sought to share the Gospel with people from diverse cultural backgrounds. His presence in New Orleans will be a tremendous gift as the Shrine continues to grow and flourish.

## 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  
Matt Morel (504) 416-6073  
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**OPELOUSAS**  
Suzanne Pitre (337) 351-8489

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David and Joan Diaz (504) 715-6642

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**SHREVEPORT / BOSSIER CITY**  
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### OUTSIDE OF LOUISIANA

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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

### KENNER, LA

I have had a history of atrial fibrillation and underwent an ablation to fix the electrical impulses causing most of these issues. Six months after the procedure, I started experiencing racing heart rate and irregular heartbeats again. One episode was so severe, I had to be transported by ambulance to the ER.

After my medications were adjusted, my heart rhythm returned to normal for a time, but the issue returned. My doctor scheduled a cardioversion to shock my heart into rhythm again, but I would

have to wait 5 days. During that time, I experienced extreme weakness and shortness of breath. I debated going to the ER again, but I prayed to Father Seelos throughout the day and anointed myself with his blessed oil, asking to restore my heart to normal rhythm.

That evening my heart converted to normal rhythm and I no longer needed the cardioversion. I attribute this to my prayers to Blessed Father Seelos. I will continue to pray to Father Seelos and ask for his healing.

### RACELAND, LA

My daughter, Jillian, 9 years old now, was born with a congenital heart defect (bicuspid aortic valve) which caused an ascending aortic aneurysm. I wasn't aware at the time, but when baby Jillian was in the hospital for 55 days, my father-in-law placed Blessed Seelos relics in the NICU. I had no idea who Seelos was.

Consequently, my daughter did not need surgery on her heart valve. In fact, I verified with her cardiologist recently that she is the only patient he has ever treated where the valves "healed" themselves. He used the words "completely atypical."

Jillian goes for yearly cardiology check-ups and in 2025 her echocardiogram showed a change in the size of her aorta (confirmed by a CT) which in turn

caused us to go to the Seelos Shrine for the first time and multiple times after. We attended a Healing Mass, placed relics under her pillow, and invoked his intercession every night through his prayers, holy water and oil. She also wears a Miraculous Medal and a Seelos medal that sit right on her aorta. The medal has been held against his relics.

This past echo on December 23, 2025 not only showed the aneurysm stable, but decreased in measurement. Her doctor and I spoke today that a different technician did this echo so it could be in a margin of technician error, but we also know her heart healed in the past so why couldn't this be from divine intervention as well? I know Blessed Seelos is interceding for this child!



## Shrine Prayer Phone Line

Call our prayer line any time at (504) 586-1803  
to hear a recorded message and prayer.



**SHRINE, MUSEUM & WELCOME CENTER HOURS**  
Monday-Saturday 10am-2pm ~ Check [seelos.org/calendar](http://seelos.org/calendar) for closures



– COMING SOON! –

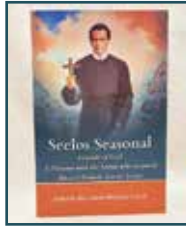
# Christmas in July Sale

**JULY 1-31, 2026**  
**10-40% OFF**

**Rosaries, Medals, Toys,  
Jewelry, Books, Artwork,  
Seasonal Items and More!**

**Items will be available  
in store & online.**

## HOT IN THE SHOP



### EXCLUSIVE! “SEELOS SEASONAL” NOVENA – \$14

*New at the Seelos Shrine and edited by Shrine Director Aaron Meszaros, C.Ss.R., this booklet features a novena to the saints who inspired Blessed Seelos, like St. Alphonsus Liguori, St. John Neumann, St. Claire and St. Patrick. It features prayers, reflections, quotes from Blessed Seelos, daily actions, prayer intentions and more.*



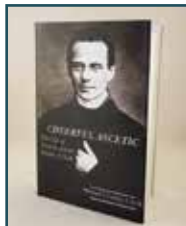
### ST. JOSEPH & CHILD STATUE – \$26

*This full-color 4" tall resin statue depicts the patron of fathers and of a happy home. Comes in a box featuring a Memorare to St. Joseph.*



### OMPH NOTECARD 12-PACK – \$12

*This pack of 12 blank notecards features a beautiful illustration of Our Mother of Perpetual Help.*



### “CHEERFUL ASCETIC” BOOK – \$31

*This account of Seelos’ life captures the totality of his piety and personality that we can identify with.*



### OMPH AURORA BOREALIS ROSARY GIFT SET – \$19

*Features a sparkling rosary of iridescent blue beads and a matching lapel pin in a gift box.*

*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 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 (\$15)

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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