

# SEELOS and SANCTITY

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## *Write Examples of Christian Kindness*

Once a woman named Joan Drake, went to see Doctor Johnson. "You have a serious heart condition Joan. It can be corrected by surgery but you must rest completely for six weeks after the operation. If you don't, you will surely die."

Joan's face dropped. "Doctor, I can't possible do it. I have four children. My husband works all day and he doesn't make enough money to hire outside help."

Doctor Johnson was a very kindly old man who had been dealing with people for many years. By now he knew what made them tick. He looked at Joan over his black rimmed glasses and said, "Joan, don't ever underestimate the goodness of people. Somehow God has placed in the heart of every one of his human creatures an urge to help his fellow man. Let your neighbors and friends know about your problem and see what happens."

Joan followed the doctor's advice. Sure enough, things did begin to happen. Two neighbor women took complete charge of the house. One friend did all the laundry for about nine weeks. Another group spent every Thursday cleaning her house. People up and down the block sent food. Workers at her husband's plant donated blood. Get-well cards, flowers, candy, cheery letters came every day. Not a single person would accept a penny for their services.

Needless to say, Joan recovered -- thanks to the virtue of kindness.

Stories such as this are repeated over and over again. It is unfortunate that evil makes better headlines than the good things people do. So very much could be accomplished if the kind, thoughtful actions of people could be more widely published.

The virtue of kindness leaps forth from every page in the life of Father Seelos. He was indeed a man with a heart. Somehow he understood people's feelings and had a way of speaking and acting which always took these feelings into account.

In developing the cause of Father Seelos, we have continually tried to encourage an imitation of his holy life. We especially feel that an imitation of his virtue of kindness is particularly timely today. If a sound world order is ever developed, it must be accomplished through the firm establishment in all human hearts of the virtue of thoughtful consideration for our fellow man, based on a genuine love for God.

We would like to use these pages of SEELOS AND SANCTITY as a vehicle to publish examples of Christian kindness in order to encourage others to practice this virtue. Therefore, we are going to make this request.

WRITE US A LETTER TELLING US OF EXAMPLES OF KINDNESS AND THOUGHTFULNESS IN DAILY LIVING. Perhaps some of your friends, some member of your family, or someone you have heard about has given a good example of genuine Christian kindness. Tell us about it. You need not use names. If you do, we will not publish the name. We will, however, try to publish examples of kindness in Christian living to encourage others to practice this virtue -- a virtue which shone so brightly in the life of Father Seelos.

FATHER VAUGHN

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Paul J. Baudry, C.S.S.R. Vice Provincial  
John J. Vaughn, C.S.S.R. Vice Postulator  
Josie M. Becker. Editor

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## Seelos - Apostle of Kindness

by Luana Jambois

Since his beginning as a novice, Francis Xavier Seelos had been tested with poverty, his own personal trials of spirit and exposure to the many sinners who thronged his confessional. Now in his new assignment as Superior and Master of Novices in Annapolis, God deigned to give him a resting place of spiritual delight. Here he was surrounded with beauty, serenity, and the most pure young souls. On April 17, 1857 he wrote "I am now the novice master! Oh happy illness that necessitated such a cure! . . . May God bless me and my work here!"

Father Seelos' strength returned rapidly. "Our novitiate" he wrote his sister, "has a beautiful garden which descends in graceful terraces down to the Bay. Our young novices live in angelic innocence and sincerity. God reflects the virtue of his young people in the fertility of our garden. The lilies prosper. On one slender St. Joseph's lily I counted twenty blooms. And the novices themselves! How beautiful a chaste generation in the eyes of God! They sing hymns to our Lady when we travel in our rowboats on the Bay. I am very happy because I love our Congregation dearly. Yet sufferings must come and I ardently desire them . . . Only in the blessed land where

God Himself will dry our tears is lasting sublime happiness to be found. . . ."

On May 21, 1857, Father Seelos was transferred to the House of Studies in Cumberland. He would serve at St. Peter & Paul's Church and teach the eager young novices. As before, the son of the practical Mang and Francesca Seelos taught best by his own example. Good humor and kindness were as much a part of community life under Francis Seelos as the genuine holiness toward which his zeal ever led them. Their recreations and cross country hikes gave him opportunity to teach in his gentlest witty anecdotes the truths over which they must cross to their vocations. Joyfully the students followed him. Laughing in hearty good spirits, picnicking on dry bread, apples, and spring water, singing hymns as they walked, they absorbed the philosophy of their beloved teacher. Yet "Does a lark destined to soar high to praise its Creator hanker after the mud in which pigs love to wallow? Father Seelos was strict. He would not tolerate laziness, pride, melancholy, greed or worldliness. "May I study or pray," he wrote, they will come to me with their problems. This consoles me. They wish to be directed and led like little children."

Father Seelos maintained a constant correspondence with former parishioners who refused to give up his counsel. They followed his with their letters even through this travels and the years. He could not ignore their pleas for guidance. "I will place in your hand the staff of the Holy Cross which we must carry daily. The Cross carries us until at last it becomes the bridge over which we walk from death to eternal life," he wrote in consolation to one of them.

Many wondrous occurrences followed him. Mrs. Brinker had diphtheria. By May 1880, she was hopeless and dying from the illness which had begun in February. She was unconscious when Father Seelos prayed beside her. By July 4, she was well again. Simon Sell fell from a scaffold in June 1865. He was so crushed that the doctors pronounced his case terminal. Father Seelos gave him Extreme Unction and prayed beside him. Simon Sell



ST. MARY'S CHURCH SIDE DOOR

# ATTEND THE SEELOS MASS

## *Father Seelos Mass -*

There will be a special Solemn High Mass in St. Mary's Assumption Church on Sunday, October 3 at 9:00 A. M. Father Seelos died on October 4, 1867. This year marks the ninety-eighth anniversary of the death of Father Seelos!

We ask all of those devoted to Father Seelos to make special efforts to attend this Mass. A special sermon will be preached on the holy life and virtues of Father Seelos. The Mass will be said for all the intentions recommended. We are most anxious to make this a grand demonstration of our faith in God and of our devotion to the holy life of his servant.

Just think! You will have the opportunity to kneel in prayer just a few yards from the exact spot where Father Seelos died.

You will kneel in prayer in the very church in which Father Seelos himself prayed.

You will attend Mass before the very altar on which Father Seelos himself said Mass.

You will hear a sermon preached in the very same church in which Father Seelos

recovered completely. Other favors, temporal and spiritual, were received through his intercession.

Suddenly a new rumor was being whispered about.

(to be continued)

## *Sunday, October 3rd*

himself preached.

Don't miss this wonderful opportunity. Be with us Sunday, October 3, at 9:00 A. M.

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To Know and Imitate His Holy Life  
(Continued from Outside Back Page)

inspiring others with hope and confidence in the goodness and mercy of God. This gift was evidenced whenever he preached a sermon or heard confessions or even in his private conversation with his friends. It rarely happened that he did not bring about the conversion of a sinner who had heard him speak.

We should all strive to imitate Father Seelos by praying at all times for God's help in our every endeavor. When we fully realize we are completely dependent on God in every single thing we do, we will then feel confident of His help.

JOSIE M. BECKER

For all the intentions recommended to the prayers of Father Seelos, we ask that you offer the following prayer:

O MY GOD, I TRULY BELIEVE YOU ARE PRESENT WITH ME. I ADORE YOUR LIMITLESS PERFECTIONS. I THANK YOU FOR THE GRACES AND GIFTS YOU GAVE TO FATHER SEELOS. IF IT IS YOUR HOLY WILL PLEASE LET HIM BE DECLARED A SAINT OF THE CHURCH THAT OTHERS MAY KNOW AND IMITATE HIS HOLY LIFE..

# TO KNOW and IMITATE HIS HOLY LIFE . . .

The simplest way of understanding what is meant by CONFIDENCE IN GOD is to study a little child. A little child does not worry about where his next meal is coming from or how he is going to find clothing and shelter. The little child knows that his parents will take care of him. Likewise a person who possesses this deep spirit of CONFIDENCE IN GOD does not worry about where he will obtain the things he needs, nor does he worry about how he will progress in the path to sanctity. He knows that as long as he is faithful to all God wants him to do, God will provide for all of his needs.

Father Seelos showed the strongest confidence in the Providence of God. He knew that God would take care of him, no matter how many troubles he found himself involved in. He never lost his inborn cheerfulness of soul. He tried very hard to inspire others with this same strong confidence in God's Providence. This is clearly shown in his letters to them.

Father Seelos was never absent from community prayers in spite of his many occupations. He was always seen holding his rosary in his hands, which according to the Redemptorist Rule, he wore hanging from the cincture (or belt) of his religious habit. In order not to give too great an appearance of holiness, he would shake his beads while walking as if it were a nervous habit. When walking down the street wearing his Roman collar he constantly kept his hand in his pocket where he kept his rosary.

In conversation and correspondence he gave the impression he considered himself entirely unfit to do anything. He might have even been considered to be a very great sinner. However, so great was his confidence in God that he would courageously undertake any work that was imposed upon him as though he was supernaturally strengthened. Somehow, in whatever work he was engaged he was successful.

Father Seelos possessed a special gift of  
(Continued on Inside Page)

Miss Mary Becker,  
2616 Magazine St.,  
New Orleans 13, La.

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## GOSSIP

To gossip means to talk needlessly about the faults and failings of others and even to invent such faults and failings where none exist.

The Bible says, "A slippery mouth works ruin." (Prov. 26/28)

Christ said, "Blessed are the promoters of peace, for they will rank as children of God." (Math. 5/9)

Gossip is seldom a mortal sin because most people gossip without really intending harm and it is difficult to prove that serious harm actually results from idle gossip. Therefore, unless you are certain that you have intentionally produced serious harm as a result of your gossip you may go to communion without confession.

However, gossip DOES produce harm. How many people are deeply hurt as a result of idle gossip.

Here are some practical hints on how to overcome the habit of gossip:

1. Never say behind a man's back what you are ashamed to say to his face.
  2. Learn to mind your own business.
  3. Avoid offensive curiosity. Be sympathetic. But don't ask questions that will embarrass people.
  4. Avoid the companionship of people who gossip.
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