



# Seelos *and* Sanctity

SECOND CLASS POSTAGE  
PAID AT NEW ORLEANS, LA.

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## THE BRAVEBOY FROM COWARD

Private First Class Tobey Braveboy, a twenty-four-year-old, light-haired, part-Cherokee rifleman from—of all places—Coward, South Carolina, was hit by three Viet Cong bullets in South Vietnam. As the Viet Cong approached, he played dead. He was so close to the Red soldiers that when they decapitated a nearby wounded American soldier blood spurted all over him. After they left, he crawled to a small creek and hid in the elephant grass, wrapping his T-shirt around his mangled left hand. There he waited for a week until he was rescued. He tells of how he once heard footsteps and four Communist soldiers walked by. One of them pointed his rifle squarely at him. "I raised my wounded hand and shook my head NO. I don't know why, but he lowered his rifle and walked away. He was just a boy—no more than 16 or 17 years old."

I relate this story to indicate that in the midst of the atrocities which we hear about the current war, the drive toward mercy and kindness is still strong in the human heart. That unknown and unheralded Viet Cong soldier demonstrated a feeling of compassion for his suffering fellow man . . . a sense of compassion that crosses the boundaries of race and nationality. Perhaps it highlights the fact that we are all brothers, and share the same Father—Almighty God. As this New Year begins, let each of us renew in our minds and hearts a sense of abiding love and compassion for our suffering brothers in Christ.

This, indeed, was the virtue which showed forth most strongly in the life of Father Seelos. On every page of his life we read lessons of mercy and compassion. Let us not merely pray to him. Let us also imitate his holy life.

As we begin a new year let us meditate on the following "recipe" which gives the ingredients necessary if you want to make yourself miserable.

Think about yourself!

Talk about yourself!

Use "I" as much as possible!

Mirror yourself continually in the opinion of others!

Listen greedily to what people say about you!

Expect to be appreciated!

Be on the lookout for a good time for yourself!

Shirk your duties if you can!

Do as little as possible for others!

Love yourself supremely!

Be selfish!

(This recipe is guaranteed to be 100% infallible.)

## BITS OF INFORMATION FROM



... The television program "The Case of Father Seelos—Journey to Sainthood," won the first place award at the Annual New Orleans Press Club Banquet, in the category of the Best Documentary Produced by a New Orleans T.V. Station in the past year. The award was presented to Mr. Ed Planer of WDSU-TV, who wrote the documentary. The same program will be submitted for the Gabriel Award given by the Catholic Broadcasters Association for the best religious documentary produced by a local T.V. station in the U.S. We are hoping to win this award too.

... We like to think it was Father Seelos who saved the Seelos Center from burning down recently. A defective floor plug began sputtering fire near a drape. Had the drape remained exposed to the fire for another ten seconds, it would have caught fire and much of the building would likely have burned. Luckily, Father Vaughn was sitting next to it and was able to pull the drape away—thus preventing further damage.

... We received a request from a Redemptorist priest on the East Coast for 350 Father Seelos leaflets to be included in his Christmas mail.

... A parishioner told us recently that his father knew Father Seelos when he was living. His father told him about how hard Father Seelos worked during the yellow fever epidemic. He also recalls the two-wheel, horse-drawn dump carts that used to go around the city during the epidemic picking up dead bodies. Oftentimes everyone in the family was sick and there was no one to bury the relative who died.

... In the 1930's St. Alphonsus Parish used to receive 300 letters a week expressing thanks to our Mother of Perpetual Help for favors received. Father Edward Kartheiser, C.S.S.R., was telling us recently that he clearly remembers a letter being read from the pulpit which thanked our Mother of Perpetual Help and Father Seelos. It is remarkable that through the years there has been a consistent devotion to Father Seelos even though there was very little official encouragement.

... Father Kartheiser also recalls how, in 1929, there were four old nuns of the Notre Dame Order, who always knelt in the first pew of the Chapel of St. Joseph's Orphanage. Father remembers one of these old nuns saying to him one day: "While on the train coming to New Orleans, I traveled with Father Seelos. He told me 'Within one year I will be dead.'" Hardly a year had passed when his prophecy came true.

... Father Seelos frequently foretold his death. While making his retreat in Chicago he told Father Wuest that he would die in New Orleans. While dedicating a statue to the Mother of Sorrows in St. Mary's Assumption Church he expressed a wish to be buried beneath it.

... Father Seelos was born 146 years ago on January 11, 1819.

## SEELOS—APOSTLE OF KINDNESS

by Luana Jambois

From September till November a severe yellow fever epidemic swept the city. On September 17, 1867, Father Seelos fought against the sickness which overcame him. He begged permission to make a sick call he had promised. When he returned, Father Duffy commanded him to go to bed and called a doctor.

At first no one was alarmed since he did not have very high fever. The fever passed, still he did not improve.

On October 2, all were convinced that he would die. Father Seelos asked to be dressed in his religious habit.

Father Seelos' coloring was now a yellow brown. His pulse beat was 124 per minute. His kidneys had blocked. The good doctor said that every breath he took was a miracle.

On October 4, shortly after midnight, father Duffy gave him Holy Viaticum. In the morning priests surrounded his bed at meditation time. His pulse rose to 136, then fell to 84, then to 60 beats per minute.

The priests and brothers around him were filled with sadness, yet Father Seelos' own joy was contagious. One of them asked him if he would like them to sing. He smiled. They sang two German hymns in honor of the Blessed Virgin, hymns that had long been his favorites. While they were singing, he died. He was 48 years, 9 months, 23 days old.

Outside a storm was blowing and people were dying with the yellow death. But the room was filled with happiness. God had taken back His own. Francis Xavier Seelos, humble servant of God, had closed the last chapter.

## CLOTH MEMENTOES

In ancient times, altars were erected over the tombs of martyrs. In the front of the altar was a little window with a shaft that led to the tomb. The faithful would lower pieces of cloth and pious objects on a string to touch the tomb of the holy martyr. They would then carry these away with them as relics.

This is the origin of the custom today of distributing pieces of cloth touched to the tombs of people who are renowned for sanctity. Although they are not relics properly so called, they can be used as treasured mementoes of the holy persons. Thus we, at the Seelos Center, distribute these cloth mementoes of Father Seelos. They are encased in gold foil and have a string attached so that they may be pinned to the clothing. It is particularly useful to attach these to the clothing of the sick person.

Over a half million of these cloth mementoes of Father Seelos have been distributed so far. We have a good supply on hand. Please let us know if you would like some to give to your friends.

**PLEASE PRINT YOUR NAME WHEN SENDING THE ENCLOSED CONTRIBUTION ENVELOPE. HADWRITING IS FREQUENTLY DIFFICULT TO READ; THUS SLOWING THE POSTING OF CONTRIBUTIONS.**

# Thanks To Father Seelos For.....

... the arresting of a cancer after the doctors declared I had only a short time to live. I am now able to get around and I am praying that God's Will be done.

... helping me to overcome a serious psychological depression. I was at a point where I could not do anything. I was retired on a disability pension from the Post Office. I had completely given up on life. In desperation I walked from Kenner, Louisiana, to St. Mary's Assumption Church (a distance of about twelve miles) and poured out my heart to Father Seelos. Immediately after, I found the job I wanted and have been happy ever since. My wife and seven children share my gratitude.

... sparing our lives. We lost everything in the flood from Hurricane Betsy, but God has been good to us. We at least had a home to come back to.

... avoiding an operation which seemed inevitable. After consultation with other surgeons the operation was not necessary.

... safety during Hurricane Betsy. Even though we had flood damage, we are happy to know our family is alive and well.

... the grace to better understand my children and for a more charitable atmosphere in my home.

... the recovery of my grandson who had a very bad break in his wrist. Also for granting a peaceful death to an elderly uncle of mine.

... for protecting me from robbers who broke into my motel. While praying to Father Seelos about 8:10 A.M., the telephone rang. While speaking to my cousin, the motel doorbell sounded. I left the phone off of the hook while I answered the door. Two nicely dressed men forced their way in, tied me up, blindfolded and gagged me. Fortunately I was able to scream a couple of times. While they were robbing the safe, my cousin heard everything over the phone. She called the police. Within ten minutes my motel was completely surrounded and the thieves were quickly captured. These men were wanted in other states for armed robbery. I attribute my safety to the prayers to Father Seelos which I was saying at the time the phone rang. I pray to him during every idle moment.

N.B. These reports of "Thanksgiving" are from the statements of our correspondents. Official judgement of the favors granted can be given only by the proper church authorities.

## A PRAYER TO FATHER SEELOS

For your own intentions, and all the petitions placed before the tomb of Father Seelos, let us pause and say—

*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 SO THAT OTHERS MAY KNOW AND IMITATE HIS HOLY LIFE. THROUGH HIS PRAYERS PLEASE GIVE ME THIS FAVOR . . . . .*

## POSSIBLE MIRACLE EXAMINED

Word has recently been received from Father Ferrante, the Postulator for the cause of Father Seelos in Rome, that a cure of blindness attributed to Father Seelos has been examined by three Roman experts. They have judged the case to be "quite good."

At the present time, we are having further medical examinations made. If the outcome of these examinations is favorable, it is likely that the process will begin for determining whether it is definitely the work of God or not. If approved, the cause of Father Seelos will indeed take a great leap forward. We urge all of our readers to pray fervently for a favorable outcome if it is God's Holy Will.

Let us not allow our hopes to soar too high. There are yet many difficulties to overcome.



## PRAY TO CHANGE YOUR WILL— NOT GOD'S WILL

Many people think that prayer will change God's Will so that the things which were going to happen will no longer happen. This is not quite true. God knows precisely what is going to happen. But somehow, in some mysterious way—a way no human mind can fathom—God grants favors because he knows we will pray for them.

The chief purpose of prayer is not to change God's Will but rather to change OUR will. In other words, when we pray, we should pray as Christ did in the Garden of Gethsemane!

"Father, if you wish it so, take this cup away from me. Nevertheless, not my will but Yours be done!"

Thus, we should pray that, if it be possible, let this particular tragedy not happen. But, if it is God's Will that it should happen, then let us ask that we be able graciously to accept His Holy Will.

BEST WISHES AND PRAYERS FROM ALL OF US AT THE SEELOS CENTER, FOR A HOLY, HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR.