



# Seelos *and* Sanctity

SECOND CLASS POSTAGE  
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## Love Your Enemies

by Father John Vaughn

During The Communist Rebellion in Spain an old priest was being led out to face the firing squad.

"Please cut these ropes" he said, "that I may bless you." One of the communist soldiers grabbed an axe. He hacked off not only the ropes, but also the hands of the priest.

Raising his mangled arms above the executioner's head the venerable priest moved the bleeding stump of his arm in blessing over them, "I forgive you and bless you."



This holy priest was indeed following the teachings of Christ Who said "love your enemies; do good to those who hate you; bless those who curse you."

Christ also said "Inasmuch as you did this to one of these least brethren of Mine, you did it to Me." Thus, in treating our enemy with kindness we actually understand ourselves to be treating Christ with kindness.

Christ also gave you the MOTIVE you should have in forgiving your neighbor. That motive is God's mercy towards you. Do you remember the charming story that Christ tells in the Bible about the time the king called a certain man before him

who owed him several million dollars? The man fell on his knees before the King and declared that he did not have the money. "Have patience with me he declared, "and I will pay you everything." The King was kind and merciful. He had pity on the man and told him to forget all about paying him the several million dollars he owed him.

This same man went outside and met another man who owed him \$20.00. He grabbed the man by the throat and demanded that he pay him what he owed him. "Have patience with me," he said and I will pay you everything." But the man who had just been forgiven a debt of several million dollars refused to forgive the debt of the man who owed him \$20.00! He had him put in prison because he could not pay the debt.

You and I are much like the man Christ spoke of. Just think of all that God has forgiven you! If Christ wanted, He could have punished you many times over for the offenses you have committed against Him, but He has not. He has continued to lavish His goodness upon you. He has continued to give you an abundance of good things in this life. Yet how many times you have refused to forgive someone else who has committed an offense against you that is so insignificant when compared to the tremendous offenses you have committed against God.

Yet God's mercy is endless. God daily forgives millions of people who have offended Him. God's mercy extends to the limits of the earth, God's mercy extends as high as the sky, as deep as the ocean, as wide as the universe.

Therefore, as you meditate on the mercy of God toward you, you must nourish in your heart that same spirit of mercy toward your fellow men.

### BITS OF INFORMATION FROM



### HERE AND THERE

... If a friend or relative is hospitalized in the New Orleans area, phone 895-6176. Father Vaughn will bless them with the crucifix used by Father Seelos ... We still need many more S & H Green stamps to obtain our new addressing machine. ... Father Curley is in the final stages of completing his manuscript of a book about the life of Father Seelos.

# Thanks To Father Seelos For.....



...giving my daughter the courage to stop seeing a young man who was divorced and not free to marry her in the Catholic Church. It took great strength on her part as I do believe she cared for him very much. I am praying to Father Seelos that she will meet someone whom she can care for and with whom she might have a happy Catholic marriage.

...my recovery after major surgery. I was scared to death at the very thought of the operation and its possible outcome. Then one of my neighbors gave me the prayer and cloth memento of Father Seelos. I prayed my heart out. The doctor said it was one of the most difficult operations he had ever performed. I am happy to say that I have fully recovered.

...Helping my husband obtain employment. At his age it was difficult for him to find a job and his new position is just the type work he was able to do and enjoy. He tried for several months with no success until we began to pray to Father Seelos.

...the recovery of my mother from brain surgery, which she had to undergo for a second time. She has overcome some of the after-effects of the surgery, but her left arm and leg are badly damaged. We continue our prayers to Father Seelos for her further recovery.

...the return of my niece to her husband. She had left him and her family and was living with another man. She has now returned to her husband and to the practice of her religion.

...sparing the life of a three year old child after being knocked down by an automobile. He suffered a fractured skull and brain concussion, and it was thought surgery would be necessary. On the way to the hospital the rescue squad man had to give him mouth to mouth resuscitation because he was unconscious and barely breathing. Thanks to the intercession of Father Seelos, surgery was not necessary and in a few days he was playing with the other children.

# "Child, Go in Peace"

by Luana Thiel Jambois

She was astonishingly frail, the child --- a beautiful little girl with warm brown eyes. She hunched over her doll, singing a child-song, half words and half humming sounds. Indeed a doll she looked, her skin too untouched by color to be real, her movements too still, too slow and sedate for a girl so young. Philomena Roehlinger was seven years old. This was Pittsburgh, the year 1854.

Across the room her mother, Katherine Roehlinger, looked up from her sewing, savoring the precious moment. "How pretty she is, my Philomena," she thought. A sob nearly tore past the carefully kept calm in her face. "God! How can you let this be? What do you want of us? Why? Why, oh God why?"

An artist would pause before painting the scene, wondering what was wrong. The room was well furnished; the mother and daughter lovely and well dressed; but there was an air of waiting in it, of calm before a storm.

The artist would not have waited long. Suddenly the child's hand jerked from her body, the doll lay forgotten on the floor beside her. The taut body twisted and moaned. The mother reached to the table beside her mending and took the silver spoon to place between her daughter's clenched teeth. "Philomena! My darling sweet Philomena! There, still, my darling, don't cry!" At last she wept, brushing back the long dark hair from the contorted face. "How long, oh God! How long!"

This day was not like the succession of endless days during which she waited for the convulsions which inevitably came. Philomena was an epileptic. This day, watching her daughter, she thought of Father Seelos, the rector of her parish church. People said that he had a special grace, that God permitted him quick answers to the prayers he said.

"Hush, darling." She smoothed away the tears which always followed when the attack was over. "Hush, sweet. I'll see the good Father Seelos. He'll help us."

In the darkness and healing silence she knelt. The little window opened. She was in the confessional facing Father Seelos.

"Father," she said "Please pray that my child will die."

"But why should she die? What is wrong with her?"

She wept. Her sobs punctuated the story of endless days and nights of convulsions which racked the small body of her beautiful daughter, doomed to live in a world separated from other human beings at the mercy of this violent thing which turned her into a nameless formless animal before her eyes.

"That is epilepsy," replied the priest. "Bring her to church immediately."

The next day she returned with her daughter. They went with Father Seelos to kneel before the altar of the Blessed Mother. He knelt before the child touching her face. "Come, Philomena, we'll ask God to make you better." He put his hand on her head. "Let us pray...."



The smell of incense and candles burning seemed to intensify suddenly. The stillness in the church seemed to last for an eternity.

It was done in an instant. Little Philomena stood and stretched her arms, smiling in wonder. She was healed.

Father Seelos knelt a moment longer, his head bent, his hands clasped in thanksgiving. His face reflected the happiness and the joy of the mothers when he stood.

He smiled. "Child, go in peace."

## 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...*

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.