



Seelos *and* Sanctity

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THE OBEDIENCE OF FATHER SEELOS

BY FATHER GRANGELL

To be holy in the world, to be on that narrow road to Heaven which our Lord speaks about in the Sermon on the Mount, 7/14, and to assure oneself that he is striving after Perfection (Matt. 5/48), one must follow a Rule of Life. The Church has approved and sanctioned many Rules for Religious, and any Priest will advise and suggest a Rule of life for anybody, man, woman; married, single; old and teenager, who desires one.

Father Seelos became a Saint by embracing, by vowing to live the Rule of the Redemptorists. On the day Father Seelos made his vows, he promised solemnly: "I promise to serve Thee henceforth with all my strength by imitating the Life of Thy Son, our Divine Redeemer Jesus Christ, which is the only way to please Thee." The life of Father Seelos was, then, the Gospels of the New Testament - - Christ's Life. Christ's life and his were to be the same. St. Alphonsus wants his followers to be very specific about this imitation. He indicates a special virtue of Our Most Holy Redeemer for each month of the year.

The virtue for July is Obedience. Obedience is possible only on the foundation of Faith and Love of God. If these two virtues are wanting, there is no hope for obedience. There may be make-believe, sham, veneer, deceit, and politics, but no genuine supernatural obedience. Father Seelos had great Faith and great Love of God. His obedience was Christly.

When Father Seelos was in the novitiate he read and re-read "The True Redemptorist," a booklet of 27 pages by St. Alphonsus. He read it on his monthly retreat days, because he always desired to be a true, genuine, holy member of the Order. He underlined one sentence which he wished to impress indelibly on his mind, and which he knew meant sainthood for him: "He only has the spirit of the Institute who enters it with the desire of practicing obedience."

Father Seelos' obedience had all the requisite qualities to make it perfect. He was faithful in every little detail; he was prompt in everything; he blindly followed directions and blindly executed the wishes of his superiors, never asking "why." He was cheerful always and most courageous in every act of obedience. Nothing was ever hard because he ever kept before his mind the obedient Jesus Christ, suffering even unto death. He lived by the Crucifix!

If Father Seelos were living in this age of change in the Church, he would accept every iota of it as the Will of God and love it. He would accept the new Constitutions and Statutes of the Redemptorist Rule as the inspiration of God and would settle down to obey each and every one of them without comment and certainly without criticism, and, in his great Faith and Love of God, without personal reservations.

Obedience has collapsed in the world today. Authority is a thing of the past. Selfish, proud man is asserting himself. That's the reason for so much unrest. So many restless people, young and old! ! St. Augustine centuries ago gave us the reason for it all: "Thou hast made us for Thyself, O Lord, and our hearts will not be at rest until they rest in Thee." The world has lost God. Our Lord told us how to strike a happy balance: Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God, the things that are God's.

Let's obey the Infallible Church always, we can never go wrong.

FEATURE LETTERS

"On October 20, 1964 my little girl, then 2½ contacted the kidney disease, nephrosis. The doctor had her admitted to the hospital for tests. She was very swollen. The doctor told me after the tests were run that there was only one drug that could be given the child. It was tried and the baby responded.

"While still in the hospital, we met a lady who was visiting another child with cancer. We talked to her and she told us about praying to Father Seelos, which I did. My child is six years old now and in school for the first year. About a month and a half ago the doctor found her so improved that he told me that there is a chance she might be cured. As you might already know, nephrosis is a rare kidney disease which no one knows just how you get it or how to cure it - - only how to arrest it.

"I feel that it is through our prayers to Father Seelos that Laurie is doing so well."

* * * * *

"I am writing this letter in thanksgiving for a favor granted us through the intercession of Father Seelos."

"I have a one year old son who was born with three heart defects. He was constantly sick and was hospitalized five times in six months, each illness being worse than the other and each time he was close to death. In February we were informed that he would have to have an operation that was originally scheduled to be done at age five.

"On March 25 he was operated on and even though his chances were slim he recovered with such amazement that the doctors were speechless. He went through surgery requiring about a half cup of blood and was scheduled to stay in intensive care until approximately five days. But he recovered so rapidly that after eight hours they returned him to his room leaving the nursing staff speechless. They said they had never seen anyone go through such an operation and recover so quickly. Seven days after the operation he was discharged.

"He was born with an extra valve which let blood drip into his lungs and deprived his lungs of proper oxygen. They removed the extra valve.

"The second defect was the pulmonary valve was enlarged two and a half times its normal size. They banded the valve and will remove the band and repair the valve when he is five years old.

"The third defect, a hole in the heart, will be repaired at the next operation.

"We feel Father Seelos answered our prayers because of our son's remarkable recovery and in our estimation he has granted us a miracle."

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"Dear Father Seelos and also kind ladies at your Center - they are wonderful ladies. Their prayers for me were heard and I am so grateful to you Father.

"My little granddaughter was very sick and thanks to you, she has recovered.

"I will be 79 years old on July 30 and live alone. I pray so hard as I have a bad heart. At the time I moved my one daughter had a vacant house, on which she relied for income and the other daughter had her daughter in the hospital, so I had no help in making the move. I overtaxed myself and have been sick.

"Please forgive me for my delay in writing and thanks again for your wonderful prayers and those of the ladies at your Center. I will always remember you both. Thanks a lot.

"P. S. My daughter rented her house."

SPECIAL NOTES

....Don't forget the 5:30 P.M. Mass each Wednesday evening. We remember the intentions recommended to Father Seelos intercession at this Mass, and you are also given an opportunity to venerate the mission cross of Father Seelos.

....Father Grangell continues his weekly visits to the hospitals in the New Orleans area to bless the sick with the mission crucifix of Father Seelos. You may phone 895-6176, Miss Addie Buhler, if you wish someone visited by Father.

....Kindly make any checks which you may send us payable to the SEELOS CENTER or SEELOS FUND. It eliminates the necessity of obtaining a personal endorsement on the checks.

....Many teenage boys and young men really love God and think of becoming Priests at some time in their lives. They need just a word of help and encouragement. Father Grangell would like to send a short piece of literature, explaining the making of a Redemptorist to any you suggest. Write to Seelos Center and get a copy of it and send it to some possible future "Father Seelos." This boy is relying on you for his start.

....We have been told that the book on the life of Father Seelos by Father Michael Curley should be ready very soon. We hesitate to name a date because we have been disappointed so many times. If we hear soon enough we will give full details in the next issue of this paper.

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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.