



FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY

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PASTOR AT ST. PHILOMENA'S

Father Seelos spent six years at St. Philomena's as assistant. During those busy years he had three pastors: Blessed John Neumann, Father Joseph Mueller and Father Frederick Poesl. When the pace became too hectic for him, Father Poesl returned to Europe in 1851. It was then that Father Bernard Hafkenschied, the provincial, named Father Seelos as pastor of St. Philomena's. At that moment in his life, he was but 32 years old, just seven years a priest.

In those days St. Philomena's was one of the largest foundations the Redemptorists had in America. In the three years he served as pastor, Father Seelos had three or at most four assistants, but with the pastoral care of a number of outmissions, the work load was heavy for all of them. For example, this was the typical Sunday schedule just at St. Philomena's:

5:30 A.M. - first Mass 7:30 A.M. - second Mass 10:00 A.M. - High Mass

Also in the morning a special Mass for the school children in the school hall with a short instruction.

In the afternoon Christian doctrine for the grownups in church and in the school hall for the children.

Every Sunday afternoon a conference was given in turn for men, women, adolescent girls, adolescent boys.

7:00 P.M. an hour's devotions, including a sermon.

It is small wonder that in January 1853, Father Seelos could write to his family:

"No one can form a picture about how we are occupied the livelong day without letup. By the grace of God we can keep it up."

Joseph Elworthy, C.S.S.R.

Copies of THE CHEERFUL ASCETIC, by Father Michael Curley, C.S.S.R. are available at the Seelos Center, 2030 Constance Street. The cost is \$4.95 per copy.

FATHER GRANGELL'S MESSAGE

BY FATHER GRANGELL



The virtue for the month of March: LOVE OF GOD

The patron: St. James Major, the Apostle

The Text: Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul and with thy whole mind and with thy whole strength.

This is the first Commandment. (St. Mark 12/30)

When Father Seelos made his religious profession as a Redemptorist, this was the formula he used: "Burning with the desire of consecrating myself entirely to Thy holy love, I bind myself to serve Thee Henceforth with all my strength by imitating the life of Thy Diving Son, which is the only way to please Thee!" He never forgot that. His life was dedicated to the Holy Love of God. He practiced the theological virtue of Faith, Hope and Love of God, but as St. Paul teaches in 1 Corinthians Chapter 13, which chapter you should read from time to time, Father Seelos practiced the Virtue of Love of God as the greatest of the three.

Father Seelos loved the prayers of St. Alphonsus, which burn with love of God. He made many visits to the Blessed Sacrament in the Monastery Chapel. He used a little book written by St. Alphonsus on "Visits to the Blessed Sacrament." Father Seelos knew sections of this book by heart. Many times daily he would say - "all that I ask and desire is Thy Holy Love, final perseverance and the perfect accomplishment of Thy Will." That's all holiness. That prayer made a saint of Alphonsus Liguori and of Father Seelos and countless others. Use it often.

St. Alphonsus wrote a short book: "The Practice of the Love of Jesus Christ." Father Seelos used it constantly in his meditation. In a recent edition of this book, the title is given: "Love God and do What You will." Get a copy of it from Liguorian Books, Redemptorist Fathers, Liguori, Missouri 63057. It will help you to love God.

One day some one asked Father Seelos what his favorite Ejaculatory prayer was. He answered: "My God I Love You." That prayer means everything. It means you are loyal to God and to the Church. It means you are keeping the Commandments, that you hate sin and that you love your neighbor. The constant use of it gives color to your life. There are no feelings nor emotions, no sentiments when whispering this to God. It is a prayer for every man, woman, teenager, little children. Use it always as the very breath of your life.

In one of St. Alphonsus' prayers to the Blessed Mother, he asks of her: "Obtain for me a PERFECT love of Jesus Christ." That was Father Seelos' request of Mary. It must be yours.

SPECIAL LETTERS

New Orleans, La.

"On July 10, 1971 my nephew hit his head. He blacked out twice and his vision became blurred. He was rushed to the hospital and treated for a concussion. He remained in the hospital four days. He never had relief from the pains in his head and severe pressure on his eyes. Two weeks later he went into convulsions and was rushed back to the hospital. After extensive tests and examinations it was determined he had a blood clot at the base of his skull. He had brain surgery on August 5. As a family we began to pray as we never had before. We just about invaded heaven and made our pleas to all the saints. We had the priest from Father Seelos Center to come to the hospital and give Joseph a special blessing. Father gave us cloth mementoes and each of us carry one with us...This young man lay in the hospital for two and a half months - he was a complete vegetable. The doctors gave him up. We brought Joseph home on October 12. Thank God he is doing great. He has begun to talk, he helps get himself out of bed into the wheelchair, he feeds himself and is beginning to walk with some assistance. The doctors are amazed at the progress he has made in the past six weeks. We feel his progressing recovery is due to our prayers and we want to express out gratitude to Father Seelos and all the saints for a request granted."

Mrs. J. S.

New Orleans, La.

"...It is one month today since our baby's operation. The stitches were removed this past Friday. The operation lasted nearly four hours. Father Seelos was with him at all times. The doctors were able to operate without his needing any extra blood. They certainly expected he would. They could not even change the dressing until ten days after the operation. They have now begun therapy and we should know in the next few weeks if he is to regain partial use of his arm as we were hoping he would if the operation would be successful. If so, Father, I know the doctors have done a terrific job, but I also know that this is definitely an answer to our prayers to Father Seelos."

Mrs. C. S.

Jeanerette, La.

"...I have a 7-1/2 year old brother who came down with Bright's disease about 14 months ago. This is a fatal disease with complete rest being the only cure. Since birth when doctors thought he wouldn't be born alive because of birth delivery complications, he has had a low body resistance which actually resulted in this disease. During these fourteen months he has been in and out of the hospital several times and constantly goes to a private physician several times a week. Even an eye sore caused his kidneys to bleed for two weeks. Every cold he has had resulted in either the hospital or doctor's care for several weeks. He attends a Catholic school and has a nun who feels sorry for him as teacher, and she is prejudiced in his favor. During the holidays she gave him a Father Seelos cloth memento. My mother has had it attached to him day and night since. Although we have never prayed for his aid...About the time of the holidays he caught a very bad cold. Immediately we brought him to the doctor. His kidneys were not bleeding yet. Usually this required three or four injections before it helps him. One day during this time his urine had blood in it, but when he was brought to the doctor no trace of extra blood cells were to be found.

(Continued on next page)

Usually he rests during his attacks, but because it was Christmas we allowed him to play and to eat salt food, which he hasn't done since the beginning of his illness. He did the opposite of all the things against him, yet the doctor can't understand it, neither can we...His cloth memento is wearing out and we would like to replace it and have prayers to Father Seelos sent us."

L. A. S.

SPECIAL NOTES

The purpose of FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY is threefold - to give glimpses of the life of Father Seelos by Father Elworthy; to help you to practice the asceticism of Father Seelos, the monthly virtue, by Father Grangell; and to squeeze in, as space permits, favors obtained through Father Seelos. Pass it on.

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At the beginning of the new year, a man and his wife, parents of five small children, called on Father Grangell and gave him 15 envelopes of pennies amounting to \$15.00 for the restoration of St. Mary's Church. The man said he could not afford at any time to give \$15.00, but to save the pennies was no effort or sacrifice. Please imitate him, save the pennies and let's get St. Mary's restored.

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Be sure to do some lenten penance.

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For blessings with the mission crucifix of Father Seelos, please call 525-2495 or 895-6176. Arrangements will be made.

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Thanks for your help in clearing up our files. We have received word from a few who are receiving two copies of our paper. If you are too, won't you please let us know? It will save us clerical time and postage.

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Rev. William Grangell, C.S.S.R., Vice-Postulator and Editor; Miss Josie Becker, Associate Editor; Mrs. James Bourg, and Rev. Joseph Elworthy, C.S.S.R., Executive Assistants.