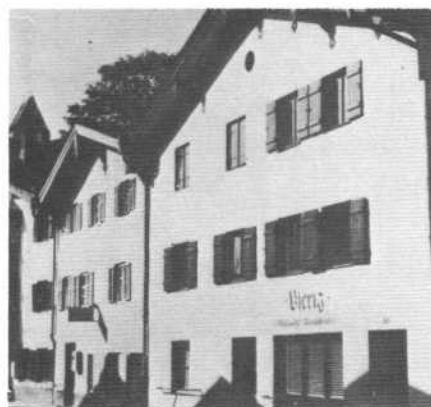




FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY

VOLUME XXV, NUMBER 1

JANUARY, 1986



THE BEGINNINGS

Francis Xavier Seelos was born in this home (left) on January 11, 1819, and he was baptized at this font (right) in his parish church on the same day. The house stands at 13 Spitalgasse in the picturesque Alpine town of Fussen, some sixty miles southwest of Munich.

Francis Seelos was the sixth child of Mang and Frances (née, Schwarzenbach) Seelos. All together they had twelve children.

The house where Father Seelos was born was three stories high, with an attic. Its living space was considerably reduced in dimensions. However, since the house did not extend far back from the front sidewalk.

Mang Seelos owned the house, worth about \$400; it was heavily mortgaged up to \$250, so that he really owned less than half of it.

FAITH LIGHTS UP THE GOAL

As we begin the first month of the new year, the long cycle of 365 days, it is not difficult for us to turn our thoughts to first things. In the life of our soul the beginning is faith. It is the first step in our return journey to God. God made us and wants us to know, love, and serve Him and to be happy with Him forever. St. Augustine, that great doctor of the early church, wandered restlessly through many fields of thought before he found the truth. He penned these famous words: "Thou hast made us for Thyself, O Lord, and restless are our hearts until they rest in Thee."

Faith is a gift of God. No one has a right to it. It is not something we can merit. God is perfectly free in giving it to us. Faith comes from an impulse of God's grace that moves us to accept on His word the truths that He reveals to us.

There are those who make a great to-do about the way faith limits our freedom and even closes our minds. They insist that the act of faith is beneath the dignity of men and women, that accepting the word of anyone, even God, as truth, is almost inhuman. Accepting the word of another is actually something we do every day and more often than we imagine.

There is something very noble and something very precious about the knowledge that comes to us through the use of our human faculties. We can stand on this tiny planet, earth, and in the twinkling of any eye, our mind can travel to the utmost boundaries of the universe, as well as plumb the depths of our own being and our natural relationship with God our Creator.

Faith, far from closing our minds or crippling them, at once enlarges the picture and enhances the vision. Without the gift of faith we could never come to know God as He really is, try as one might. Through faith God can tell us who He is, how there are three Persons in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, all equal yet each distinct, but still only one. He can tell us how He sent His only Son to become man for love of us, and how, after being born of the Virgin Mary, He grew into manhood among us and gave His life on the cross to redeem us from our sins. He can tell of Jesus' resurrection from the dead three days after His death.

Through faith we learn of the happy burden of the Church to bring the teaching of Jesus to the nations, how each one of us is called to be the brother and sister of Jesus, how each one of us is called to be a saint, and to enjoy the vision of God for all eternity.

We are on our way to heaven, and it is our faith that lights up the goal.

Joseph Elworthy, C.S.S.R.

SPECIAL LETTERS

From New Orleans, La.

In June my son amputated his finger to the first joint. Doctors reimplanted the part, but were not sure it would take. I prayed to Father Seelos. My son's finger is now doing great. He is in therapy and is expected to have full use of it.

Simmesport, La.

I got up one morning and could not walk. Something was wrong with my left knee. I prayed to Father Seelos that I would be able to walk the next morning, because I was not at home and I wanted to go home. Well, the next morning I had no pain whatsoever and could walk well. Father Seelos had helped me so many times before.

Slidell, La.

I had breast surgery and the surgery was a success. Thanks to Father Seelos for interceding for me. This is my note of thanks.

New Orleans, La.

My sister was found to have cancer of the colon, for which she was operated. Then came cancer of the lung. We all prayed that the diagnosis would be wrong. It turned out to be a blood clot which was dissolved by medicine. She is now back home and holding her own. Thanks.

Chalmette, La.

Last year my granddaughter had a knee cap broken and required a cast. She was told that if it would happen again it would require surgery. Six days ago the same knee cap was knocked out of place and again required a cast. I prayed to Father Seelos that she would not need surgery. The favor I asked Father Seelos was granted.

Marrero, La.

I promised to write a public letter of thanks to Father Seelos. He obtained several favors for me over the past few months and I would like to thank him publicly.

Mail received September, 1985:

Petitions - 486;

Thanksgiving - 174;

Others 481

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Published with Ecclesiastical Approbation.

Rev. William Grangell, C.S.S.R., and Rev. Joseph Buhler, C.S.S.R., Vice-Postulators; Rev. Joseph Elworthy, C.S.S.R., Director and Editor; Miss Regina Beck and Warren Gautreau, Executive Assistants.

SPECIAL NOTES

1. All of us at the Father Seelos Center are pleased to wish all of you readers a happy and holy new year, one that will be filled with all of God's blessings. It is our hope and prayer that the cause of Father Seelos' canonization will continue to show progress.
 2. Twice during the last year Father Seelos appeared on local New Orleans television. Peggy Scott Laborde, of local channel 32, WLAE-TV, produced a program called, "Our Fathers". The program featured four active priests of the archdiocese. In the last ten minutes of the hour-long program, five other priests, all deceased, whose lives and ministry had an impact on the faith in New Orleans, were briefly mentioned. Father Seelos was one of the five. Later on the producer had an hour-long feature on the five deceased priests. It was called, "Thy Will be Done, the Histories of Five New Orleans priests." Father Seelos was given a generous share of time.
 3. The annual memorial Mass on October 6 was well attended, perhaps more so than in the past few years. WLAE-TV again was on hand to videotape the proceedings. Later on they will show it on TV.
 4. For blessings of your sick with the missionary crucifix of Father Seelos, please call Miss Addie Buhler. 895-6176
 5. WE ARE IN NEED OF VOLUNTEERS AT THE FR. SEELOS CENTER. Those who can crochet and would like to volunteer to crochet the Fr. Seelos mementos, please call 525-2495.
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