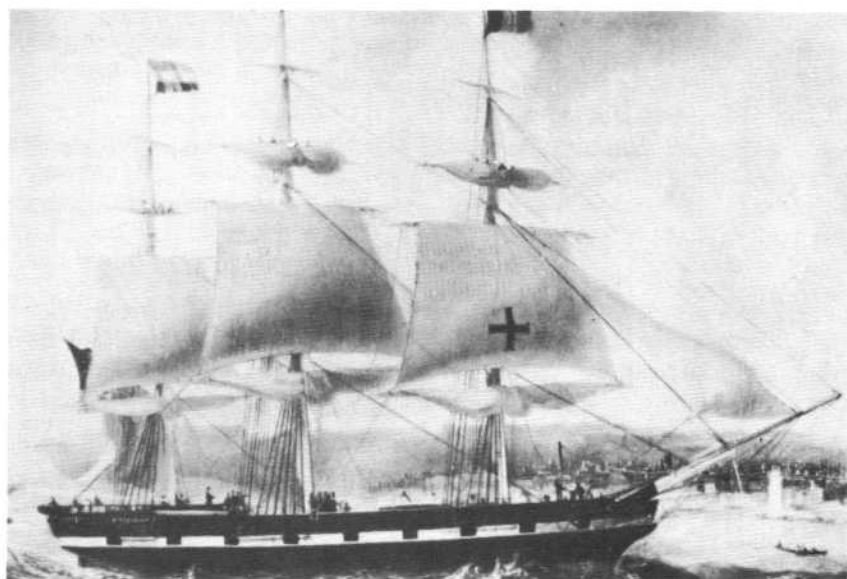




FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY

VOLUME XXV, NUMBER 4

APRIL, 1986



FATHER SEELOS ARRIVES IN AMERICA

On March 17, 1843, seminarian Francis Seelos along with several Redemptorists, Father Ernest Glaunach, and Brothers Jerome Schenk and Xavier Burdych, set sail on the *St. Nicholas* from LeHavre, France. The *St. Nicholas* was a new American ship, a three-master of 800 tons, 148 feet long and 34 feet wide.

It took the *St. Nicholas* five weeks to make the journey to America through storms, fair weather, and dead calms. All 156 passengers aboard had hoped to arrive in time for Easter, April 15. However, Captain John B. Pell brought the state-ly ship into New York harbor on April 20, 1843.

Francis Seelos was just a few months into his 24th year. In reality half of his life was over. The next 24 years would see him fulfilling his boyhood dream of following in the footsteps of his heavenly patron, St. Francis Xavier, not through the mountains and jungles of India, but through the new land called America. On the Atlantic coast cities of size were burgeoning, while more and more of the restless immigrants set their eyes on the endless acres of land to the West. America was now Seelos' home. He would never see the land of his birth again.

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR

It will come as no surprise to learn that the virtue of love for neighbor stands high in the mind of Jesus. If love for God is the first commandment, then the second is love for neighbor. Jesus told us on these two commands depend the whole law and the prophets. Love God is our first obligation, our Savior told us, and "the second is like it: you shall love your neighbor as yourself." (Matt. 22/38).

St. Paul very practically does not indulge in philosophical or even theological language. He describes what love does: "Love is patient, love is kind. Love is not jealous, it does not put on airs, it is not snobbish. Love is never rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not prone to anger; neither does it brood over injuries. Love does not rejoice in what is wrong but rejoices with the truth." (Cor. 13/4-3). Truly it will take us a life-time to fulfill this command.

The virtue of love for neighbor is a 24 hour a day task. We are called upon to exercise all the other virtues only from time to time. Love for neighbor calls for constant practice. As long as we live, we are surrounded by people and constantly interrelating with them. These relations can be pleasant, or sad, even bad. This is where the virtue of love is tried and practiced or found wanting.

The word love today is bandied about recklessly and without a clear understanding of the underlying concept of sacrifice: the willingness to give of oneself.

What turns many people away from the word "love" is the hollow empty sound it has, when it is only on the lips and not in the heart. As God said, "These people worship Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me." (Isaiah 29/13) St. John wrote in his first letter (1 J 4/20): "If anyone says, 'My love is fixed on God', yet hates his brother, he is a liar. One who has no love for the brother he has seen cannot love the God he has not seen."

Love for neighbor knows no limits. There is no one excluded from our love, nothing too much not to do for one's neighbor. "There is no greater love than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends." (John 15/13). Jesus gave His life for us even when we were not His friends.

Love for neighbor is particularly the commandment of Jesus: "This is My commandment: love one another as I have loved You" (John, 15 13-14). He identifies Himself with us: "As often as you love one of My least brothers, you did it for Me" (Matt. 25/29).

We pray in the Our Father, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us" (Matt. 6/12). We dare to ask God to forgive us our sins in the same measure we forgive the sins of those who sin against us. Forgiving one's enemies calls at times for great strength and courage. But we do have the example of Jesus: it was on the cross that Jesus prayed for his executioners: "Father, forgive them, they do not know what they do" (Matt. 23/24).

Joseph Elworthy, C.S.S.R.

SPECIAL LETTERS

From New Orleans, La.

My wife had a 90% blockage in an artery near the heart and the doctors were not sure that an angio-plastic would be successful. The angio-plastic is surgery and is commonly referred to as the balloon procedure. The doctors had to tell her that she might not survive the procedure. She decided to go through it and thanks to Father Seelos it was successful. The angio-plastic was performed the same day that you blessed her.

My wife came home a few days later. However she developed pneumonia and returned to the hospital. This was very dangerous because of a synthetic valve that was put in her heart in 1978. The doctors (with the assistance of Father Seelos) did a splendid job. She is home and doing splendid.

Tickfaw, La.

My birthday was Sunday, July 14. My husband and I went to a fine restaurant in New Orleans and then to St. Mary's Church for the exposition and benediction of the Blessed Sacrament at 3:30 and then Sunday Mass at 4 P.M. It was a great birthday gift for me. We had two of our children, my brother and mother-in-law with us and we were all blessed with the mission crucifix of Father Seelos. My husband's birthday was July 15, so this was a birthday present for him, too.

Metairie, La.

We are thanking the intercession of our Blessed Mother and Father Seelos for our son's recovery from an automobile accident. He was thrown 35 feet. Meningitis set in while he was in intensive care for three and a half weeks. We were blessed by all the prayers for our son.

Norco, La.

I promised public thanks for Father Seelos' intercession on my behalf: two large favors I prayed to him about. I needed him and he came through with more than I imagined. He is always there for us.

Mail received during December, 1985

Petitions 521,

Thanks 234,

Other 755,

Total 1324

Published monthly by the Redemptorists at the Father Seelos Center, 2030 Constance Street, New Orleans, Louisiana 70130. Telephone 525-2495. Subscription is \$1.00 per year.

In conformity with the decree of Pope Urban VIII all statements contained herein are unreservedly submitted to the judgment of the Holy See and the decision of the Sacred Congregation of the Causes of Saints.

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. We are pleased to announce that the documentary for television on the life of Father Seelos has been completed, and we are making it available on videocassette for anyone who wishes a copy. Keep in mind it would make a nice gift for a relative or friend. It will be good for showing at parish meetings, small assemblies, catechetical instructions.

We can send you a videocassette of this documentary for \$45.00 (includes dubbing, handling and shipping.) The tape is unconditionally guaranteed. It runs approximately 50 minutes. Allow 6 to 8 weeks for delivery. When ordering, please specify whether you want the VHS or Beta format. Please make checks or money orders payable to:

FATHER SEELOS CENTER
2030 CONSTANCE ST.
NEW ORLEANS, LA. 70130

2. For blessings of your sick with the missionary crucifix of Father Seelos please call Miss Addie Buhler. 895-6176

SECOND CLASS POSTAGE
PAID AT NEW ORLEANS, LA.

4/86

POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO:
FATHER SEELOS CENTER (USPS 488-660)
2030 CONSTANCE ST.
NEW ORLEANS, LA. 70130-5099