

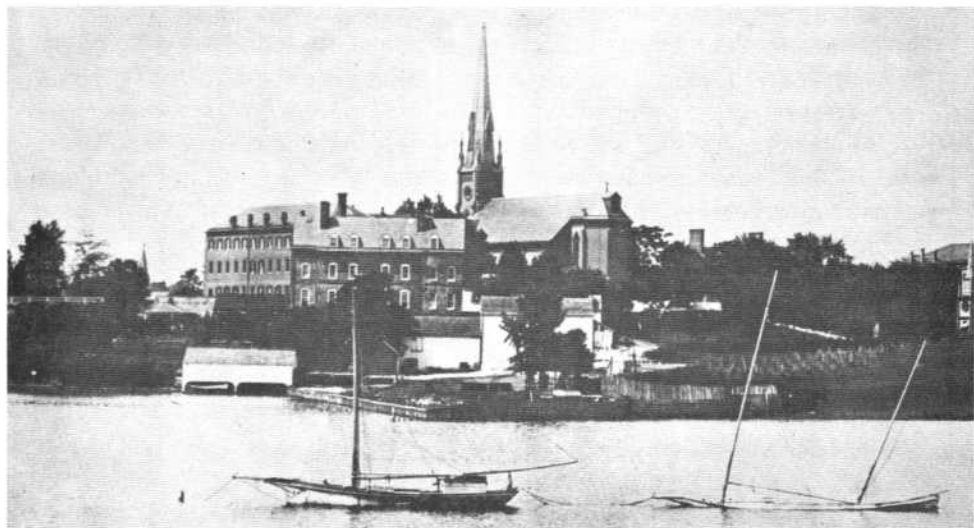


FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY

VOLUME XXVI, NUMBER 12

DECEMBER, 1987

FATHER SEELOS IN ANNAPOLIS



It was in the summer of 1862 that Father Seelos left the mountains of Cumberland to return to Annapolis. For the seminarians and himself it would be a milder climate. When the seminary was transferred to Annapolis, the novitiate was in turn transferred to Cumberland. Father Seelos would continue as rector of the seminary and was now named pastor of St. Mary's.

He had loved the quiet of Annapolis after his hectic days in Baltimore. Now, he thought, he would once more appreciate the relative solitude of St. Mary's.

Much as looked forward to his stay in Annapolis, peace he was not to have. The novice master, with whom he traded places, thought Father Seelos incapable of training the seminarians as he, Michael Mueller, thought they should be. He thought Seelos was too weak and easy-going. Unfortunately the Mueller opinion prevailed with the then higher superiors and Seelos was removed from office. As unwarranted and seemingly unjust as may have been the dismissal, be it to the credit of Father Seelos and his virtue that he never uttered one word of complaint.

Joseph Elworthy, C.S.S.R

FATHER SEELOS, SELF-DENIAL AND LOVE OF THE CROSS

Father Seelos was long-experienced in the affairs of the soul and well understood the qualifications for being a true follower of Christ. Jesus said: "If man wishes to come after Me, he must deny his very self, take up his cross, and begin to follow in My footsteps" (Matthew, 16/24). We all know how Jesus was treated by those who were no friends of His. He, too, felt the unjust stings and wounds and even death that come from fellow human beings.

Father Seelos is much admired these days, and he was well respected in his lifetime. Yet he had to practise self-denial. He found his daily cross. Self-denial and love of the cross are not the most popular virtues around. Father Seelos called the attention of one of his friends to this. He wrote: "This life is full of obstacles for one whose purpose is the close following of Christ. And for this reason it may sometimes appear that the true Christian life is something excessive. Our poor human nature may even call it at times a stupidity to despise a pleasure for God."

Father Seelos was once considered as a candidate for bishop of Pittsburgh. On the other hand he was dismissed from his office as prefect of the seminarians and rector of the Redemptorist community. He thanked God for escaping the onus of bishop. Never a word of complaint did he utter after his rough handling by his superiors.

He had high ideals about self-denial. In writing to his two sisters in religion, he said: "Would that all religious possessed sufficient faith, combined with courage and self-denial. This would enable them to see in their daily duties, in the commands of their superiors, in the various unforeseen occurrences of every day, in despondency and wretchedness of every kind, the cross sent to them individually and especially by God. In this way God is wont to manifest His wisdom. He, the most experienced of all physicians, prescribes for each and every person according to his individual needs, the circumstances peculiar to him, that specific remedy which is qualified infallibly to sanctify the individual and to bring him to that degree of perfection that He has ordained for him. . . We deceive ourselves and give in to temptation if we consider ourselves ill-used by our community. The good God always stands in the background. . . Have we not committed numberless faults for which we have never been punished and for which perhaps a fearful purgatory is awaiting us? Should we, therefore, not be most willing to suffer now and then?"

Joseph Elworthy, C.S.S.R

SPECIAL LETTERS

Zachary, La.

Kathy, aged twenty-seven months, was found floating on her back in her grandparents' swimming pool. The grandfather pulled her out and began to administer CPR. Soon others came to assist, including the local fire department. After ten to fifteen minutes, Kathy gave a sigh, indicating she was trying to breathe. After forty-five minutes she regained a blood pressure. She was first taken to the local hospital and then later to Our Lady of the Lake Hospital in Baton Rouge where they were equipped with advanced life-support systems.

Kathy was on a respirator for three days, in ICU for four days, and then eight more days in a regular hospital room. She had no control of her head, her arms, her legs. She could not talk. Sixteen days after the accident she took a few steps, but could not talk or move her arms in any way. Partial paralysis was feared.

Taken to Children's Hospital in New Orleans, she was visited by a representative of the Father Seelos Center who blessed her with the mission crucifix of Father Seelos. The next day Kathy spoke her first words to her daddy. From then on, there was no stopping her.

All of Kathy's therapists said that her progress was amazing and that they had never seen a near-drowning victim recover as much as Kathy had done, and especially so quickly. Four months later Kathy is a normal two and half year old with no problems. She is enrolled in a normal day care program. Thanks be to God.

Baton Rouge, La.

This is a letter long overdue. So many times in the past years since I started praying to Father Seelos, he has intervened for me and answered my prayers. Once when my daddy was very sick in the hospital and did not seem to be responding to the medicine, we pinned a memento to his pajamas and immediately he started to get better. Another time I asked for his assistance when my son was interviewed for a job. He got it and is very well satisfied. It seems that whenever a problem comes up in my life, I turn to him and everything always turns out all right. So many of my friends have come to me in times of stress and have asked me to pray to Father Seelos for them.

Mail received August, 1987

Petitions: 430 Thanksgivings: 157 Other: 613 Total: 1220
Dial-a-message: 623 (The number is 504-586-1803).

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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. Joseph Buhler, C.S.S.R., Vice-Postulator; Rev. Joseph Elworthy, C.S.S.R., Director and Editor; Mrs. Angela Boudreaux and Warren Gautreau, Executive Assistants.

SPECIAL NOTES

1. The staff and volunteers of the Father Seelos Center, all of us, wish all our readers and devotees of the Father Seelos, the divine blessings of the Christmas season. We rejoice in the fact that God so loved us that He became our Brother.
2. On December the eighth we Americans celebrate the feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Mother, the patroness of the Church in the United States.
3. The Father Seelos Museum, immediately to the rear of the sacristies of St. Mary's Assumption Church, is open to the public on Saturday afternoons after the 3:00 P.M. vigil Mass and on Sunday mornings from 9 to 11. At 11 A.M. on Sunday mornings in St. Mary's Church there is a prayer service for the canonization of Father Seelos. It is followed by the 11:30 Sunday Mass.
4. We are pleased to welcome pilgrimages to St. Mary's Church and the tomb of Father Seelos. Please let us know your plans. For visits to the tomb and the Father Seelos Museum, call 504-525-2495
5. For blessings of your sick with the mission crucifix of Father Seelos, please call Miss Addie Buhler (New Orleans area only) 895-6176.
6. Please use the form below, should you wish to inform us that you are receiving more than one copy of the bulletin, or you are changing addresses or we have the wrong address or have misspelled your name. Also send us your name and address from a previous issue.

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