



FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY

VOLUME XXVI, NUMBER 5

MAY, 1987

THE VOLUNTEERS

In this first issue of the 26th year of FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY, we salute all the volunteers who over the years have made it possible for us to communicate each month with you, our faithful readers.

To do this properly, we highlight the volunteer who was the first to come to the aid of the then vice-postulator, Father John Vaughn. Her name was Josie Becker, and at that time she was working as a fulltime secretary in a local bank. Several generations before, her grandparents knew and revered Father Seelos as acting pastor of St. Mary's.



Josie Becker

Once Josie volunteered she spent many an evening and weekend as the first editor of this publication. There was a list of subscribers to maintain, changes of address to make, letters to type, proofs to read, and mail to get out. Josie completed 25 years as a volunteer and 23 years as managing editor. Stricken with cancer, she struggled valiantly for two years, always accepting with patience the cross she was asked to bear. Her one regret as she lay dying was that she was unable to send the next issue of this bulletin to the printer. May her good soul enjoy eternal life.

In saluting Josie Becker we salute all our volunteers, past and present. Many of the originals are still with us: Pauline Abadie, Mary Ducey Perkins, Clare Hein, Ellen Gurtner, Catherine Flanagan Carrigan. Back in those early days Odile Legendre and Thelma Crotty and their group were busy making cloth mementos and Rose Peeler spent her free time embossing subscribers' name on address plates.

May all these and all those who have preceded us into eternal life accept our heartfelt thanks and prayers.

Joseph Elworthy, C.S.S.R.

THE POVERTY OF CHRIST

In His famous sermon on the mount, Jesus said: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, the reign of God is theirs(Mt. 5/31)." This text would seem to indicate that Jesus was asking for a reform of attitude toward the things of this world, toward our worldly possessions. Concern for worldly possessions seems to occupy our minds day in and day out. This is not as it should be.

The Son of God became man to point out to us the surest way to heaven. One desire He had particularly at heart, and that was that we should learn the value of a life of poverty. Thirty years before He ever preached it, He practised it. Did He not decide to be born into poverty, and even extreme poverty? He was born not into a home, nor in the house of another, but in a shelter intended not for man but for beasts. Poverty is written across the whole scene of His birth at Bethlehem.

His first friends were poor. He chose the shepherds who could not possibly relieve His wants or come to His assistance. These were the first friends who visited Him.

As Jesus grew to manhood, His home, His food, His living was that of an ordinary man, if even that! To live He had to earn and to earn He had to work, and work He did to keep poverty from the door.

All through His public life Christ's poverty was just as evident as during His hidden life. He had not a fixed home of His own for meals and for rest. He had to make himself at home wherever He went, be it with relatives or strangers. Jesus passed His days in the towns and villages, and sometimes at night the sky was His canopy and a rock or dirt mound His pillow.

One day He eats with a rich Pharisee, another with one not so rich, Lazarus. On a few occasions He is one of a hungry multitude eating a meal in the desert; more often than not, He is alone in the desert and fasting. He lived on alms and depended on compassion of charitable people.

In apparel His clothing was respectable, but always the simplest and in accordance with the custom of the people.

At death His poverty did not change. He had not even a cloth to cover His body or a plot in which to be buried. Others had to supply both.

Dear Jesus, grant that I may think of Your poverty when I am tempted to complain, and forget the spirit of the example You gave Your followers.

George Corbett, C.S.S.R.

SPECIAL LETTERS

Hammond, La.

My fifteen-year old son was diagnosed to have a non-hodgkins lymphoma in July, 86. He started chemotherapy and after only three treatments had a dramatic response. He had an early remission from the disease, and was feeling well until October, 86, when he developed a fever of unknown origin. He was hospitalized for tests. During a routine test for a study conducted by the pediatric oncologist, he was found to have a pocket of fluid in the outer lining of the right lung. The fluid was removed by pleuracentesis and a tentative analysis was made by the pathologist. He felt that the cells present were lymphoma cells and that David had suffered a relapse. We were all distressed by the prospect of a major setback. I felt that God had deserted us, and that I did not know how to pray.

I decided to pin a small relic of Father Seelos in his pajama pocket, and began to pray to Father Seelos. Just four days later, the final report revealed no lymphoma cells, only what appeared to be cells produced from a reaction to the chemotherapy.

I do feel that Father Seelos helped and our prayers were answered.

In November, David returned to school. We feel very close to Father Seelos. Thank you for blessing him in the hospital. It meant so much to us.

Lafayette, La.

Our daughter, Suzy, was in a bad automobile accident on April 29. It crushed the left side of her head, eye socket and cheek. The doctors had a hard time finding her eye which was pushed back behind her crushed cheekbone. She had brain damage of the left temporal lobe. The eye doctor decided to go ahead and put her eye back but said she would not see out of the eye. Her whole right side was paralyzed.

Someone brought me a prayer card and a relic of Father Seelos and we started praying to him. We spent our four months at the hospital. She stayed 6 weeks in a coma. She said her first words 2½ months later. About 3 months after surgery we discovered she could see in that eye. She has 20-40 vision in her left eye. Her eye doctor calls her the mircale girl.

Suzy is doing real well now. She is taking a few steps on her own. We are going to therapy three times a week. We hope to have her back in college in September.

Mail received during January, 1987

Thanks 216 - Petitions 485 - Other 629 - Total 1330

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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; Miss Regina Beck and Warren Gautreau, Executive Assistants.

SPECIAL NOTES

1. Every Sunday morning at 11 o'clock A.M. in St. Mary's Assumption Church (corner of Josephine and Constance Streets in the Irish Channel of New Orleans), there is a special prayer service for the canonization of Father Seelos. It is a period of meditation and prayer before the Most Blessed Sacrament. It ends with Benediction. The regular Sunday Mass follows at 11:30 A.M.
2. The Father Seelos Museum is open after the 3:00 P.M. Mass on Saturday afternoon, and on Sunday mornings from 9:30 to 11:00. At other times, please call for an appointment (504) 525-2495.
3. For blessings of your sick with the mission crucifix of Father Seelos, please call Miss Addie Buhler, (504) 895-6176.
4. For a spiritual message from the Father Seelos Center, dial (504) 586-1803.
5. If you are changing your address or we have your name misspelled or your address is incorrect, will you please fill out this form and send it back to us ogether with your name and address as printed on this page.

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