



FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY

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ST. MANG'S — A CHERISHED MEMORY

Father Seelos was ordained on December 22, 1844, and said his first Mass on Christmas day in St. James Church in Baltimore, Maryland. In the normal course of events, he most probably would have said his first Mass in the parish church of Füssen, Bavaria. It was in this church that he was baptized and confirmed and made his first holy Communion. He had left his home in Bavaria to go to America to follow his vocation as a Redemptorist priest.



"ST. MANG'S, FÜSSEN"

On the day of his first Mass without a doubt his thoughts turned to his homeland, the place of his birth, to the church of his boyhood years where his vocation blossomed.

His parish church was dedicated to St. Magnus, or St. Mang. This magnificent church was already one hundred years old when young Seelos used to follow his father as the sacristan performed his duties of preparing the church and the altars for the celebration of holy Mass. Francis delighted in the huge edifice; he knew every nook and cranny. It was here that with his mother leading him that he learned devotion to the Blessed Mother by saying the Rosary. The Rosary ever after was his daily prayer. From America he wrote her, "I will never forget you! On feast days . . . I will have you in my heart and in my prayers in a most special manner."

THE CROSS

The cross is most important to us Catholics because it is the instrument on which Jesus offered His life for our redemption. In memory of that death we have crosses on the steeples of our churches, on our altars, on the walls of our home. We make the sign of the cross before and after our prayers. Many make this sign as they pass before the door of a church or in moments of excitement and danger.

The cross is a consoling sight in the sick room, be it at home or in the hospital. In the moment of grave illness and even death nothing eases the pain so much as the recollection that Jesus, in becoming man, did not will to escape the common lot of us all, but accepted totally the human condition with its suffering and death.

It came as a great shock to St. Peter and the other apostles when our Lord revealed to them that He would go up to Jerusalem and there He would be put to death and on the third day rise again. Two thousand years later we know that sin, death and satan had no power over Him - He rose triumphant from the grave. Each day we pray in the Mass: "Father, calling to mind the death Your Son endured for our salvation, His glorious resurrection and ascension into heaven . . . we offer You in thanksgiving this holy and living sacrifice."

St. Paul summed up the meaning of the cross when he wrote to the Corinthians, "The message of the cross is complete absurdity to those who are headed for ruin . . . we preach Christ crucified - stumbling block to the Jews, an absurdity to the Gentiles, but to those who are called, Jews and Greeks alike, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." (I Cor. 1, 18-24).

To train ourselves to accept the cross in our lives, as Jesus invited His followers to do, is the virtue proposed to us in the month of December. This learning to accept the cross is a fitting climax to our pursuit of union with God through the practice of the Christian virtues.

Our hearts should be filled with gratitude to the Savior who on the cross wrought our salvation. The memory of the cross should fill us with a distaste of sin and be a source of strength in the time of temptation. The crucifixion scene should prepare us for every pain and tragedy and suffering that can come our way. At the moment of death may the dark shadow of the cross fade ever so gently into the dazzling light of our encounter with the risen Jesus!

Joseph Elworthy, C.S.S.R.

SPECIAL LETTERS

New Orleans, LA

Father Seelos has been a friend of mine for a long time. This letter is to thank this old friend for his intercession and to thank God for sparing my grandchild who was operated on for open heart surgery. Her heart had been defective ever since she was a baby. Thanks to a lot of prayer, she made it to nine years of age before the surgery could wait no longer. Her heart was already enlarged and there was some leakage of blood when the decision was made. Father Steffes came to the hospital and blessed the little girl with the crucifix of Father Seelos. Father Seelos responded just as I knew he would. Before the week was out, my granddaughter was out of intensive care and walking in the corridor. She has progressed beautifully ever since. I could not let another day go by without thanking the kind priest who brought the cross and Father Seelos for his intercession.

Arabi, LA

Someone gave me a memento of Father Seelos. The very next day my husband became ill and eventually was admitted to the hospital suffering from congestive heart failure. He was very, very ill for some time. He did improve enough to come home. He was home only a week when he had to return to the hospital, sicker than even the first time. The prognosis was very discouraging. During this time my family and I called on the intercession of Father Seelos for his recovery. He has been out of the hospital for over two months now. He looks well and feels well. We continue to pray that through the intercession of Father Seelos, he will recover completely. Our devotion to Father Seelos continues and I pray that some day he will be canonized.

Paintcourtville, LA

I write this letter in thanksgiving for a special favor granted me. After many tests, including a CT scan, my doctors informed me that in all probability I had a cancerous tumor in the area of the pancreas and surgery was necessary. I started praying to Father Seelos that I would not have cancer of the pancreas. After the surgery, the surgeon told my family that I had a lymphoma which could be treated and the pancreas was not involved. In essence my prayers were answered. But that's not the most wonderful miracle of all. Tissues were checked by pathologists and after repeated checks, my doctors were still puzzled as to why they continue to come back negative. After numerous biopsies they have concluded that I do not have cancer. The doctors have no explanation for my recovery. Thanks to Father Seelos for his prayers.

Mail, August, 1990

Petitions: 556 Thanksgivings: 355 Other: 490 Total: 1401

Dial-a-message: 771

Volunteer hours: 809

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

SPECIAL NOTES

1. The Father Seelos Center offers the following:
 - a. "The Cheerful Ascetic," a biography of Father Seelos. Price: \$10.00.
 - b. "Seelos: A Cause to Rejoice," a TV documentary of the life of Father Seelos. VHS cassette only: \$45.00.
 - c. "Nothing Short of A Miracle," a book on the healing power of the saints, written by Patricia Treece. In it there are two chapters on Father Seelos. Price: \$8.95 plus postage.
 - d. "The Sanctified Body," by Patricia Treece, a study of the physical phenomena that accompany people who are close to God. Price: \$17.95 plus \$2.00 for postage.
 - e. Pamphlets, prayer-cards, mementos.
 - f. A daily spiritual message: dial (504) 586-1803.
 - g. Blessings of the sick with the mission crucifix of Father Seelos. Call Miss Addie Buhler: 895-6176.
 - h. Pilgrimages to St. Mary's Church, the tomb and museum of Father Seelos. For further details and appointments, call the Center: (504) 525-2495.
 - i. PRAYER SERVICE FOR THE CANONIZATION OF FATHER SEELOS: every Sunday morning at 11 A.M. in St. Mary's Church. It is followed by the 11:30 parish Mass.
2. A SUBSCRIPTION TO THE FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY IS TWO DOLLARS PER YEAR. We appreciate your letting us know you want to continue to receive the bulletin. Please use the form below for changes of address, corrections, duplications and renewals. Please return the lower portion of this page to us.

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