



# FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY

VOLUME XXXVI, NUMBER 9

SEPTEMBER, 1997



*Main Altar of St. Mary's*

## ANNIVERSARY MASS, OCTOBER 5

The 130th anniversary of Father Seeelos' death will be commemorated on the first Sunday of October, the fifth, in St. Mary's Assumption Church at the 11:30 A.M. Mass. Father Joseph Greenwell, C.S.S.R., will be the main celebrant of the Mass and the homilist. Father Greenwell was an associate priest of St. Alphonsus parish some years ago. He is now serving the parish of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Crowley, Louisiana.

The mission cross of Father Seeelos will be available for blessings after the Mass. A reception will be held as usual in the garden of St. Mary's after the ceremonies.

## RE: THE MAILING

Due to costs we have been forced to discontinue the sending of thank-you notes for your letters and donations. This does not mean that we are not grateful. Indeed we are and we ask God to bless you always.

## THE PAST IS HISTORY

There is a story told of a novice in a certain religious congregation. One day at recreation time he smilingly mentioned that his family was descended from the family of St. Francis de Sales. To his surprise the next Friday at the customary chapter of faults he was accused by one of his fellow novices of boasting of his ancestors. For whatever reason he may have had in mind, the story points up the current interest in searching for our family history.

Maybe it is because we have become, as predicted, the global village in the waning years of the twentieth century. All of a sudden the world seems so much smaller and it is easy to trace our beginnings. Several years ago a man named Alex Haley did some research into his background in Africa and came up with not only a bestseller book but a very successful mini-series on television. Both productions were fittingly called "Roots."

Today we see orphans and adopted children searching for their birth parents. People are looking into their backgrounds, and beginning to fill out the branches of their family tree. An old industry has taken on new life. Genealogy centers

*(Continued on next page)*

and researchers are busier than ever. Family trees, if you'll forgive the pun, are in full bloom.

I think that our first memories come when we are between two and four years of age. By the time we have our own personal first memory we have become accustomed to our surrounding family and we take being with them for granted. No one is, as it were, catapulted into this world without some sort of genealogy.

We are not asked to be born, nor did we ask. We did not choose our family. God did it for us. We must accept our forebears, the good and the bad, the beautiful and the ugly, the famous as well as the infamous, the heroes and the cowards. Once we accept our family, we are ready to accept all the other circumstances of our birth, the country, the state, the city, the street, the neighborhood, the time and all the other details of our arrival.

In His loving providence God has ordered all things in our regard for His greater glory and our well-being, both spiritual and temporal. He has given us a body and a soul, intelligence and free-will, talents in common with others and some perhaps uniquely ours, all wrapped up in our imperfect human nature. He, thanks to our pro-life mothers, has given us a chance to live and breathe, to believe in Him, to love Him and our neighbor and to be with Him for all eternity.

It is clear that we come into this world circumscribed in various ways. But in no way are we kept from pursuing to the best of our ability the ends open to us within the limits of our gifts.

God loves us and bestows upon us something beyond our human nature. We call it grace. The fact that we can read this message is a proof of the interest He has in us. By the death of Jesus on the cross and His resurrection and through His grace He impels us on to win the reward that comes with victory over death, sin, and the wiles and envy of satan.

Joseph Elworthy, C.S.S.R.

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### 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 - one half hour long. VHS cassette: \$20.00 (includes postage).
  - c. "Nothing Short of A Miracle," a book on the healing power of the saints, by Patricia Treece. Two of the chapters are on Father Seelos. Price: \$8.95 plus postage.
  - d. Pamphlets, prayer-cards, mementos.
  - e. Blessings of the sick with the mission crucifix of Father Seelos. Call: Yvonne Sevin, 888-1250, Gerry Heigle, 482-4404, Jack Pitkin, 524-6591, Teresa LaCour, 887-0214, Rita Kaul, 271-4520, Thad and Ethel Kuhn, 837-3957, Rosary Stoltman, 393-9423 or Marie Callahan, 525-1775.
  - f. A daily spiritual message: dial (504) 586-1803.
  - g. Pilgrimages to St. Mary's Church, the tomb and museum of Father Seelos. For further details and appointments, call the Center (504) 525-2495.
  - h. Veneration of the mission crucifix every Sunday after the 11:30 A.M. Mass in St. Mary's Assumption Church.
  - i. Every week a Mass is celebrated for the intention of the Father Seelos Center.
2. A SUBSCRIPTION TO THE FATHER SEELOS AND SANCTITY BULLETIN IS FOUR DOLLARS PER YEAR. Please let us know you want to continue receiving this bulletin. Please use the form below for changes of address, corrections, duplications and renewals. Return the lower portion of this page to us. Include your old address.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

## SPECIAL LETTERS

Dubuque, IA

Christina was given a terminal diagnosis after she was born. Then she was given a Father Seelos blessing; and she will be eleven years old on March 17. In June, 1995 Christina was in New Orleans visiting her grandmother; she made a visit to the church and tomb of Father Seelos. I have never seen Christina's smile so bright for so long, nor have I seen her zest for life so pronounced as I did when she was visiting the tomb of Father Seelos on that day. She danced her ballet routine across the front of the altar and over the tomb for at least 20 minutes.

Metairie, LA

I want to thank all those wonderful people who prayed so hard for me. I want to thank Jack for the prayers and blessings given me in the hospital. All those prayers to God from Father Seelos and my deceased mother, who probably whispered in God's ear "to help save her son." And of course my guardian angel (my wife) who never lost faith.

On entering the hospital (January 18, 1997) to have surgery on two herniated discs, they discovered I had a very high fever and were unable to do the surgery until they found the source of the infection. For six days they ran many tests, including MRI, myelogram, CAT scan, and many other tests and found that I had a staph infection in my blood stream, that turned to osteomyelitis, and then an epidural abscess on my spine.

At the time they gave me a myelogram test they could not get the needle into my spine, and could not understand why. The doctor told me later that if the needle had gone in, it would have spread that poison up my spinal column to my brain, causing meningitis and probable death.

I know all those prayers for me kept that needle from entering my spine and saved my life. The doctor, who is a wonderful man, remarked that I had some divine help.

Houston, TX

On April 22, 1997 I started a novena to Father Seelos for my son — a better job and to do God's will. On April 25 an opportunity to purchase a home in his neighborhood presented itself. Now he and his wife are happier with their situation in Baton Rouge. Previously they had been determined not to buy there. I look upon this as an answer to my prayers. They had searched last year and found no home to their liking. It is their attitude that has changed and that to me is a divine intervention. I gave my son my memento.

I also want to report what happened on one January day in 1967. A friend of mine, Marie, had been asked to give a memento of Father Seelos to one Lena for her husband. Marie was being driven to the office by a co-worker when they were hit head-on by someone rushing to work. Their car was totally demolished but neither passenger received a scratch. Marie was holding the memento in her hand. Marie now lives in Houston and she told me the other day that Father Seelos had saved her life. I told her she should have reported it. She said she didn't like to write and gave me permission to do so.

Longmont, WA

I read with extreme interest the small article printed in "The Passing Parade" on Father Seelos. The fact that the person mentioned in the article had prostate cancer struck close to home as I am in the process of recuperating from an operation for the very same cancer. Thank God there is no indication that it has spread. I do, however, have to undergo more tests in June. Where can I read more about this priest?

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Mail: May, 1997

Petitions: 738

Thanksgivings: 229

Others: 360

Total: 1327

Dial-A-Messages: 737

Volunteer Hours: 1046

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