

NEWS

Seelos Center



VOLUME XLI • NUMBER 11 • NOVEMBER 2002

“Excuse Me, Didn’t You Die?”

By Patricia Treece

Brian of Eunice, Louisiana, was born with a heart defect so severe that a doctor tried to talk the Gills out of adopting the infant. The devoutly Catholic Gills took him anyway.

Twelve years later, in 1992, Brian was in West Jefferson Medical Center in New Orleans having surgery on his heart’s aortic valve.

As the surgery neared completion, Brian began to hemorrhage. Doctors had to reopen his chest and pour boiling water in to stop the copious bleeding. The boy’s parents were told that, in addition to his heart troubles, Brian had a blood disorder that made surgeries life threatening.

While Brian was recovering in the hospital, a smiling priest – who, surprisingly, did not give his name – came into the boy’s room. The priest blessed the boy with a crucifix that reminded Brian of the one belonging to dead Father Francis Xavier Seelos that a volunteer from the Seelos Center had blessed him with before his surgery. The priest asked

if Brian wanted Communion and, when he did, gave it to him. Then he left.

When Brian innocently reported this visit, the hospital and chaplain were annoyed. Whoever it was, delivering Communion or not, he had no permission to be there.

But perhaps the visitor had God’s permission. Perhaps, the hospital visit was from a dead priest who is a great friend of God’s – a messenger from heaven

setting in motion God’s gift of healing. At any rate, when Brian returned to his hometown of Eunice, he saw a photo at the local church.

“Mom, that’s the priest who visited me in the hospital!” he exclaimed. “Oh no, Brian, that’s Father Seelos,” Jolene Gill replied. “He’s dead.”

“Mom! I *know* he came and blessed me.” Brian remained adamant. Dead or not, Father Seelos had visited him.

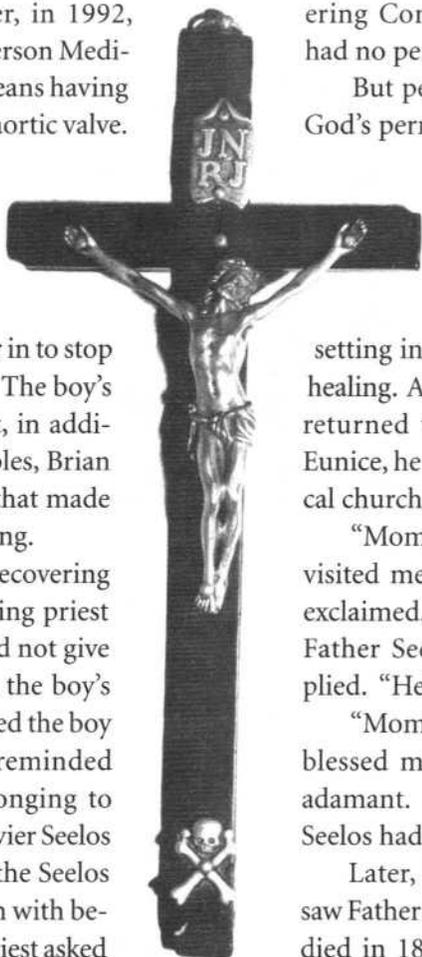
Later, Brian’s mother also saw Father Seelos. The saint who died in 1867 – a greatly-loved

Bavarian Redemptorist missionary to America known during his lifetime for his gentle insistence on God’s mercy as well as for his healing gifts – said nothing but smiled at her, a reminder, Jolene understood, that he was praying for Brian.

Eventually Brian had some unusual things happen: first, he didn’t require the next surgery because his heart “fixed itself” at a Protestant healing prayer convention. Secondly, when four years later – he was now sixteen – it *was* necessary that he get a new heart valve, there was no longer any trace of the bleeding disorder that earlier, had nearly killed him.

The year 2001 was a bad one for shark attacks on the eastern U.S. coast. One widely reported was that on eight-year-old Jessie Arbogast whose arm was bitten off, recovered from the shark’s mouth, and reattached at a Catholic hospital in Florida. There, Bishop Thomas J. Rodi of Biloxi, Mississippi, visited Jessie, blessing him with a relic of Bl. Seelos.

Did the intercession of Father Seelos permit the reattachment of the boy’s arm to succeed? Impossible to say. Many prayers were offered for young Jessie and not all of them, by any means, asked the intercession of Father Seelos. But it is noted that the boy started to improve after the blessing.



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A Message FROM THE EDITOR

With the holiday season advancing, 'tis the season to "eat, drink and be merry." An article in a men's health magazine called "Soul Training" reports that hundreds of medical studies have shown how being spiritual can help people live longer. "Is it time for you to start counting your blessings?" asks the author. *You bet your Thanksgiving turkey it is!*

Meditation, exercise and conventional churchgoing can significantly enhance your health, fight disease and extend your life. "Statistically, God is good for you," states David Larson, M.D. Moreover, the article includes two other facets of spirituality that appear to be just as potent as meditation and prayer. First, feeling that you're part of a community – something that traditional religions naturally supply – and second, altruism, or *giving back* to the community in some way.

Religious life is one way that provides opportunities for meditation and prayer and the feeling that you are part of a community. Through altruistic ministry as a Redemptorist, Father Seelos gave back to the faith community his time and talents, compassion and counsel. With a vocation to the priesthood, diaconate, sisterhood & brotherhood, you can also give back to God your very life!

While there is, of course, much more to religious life than medical science can ever explain, it is good to know that it can also be a prescription for *holistic health!*

Rx: PRAY DAILY FOR VOCATIONS

Consult a vocation director if the discernment persists

Happy holidays! Here's to your health!



Fr. Byron Miller, C.Ss.R.

The National Shrine of Blessed Francis Seelos is delighted to announce the first recipients of the Seelos Seminarian Scholarships for 2002: Eugene T. Batungbacal (Weslaco, Texas), Robert H. Lindsey (Cathedral City, California) and Donald B. Willard, Jr. (Orange Park, Florida)

It is hoped that in future years the increased generosity of benefactors to the Seelos Center for the specific purpose of aiding our seminarians will continue to enable the fund to provide worthwhile scholarships. These seminarians are keeping the Seelos benefactors in the prayers of their respective formation house communities in thanksgiving for your generosity.

Seelos Center NEWS

Continued from page 1

This newsletter (February 2002) reports an Arizona child born in 1997 with a heart condition and Downs syndrome who is making exceptional progress; continuing recovery of a teenager from a life threatening lupus attack; and full remission of a kindergartener from acute myeloid leukemia.

Another recent newsletter has a parent's testimony about a ten-year-old girl diagnosed just after Easter 2001 with a rare, deadly form of leukemia who has also seen Bl. Seelos. She had just returned from hospital treatment when he appeared in her bedroom as she climbed into bed.

The parent, who had just left the room, heard her say, "Um, excuse me, didn't you die?"

Then the girl came rushing out. She said the priest "whose picture is hanging in the back of the church" had just come in and blessed her. The picture is of Father Seelos.

Unlike other children who have seen Father Seelos, this one was upset. When asked why, she replied, "I don't want to be visited by anybody dead, not even a priest."

Friends of Father Seelos are watching this child's future with interest.

THIS ARTICLE FIRST APPEARED IN PATRICIA TREECE'S COLUMN OF FEBRUARY 22, 2002 IN *THE TIDINGS*, THE ARCHDIOCESAN NEWSPAPER OF LOS ANGELES, CA.

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Seelos Lithograph Prints Now Available to the Public

Italian artist, Antonio Lomuscio, was commissioned by the Redemptorists to create these limited-edition prints to commemorate Father Seelos' beatification in the Jubilee Year 2000. Each print measures approximately 12" x 16.5" on quality parchment and is signed and numbered by the artist; the print comes in a matching folder with information on Blessed F. Seelos and the artist. A donation of \$29.50 (+\$4 for p/h) supports the Seelos canonization cause. **Supplies are limited. Mail request & payment to: SEELOS CENTER 2030 Constance Street • New Orleans, LA 70130**

Seelos Center NEWS

A monthly newsletter for friends of Blessed Francis X. Seelos, C.Ss.R.

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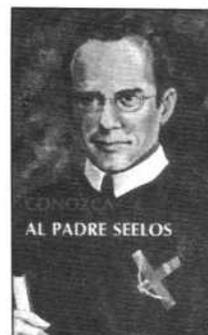
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Meet Padre Seelos

Are you willing to help introduce Father Seelos to the Spanish-speaking in your community and parish? This 32-page pamphlet, *Conozca Al Padre Seelos* ("Meet Father Seelos"), was written to document miracles through Father Seelos' intercession during his lifetime and the decades following his death. Special bulk rate of 50/\$11 (includes p/h).



"With Him is Plentiful Redemption"

(Psalm 130:7)

The Seelos Center offers the following services:

- Pilgrimages to St. Mary's Assumption Church, the Shrine and Museum of Blessed F. Seelos in New Orleans. For details and appointments, call the Center at 504-525-2495.
- A Daily Spiritual Message. Call 504-586-1803.
- Blessings of the Sick with a Mission Crucifix of Blessed F. Seelos in the Greater New Orleans area, please call:
 - Gerry Heigle (E. Jefferson) 504-482-4404
 - Jack Pitkin (Uptown/Innecity) 504-524-6591
 - Teresa LaCour (E. Jefferson) 504-887-0214
 - Rosary Stoltman (Westbank) 504-393-9423
 - Jim Howard (St. Bernard & Arabi) 504-277-7949
 - Elaine Freeman (Westbank) 504-341-2213
 - Ethel Kuhn (Ochsner) 504-837-3957
 - Bill and Sunny Schulz (Mandeville) 985-792-5394
 - Carmelie Mancuso (Slidell) 985-641-6999
 - Mary Jo Stewart (Slidell) 985-643-5548
 - Pam Crutchfield, R.T. (Covington) 985-892-6560
 - Ethel Gallagher (Reserve) 985-536-1052
 - Dan Montz, L.P.C. (Houma/Thibodaux) 985-446-1805
- Veneration of Blessed F. Seelos' Mission Crucifix every Sunday after the 11:30 am Mass in the historic St. Mary's Assumption Church (Josephine and Constance Streets).
- Weekly Mass celebrated for the intentions of the Seelos Center. If you have Special Intentions, please list them in the space provided on the enclosed envelope.

Spiritual Reading

The Seelos Center / Seelos Foundation Office offers the following devotionals:

(Please allow up to 2 weeks for delivery of item(s) requested):

- "Seelos: A Cause to Rejoice," an informative documentary on the life of Blessed F. Seelos; 30-minute VHS cassette. (Suggested donation: \$17.00 - includes postage.)
- "A Life of Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos," a new 108-page paperback biography by Carl Hoegerl, C.Ss.R. & Alicia von Stamwitz. (Suggested donation: \$9.00 - includes postage.)
- Nothing Short of a Miracle*, a 207-page paperback book by Patricia Treece on the healing power of the saints; two of the chapters feature Father Seelos. (Suggested donation: \$15.00 - includes postage.)
- Messengers: After-Death Appearances of Saints & Mystics*, a 343-page hardbound book by Patricia Treece on the authentic appearances of the holy dead sent as God's messengers. Chapters on Fr. Seelos; photos included. (Suggested donation: \$24.00- includes postage.)
- Seelos Medals: Blessed F. Seelos medal, made of nickel silver. Round (3/4" diameter), with loop, antique finish, finely crafted in the United States. (Suggested donation: \$3 each or 2/\$5(+\$1p/h).
- Pamphlets and prayer cards of Blessed F. Seelos, available in English, Spanish and Vietnamese.
- Audio cassette of a spiritual conference talk on God as Father and Blessed F. Seelos, given by Father Charles Mallen, C.Ss.R. (Suggested donation: \$7.00 - includes postage.)
- A Blessed F. Seelos vigil candle will burn near his tomb or in the Seelos Museum at St. Mary's Assumption Church, New Orleans for an offering of \$3.00.
- First, Second and Third-Class relics of Blessed F. Seelos. Please contact the Seelos Center, 504-525-2495

Testimonials

Mandeville, LA

In July 2001, my dad was diagnosed with Stage 4 Lung Cancer. We were devastated, but had faith in God. A priest administered the sacrament of the sick, and a few weeks later, Bill & Sunny Schulz [of the Seelos Center] visited with our family in time of need. They brought a Seelos Crucifix, various relics, prayer cards, etc. They gave a talk, prayed with us, and passed the crucifix around, so everyone could be blessed with it. It was a very moving experience; you could really feel Blessed Seelos' presence in the room.

My dad took all his treatments with virtually no side effects. After chemo and radiation, he has been given a very good report. He is not cured; the cancer is just not doing anything at this moment. We just know that Blessed Seelos interceded for my dad to make his illness as easy as possible.

Destrehan, LA

A close family friend (63-years-old) was taken to the emergency room at Ochsner Hospital for severe throat pain. Tests and ultrasounds showed a tumor blocking her windpipe on her voicebox and spots on her lungs and lymph nodes. The ear, nose and throat specialist decided to operate on August 5.

Prior to the surgery, my wife and I went to the hospital to pray with her. We put a scapular and a miraculous medal on her. I then placed the relic of Fr. Seelos on her throat and I began to pray. I prayed a healing prayer to Our Lady. My wife and I both prayed to Fr. Seelos to intercede and heal her.

On the day of surgery, the doctor went in and could not find any sign of the tumor or the spot on her lungs. Everything was gone. The doctor said there was no explanation. We know better. By the intercession of Blessed F. Seelos there was a miracle. Our friend was healed.

Lancaster, NH

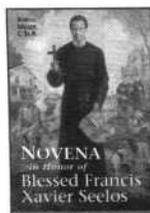
Blessed Seelos has become another precious gift from God as he was introduced to me on Mother Angelica Live. I was immediately drawn to him in an undeniable way! I was deeply comforted in the reading of his biography and the viewing of his video. I am now permanently attached! I find the mere smile on his face can make my day! His kind and gentle countenance comforts me. Courage is mine because I have the picture and the warm light of the Blessed Fr. Seelos to press close to my heart. It is through him that I receive the pastoral love I need to carry on. I look at the holy card of Blessed Seelos, which I keep in my prayer book and touch at the offertory of every Mass I attend, and invoke him again and again, to be my Pastor and to aid our parish and our priest, and our dear Bishop on our journey together in the most difficult of times.

Metairie, LA

My granddaughter was born on the evening of July 28 with a form of a chemical pneumonia. Since the hospital did not have the ventilator necessary to offer the latest treatment for her condition, she was air lifted to Ochsner Clinic the next morning in very serious condition. Her condition was so serious that her parents had her baptized by the chaplain before being flown over.

I obtained a small relic of Fr. Seelos and several prayer cards. The crocheted relic was attached to her bed. My granddaughter began to visibly respond to treatment on that very afternoon. Slowly, but surely, she began to improve, to the point that today she appears to be a normal, healthy, and happy 7-week-old child. Without the intercession of Fr. Seelos, I doubt whether she would have recovered or recovered as quickly as she did.

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OR CALL: 800-464-2555 Ext. 1425 (Please allow a minimum of 30 days to process your changes.)

The Seelos Museum, Shrine and Gift Shop are now open on Saturdays!
New Hours of Operation: Monday - Friday 9 AM - 3 PM • Saturday - 10 AM - 3:30 PM
Tours available during the hours of operation - Other times by appointment. (504) 525-2495