

# NEWS

## Seelos Center



VOLUME XLI • NUMBER 8 • AUGUST 2002

## Two Saints, One Rectory

*Sister Ursula Kelly, S.S.N.D.*

In April 1845, a tragic fire had burned a quarter of Pittsburgh, with over 10,000 homes destroyed. In the aftermath of this disaster, young Father Seelos arrived in August to assume his first assignment as a Redemptorist. He would serve St. Philomena Parish in the Bayardstown section of Pittsburgh.

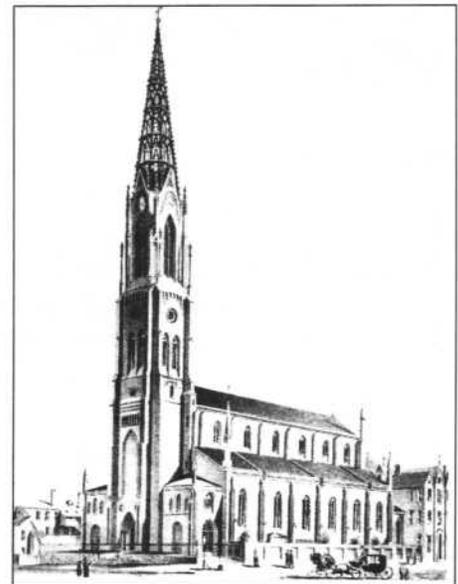
The parish worshiped in a building they called "the Factory Church" because it had in fact been a factory. The property was located between

Liberty and Penn Avenues, with 11<sup>th</sup> Street as the western boundary and 14<sup>th</sup> Street as the eastern.

Within the first 18 months, Father Seelos administered over 200 baptisms, witnessed 35 marriages and preached in three languages each Sunday. His name appears in the baptism and marriage registers of some of the outlying areas such as Greensburg, McKeesport, Pine Creek, Riceville, Sharpsburg and Wexford. He even answered pleas of abandoned German immigrants in Steubenville, Ohio, and Wheeling, West Virginia.

The influence of Father John Neumann cannot be estimated. As Father Seelos watched his superior's dedication each day, his own love for his priesthood grew. Father Neumann was determined to build a new church to replace the Factory Church. It took some ingenious management of finances as he was working with a poor immigrant parish.

Bishop O'Connor requested that Father Seelos be appointed a full-time chaplain to the Sisters of Mercy. It was agreed that Father Seelos could accept this responsibility only if he could remain at St. Philomena



St. Philomena's Church, exterior

and be a part of the community's missionary endeavors. Some of the Sisters of Mercy were asked to offer testimony to the holiness of Father Seelos after his death and spoke in glowing terms about his successes as their chaplain.

In 1847, Father Neumann was appointed the leader of all the Redemptorists in America. Though the two saints no longer shared a monastery, their respect and reverence for each other continued. In fact, Father Neumann decided to move the Redemptorist novitiate to the new monastery he had built at St. Philomena and chose Father Seelos to be novice master.

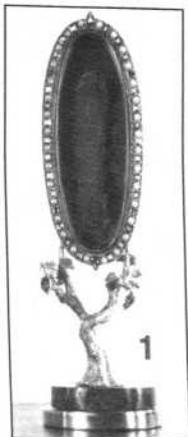
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St. Philomena's Church, interior

*"Nothing seems to have more of an inherent bond to a saint, than his or her remains ... Close your eyes and know the presence of the saint" --*

Theresa Sanders, U.S. Theologian, 2000



1. Sternum Bone of Blessed Francis X. Seelos is located in his national shrine, New Orleans.
2. Exquisite Detail of Sternum Bone Reliquary
3. The Sacred Reliquary to house the Sternum Bone of Blessed Francis Seelos was the commissioned work of Adler's of New Orleans, the city's most respected repository for fineries since 1898.

Photo credit, Diane C. Garcia



Continued from page 1

In 1851, at 32 years of age and only ordained for seven years, Father Seelos was chosen as pastor of St. Philomena, one of the largest foundations in America. He proved an excellent administrator and spiritual leader. However, he was faced with the serious problem of many orphaned children who were members of his parish.

What he always considered one of his most important accomplishments was the building of a new three-story orphanage for German children on Troy Hill in 1852. The orphanage was located on the present site of North Catholic High School. In fact, the red

brick buildings to the west of the stone buildings were part of the orphanage, which was entrusted to the School Sisters of Notre Dame until its closure in 1938.

Father Seelos' preaching was so eloquent that he was asked to preach a sermon at the laying of the cornerstone for the new cathedral in June 1851. It is said that people from Pittsburgh and beyond sought him as a confessor. It was rumored that Bishop O'Connor chose this young priest as his spiritual guide.

Such was this Redemptorist's reputation that Bishop O'Connor nominated him to become the second bishop of Pittsburgh. When Father

Seelos learned of this, he wrote to the Pope requesting that his name be removed from consideration because he would be a better Redemptorist missionary than a bishop of Pittsburgh. His request was honored.

At one time in the United States, two saints lived in the same rectory in Pittsburgh. The Catholic Church has already canonized the pastor of St. Philomena Parish, Father John Neumann. On April 9, 2000, Pope John Paul II beatified Father Francis Seelos, who was Father Neumann's assistant. The people of Pittsburgh have never let the memory of these two holy men grow dim. ■



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## Seelos Center NEWS

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

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Vice Provincial - New Orleans

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Seelos Center News® (USPS 488-660) published monthly by the Redemptorists at the Seelos Foundation, One Liguori Drive, Liguori, Missouri 63057-9999  
Telephone (636) 464-2500 Subscription is \$9.00 per year. Periodical Postage Paid at St. Louis, Missouri.  
Postmaster: send address changes to the Seelos Foundation, One Liguori Drive, Liguori, Missouri 63057-9999

## 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 (+\$3 for p/h) supports the Seelos canonization cause.



Supplies are limited. Mail request & payment to:  
**SEELOS CENTER**  
 2030 Constance Street • New Orleans, LA 70130

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

*You are invited to the Annual  
 Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos  
 Memorial Mass  
 Sunday, October 6<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 a.m.  
 at St. Mary's Assumption Church  
 (corner of Josephine & Constance Streets),  
 New Orleans, Louisiana*

### **"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/Innercity) 504-524-6591  
 Teresa LaCour (E. Jefferson) 504-887-0214  
 Rita Kaul (Arabi) 504-271-4520  
 Rosary Stoltman (Westbank) 504-393-9423  
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 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.



#### **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

## Pittsburgh, PA

In September 2001 my husband was diagnosed with a malignant tumor on his lung, the size of a baseball. St. Anthony's Chapel in Troy Hill has 500 relics of the saints. When we went there to pray for my husband's surgery to be a success, the director, Sr. Margaret, asked if we would like a healing prayer to be offered. She returned and said she had a relic of Fr. Seelos, who probably not too many people know about. We were astounded because we wear his medal and have prayed to him daily for many years. She placed the relic on my husband's chest and prayed the healing prayer. We felt a wonderful presence. The week before the surgery we went back and she again placed the Fr. Seelos relic on him and we felt an overwhelming warmth and power.

My husband had his surgery on March 4. The surgeon was able to remove the entire tumor and the surgery was a complete success. He is 100% cancer-free with no need of chemotherapy or radiation. Thank you Fr. Seelos for interceding to God for us. He must love you so much to honor your wishes. Fr. Francis Seelos must truly become a saint.

## Westwego, LA

In 1968 my husband fell from a crane approximately 80 to 90 feet. He is alive today and is a miracle to me and his family and friends. He has nerve damage with a plate and screws and bolts holding his pelvis together, but he is alive and is a joy to all. Initially, he spent 107 days in the hospital and has had surgeries and infections requiring hospitalization. When he was in ICU, we had a visitor who prayed with my husband and me. He was given a cross and I was given prayers to read. I faithfully read the prayers to Fr. Seelos. I prayed every day trusting in God and sought intercession through prayers. We feel that God truly blessed us with a miracle.

## Dallas, TX

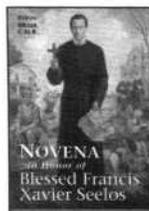
On March 18 I had a dental appointment. My dentist told me that the roof of my mouth was white, callused and spongy. It looked like cancer, so he set a biopsy appointment for me on April 9. The next evening I watched EWTN and heard about the miracles attributed to Blessed F. Seelos' intercession, many of them involving cancer. I started praying to Blessed F. Seelos for a healing. On April 9 (the two year anniversary of Fr. Seelos' beatification in Rome), I took his relic with me to my appointment. The dentist could not believe that I had taken no medication for the roof of my mouth because it was pink and normal. There was no need for me to do a biopsy.

## Plaucheville, LA

I am a 31-year-old wife and mother of two. In June 2001 I was diagnosed with a brain tumor. My doctor stated that the lesion appeared to have been there for 5-10 years and had grown large enough over time to put pressure on my optic nerve, which was causing headaches and my vision to be distorted. An MRI initially detected the tumor and a PET scan diagnosed a Grade II Glioma. My husband and I, along with an aunt of mine, visited the Seelos Center and attended Mass at St. Mary's Assumption Church. I kissed a cross of Fr. Seelos and the priest laid it on my head and prayed. When I left the church that day I really felt like I had been touched. In August I placed the first class relic of Fr. Seelos in the MRI room and my husband and I prayed while I was having the MRI performed. My doctor was astonished to see that my MRI was clear and the lesion had diminished. I never had medical treatment of any kind and the tumor in my head is completely gone. Praise God! Thank you Fr. Seelos for your intercession.

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OR CALL: 800-464-2555 Ext. 425 (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

Seelos Center **NEWS**