

SEELOS CENTER NEWS

*National Shrine of Blessed
Francis Xavier Seelos*

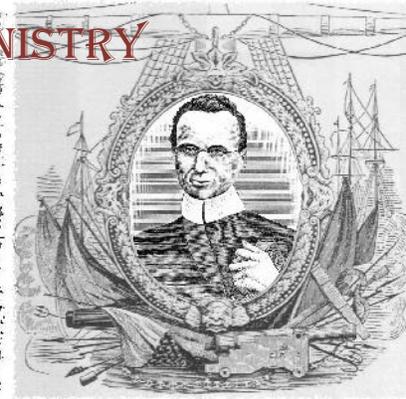
*In the Redemptorist Church
of Saint Mary's Assumption*

2030 Constance Street (504) 525-2495
New Orleans, LA 70130 (504) 525-2499

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www.seelos.org

FR. SEELOS' MILITARY MINISTRY



I got a call to go to Fortress Monroe -- you have probably often read about it in the papers during this unholy war -- to give spiritual help to the unfortunate soldiers in the hospital there... One of my dear confreres, a student, accompanied me and gave me whatever help I needed... After our arrival at Fortress Monroe, we went first to the church; it is small but very pretty. We had to set

From 1831-1834, Lieutenant Robert E. Lee was among the engineers assigned to oversee the construction of Fortress Monroe in Hampton, Virginia. From that time on it has served as a base for every war the United States has fought. During the Civil War, Confederate President Jefferson Davis sent his commissioners to meet with President Lincoln aboard a ship lying in the waters off this fort for a failed peace treaty in February 1865. A few months later, Davis himself was imprisoned at Fortress Monroe until 1867.

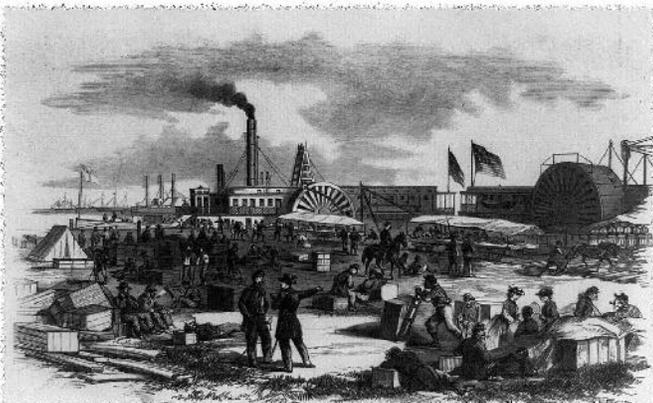
However, it was a humble Redemptorist priest with far less notoriety by the name of Francis Xavier Seelos, who simply answered a ministerial call of duty at Fortress Monroe in December 1862. He and a large number of military officers boarded the steamboat *Adelaide* from Baltimore at five o'clock in the evening and arrived at their destination around seven the next morning. Seelos' name was recorded on the steamer as traveling at the expense of the government. His short stay at the fort was characterized by long hours celebrating Mass, hearing confessions and administering communion. He also recalled how bitterly cold it was, "We didn't have any snow, but there was a cutting wind, fresh from the north." He found warmth in the appreciative attitude of the soldiers, and he encouraged them to be faithful in the service of God for the great grace they were given. All were moved to tears.

up our living quarters in the sacristy, and light a fire as best we could. Then my companion left to announce our arrival to the soldiers and invite them to the services. The Mass began at eleven o'clock and at it I preached in English. It was around one o'clock when everything was over, and I had made my thanksgiving after Mass.... Returning to the church, I heard confessions until midnight, and when I had finished, divine Providence arranged it that a soldier brought us to his house for supper. He was a farmer from the Rhineland who was married to an Irish woman. He hosted us with the greatest joy and loaded us with woolen blankets. This was fortunate, because it was still so cold that even with all the blankets, I woke up several times during the night from the cold.

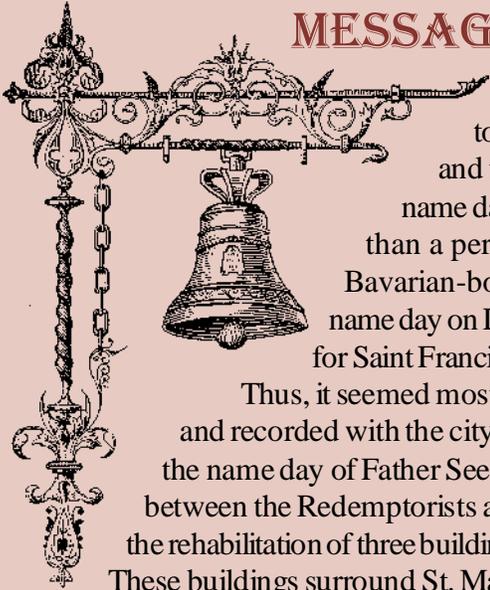
On Monday, December 8, after the Mass, a carriage was waiting for us and brought us to the hospital that lies opposite the fort two miles from the church, near the town of Hampton that has been completely destroyed by the Southerners. There is only a big pile of ruins left. This hospital consists of twenty-one large barracks in which there are about fifty beds. The officers were most obliging and polite. Most of the sick were not so sick that they had to stay in bed but could walk around, and almost all of them could come to the room that was separated from the big sick ward, and there I heard their confession.... I was richly repaid by the fine attitude of the soldiers, most of whom had not been to confession for three or four years. For many it was even longer, and with several, twenty years. Some did not even know the principal truths of our holy faith and so you see, dear brother, that my stay there was very much needed.

Top Left: Fort(ress) Monroe & Hygeia Hotel in 1862 when Seelos administered the Sacraments to the troops. In 2005 Congress directed the Army to close its base at Fort Monroe by 2011.

Bottom Left: Wounded soldiers receiving medical treatment at Fortress Monroe, 1862. (Library of Congress photos)



-- Fr. Francis Seelos, in a letter to his brother, December 18, 1862



MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

The observance of name days was customary in predominantly Catholic countries and throughout most of Germany. A person's name day was often viewed with more importance than a person's actual day of birth. Our beloved Bavarian-born Francis Xavier Seelos celebrated his name day on December 3, the Church's solemn feastday for Saint Francis Xavier.

Thus, it seemed most fitting that legal documents were signed and recorded with the city of New Orleans on December 3, 2007 -- the name day of Father Seelos -- which establishes a long-term lease between the Redemptorists and Historic Restoration, Inc. to allow for the rehabilitation of three buildings for low-income senior citizen housing. These buildings surround St. Mary's Assumption Church and have been vacant since Hurricane Katrina. A fourth building -- the former School Sister of Notre Dame Convent adjacent to the Church on the riverside -- was removed from this lease arrangement; it has now been returned to the Redemptorists unencumbered for the purpose of creating a new stand-alone SEELOS WELCOME CENTER. This 3-story building will be adapted for the Shrine's ministerial needs, and will undergo major construction through most of 2008. This exciting development has taken years to accomplish. May our united prayers help see it through to completion!

Byron Miller, C.Ss.R.



Julia Callahan

SANCTITY LOVES COMPANY: *Meet Our Staff*

SINCE 1990, Julia Callahan has been the mouthpiece for a future saint - albeit with a softer voice and stronger New Orleans accent! After daily morning Mass, she ambles faithfully up the stairs to the administrative floor of the Blessed Francis Seelos Shrine to record an inspirational message on the telephone prayer line. Her morning ritual is itself an inspiration: to hear the Word of the Lord and then go out and broadcast the Good News.

Miss Julia provides a pithy commentary on the scriptural readings of the day & the timeless words of Father Seelos. Her soothing voice is familiar to several thousand callers received annually; her smiling face is familiar to visitors of St. Mary's Assumption Church, where the sacred remains of this holy priest are enshrined.

In 1867, those who had the wherewithal evacuated New Orleans until a yellow fever epidemic ended, leaving a disproportionate number of the poor to remain in the city, along with physicians, clergy, and religious to care for them. When Father Seelos stayed to work tirelessly with the victims, he succumbed to the dreaded disease himself. Beatified in the Jubilee Year 2000, his cause awaits another miracle for canonization.

The Church creates saints so that their good example can live on in their followers. Father Seelos' example suggests that he would have responded to the victims of Hurricane Katrina in 2005 as he responded to the victims of yellow fever in 1867. Perhaps that explains the increase in calls to the Seelos Dial-a-Message after Hurricane Katrina at all hours of the day and night. In life's turmoil, people yearn to hear the consoling voice of God and feel the comforting presence of God's saints.

Thanks to Julia's labor of love, the healing message of Father Seelos is still heard by those who need it most.

The Seelos Center offers the following services:

☞ *Pilgrimages* to St. Mary's Assumption Church, Seelos Shrine & Museum. Call the Center at 504-525-2495 or 525-2499.

☞ *Daily Spiritual Message*
Call 504-586-1803.

☞ *Blessings of the Sick* with a Mission Crucifix of Blessed F. Seelos in New Orleans & other area hospitals. Please call:

East Jefferson

Gerry Heigle: 504-554-1912
Teresa LaCour: 504-887-0214

Ochsner

Mark/Monica Surprenant 504-895-5371

Uptown/Innecity

Jack Pitkin: 504-524-6591

Westbank

Elaine Freeman: 504-341-2213
Rosary Stoltman: 504-393-9423

Baton Rouge

Gloria Bacque: 225-767-8432
Marie Giorlando: 225-615-7888

Covington

Dr. Ann Logarbo, MD: 985-886-0218

Houma/Thibodaux

Dan Montz, L.P.C.: 985-446-1805

Lacombe/Abita Springs

Billy Bachemin: 504-232-0349

Lafayette/Abbeville

Rita King: 337-984-4607

Mandeville

Bill & Sunny Schulz: 985-792-5394
Pam Crutchfield: 985-966-0358

New Iberia/Berwick/Baldwin

Rachel Gonsoulin: 337-224-7855
Fred Roy: 337-380-0646

Pontchatoula/Hammond

Gasper Corpora: 225-294-5938

Reserve/LaPlace

Deacon Percy Vicknair: 985-652-9313

Shreveport/Bossier City

Tom & Marjorie Rivers: 318-925-9975

Slidell

Carmelie Mancuso: 985-641-6999
Mary Jo Stewart: 985-643-5548

St. Bernard/Arabi

Patricia Noote: 504-756-4163

☞ *Veneration of Bl. F. Seelos' Mission Crucifix* in historic St. Mary's Assumption Church (Josephine & Constance streets).

☞ *Weekly Mass* celebrated for the intentions of the Seelos benefactors. Please list Special Intentions in the space provided on the enclosed envelope.

Seelos Center News

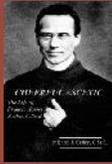
A monthly newsletter for friends of
Bl. Francis X. Seelos

Denver Provincial Superior:
Very Rev. Thomas D. Picton, C.Ss.R.
Seelos Center Executive Director/Editor:
Rev. Byron Miller, C.Ss.R.
Seelos Center Administrator:
Joyce Bourgeois

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The Seelos Center offers the following devotionals:



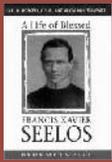
Cheerful Ascetic, 480-page hard-bound biography by Fr. M. Curley that captures Seelos' piety & personality. Index/photos. (Donation: \$30, incl. p/h)



.999 Fine Silver Seelos Medal Round, 3/4" dia., with loop; brushed image with polished reverse and edge. Marked with .999 FS on reverse top. (Donation: \$52 - includes p/h).



Willy Finds Victory: A Blessed Francis Seelos Story, Introduce youth, ages 7 - 12, to Fr. Seelos in this 110-page illustrated book by Joan Stromberg (Donation: \$12, incl. p/h)



A Life of Blessed Francis X. Seelos, a 108-page paperback biography. (Donation: \$11 - includes p/h)



Seelos Medals: Made of nickel silver, round 3/4" dia. with loop, antique finish, finely crafted in the U.S. (Donation: \$3 each or 2/\$5 + \$1 p/h)



Seelos Perpetual Mass League: A one-of-a-kind lasting remembrance for you or for someone dear, living or deceased. (Donation: \$25, contact Seelos Center for enrollment)



Seelos, Tireless Intercessor, a 68-minute documentary on the miraculous life of Seelos, as seen on EWTN. (Donation: \$35 DVD/ \$30 VHS - incl. p/h)



Death, Where Is Your Sting?, a tender account of Seelos' final weeks of life as told primarily by those who witnessed his death. Seldom revealed details of his encounter with yellow fever transport us to the bedside of a true martyr. Hardcover, 175 pp., photos. (Donation: \$23 - incl. p/h)

Pamphlets & Prayer Cards of Bl. F. Seelos, available in English, Spanish & Vietnamese.

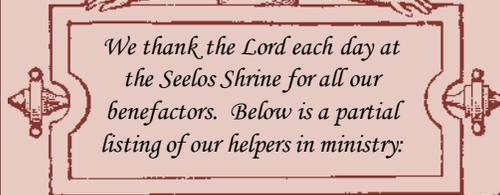
A Bl. F. Seelos vigil candle will burn near his sacred resting place in St. Mary's Assumption Church, New Orleans, for an offering of \$3.

First, Second & Third-Class Relics of Bl. F. Seelos. Call Seelos Center, 504-525-2495 or 2499.

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



Our Special Valentines!



We thank the Lord each day at the Seelos Shrine for all our benefactors. Below is a partial listing of our helpers in ministry:

- James M. Maddox (Baton Rouge, LA)
- Virgil Brady (Baton Rouge, LA)
- Donald E. Theriot (Shidell, LA)
- Msgr. James P. McGough (Biloxi, MS)
- Brady & Sharon Richardson (Redmond, WA)
- Brad & Xiomara Brewster (New Orleans, LA)
- Dr. Elmo & Doris Cense (New Orleans, LA)
- Joseph & Cynthia Mohyneux (Metairie, LA)
- Pauline Stukus (Syracuse, NY)
- Shava & Kathleen Carboni (Youngsville, LA)
- Charmaine Martin (Church Point, LA)



Johnette Benkovic, host of Eternal Word Television Network's popular program, "Living His Life Abundantly," visited the Seelos Shrine in November 2007.

(Photo: Bill Coskrey)

Bust of Francis Seelos

Created by artist Franco Alessandrini & his wife, Margaret. Plaster with deep gold finish, weighing over 5.5 lbs. Handcrafted in New Orleans. Measures approx. 11.5" H x 8" W x 5.5" D. Donation: \$97 (incl. P/H)



Cherub Cards Boxed Set



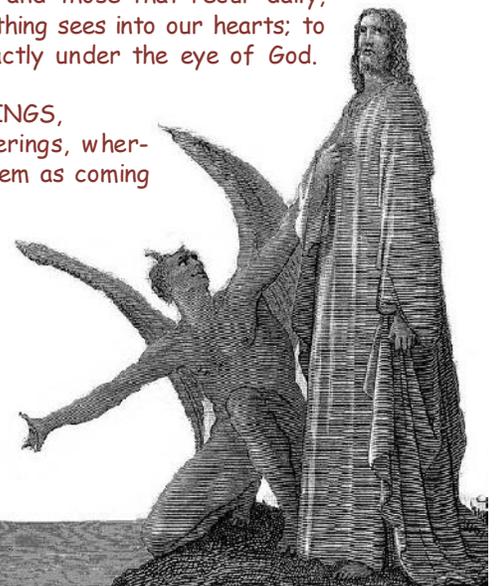
Cherub Detail of St. Mary's Assumption Church High Altar. Gift-boxed set of 20 cards/envelopes. Measures 5-1/2" x 4-1/4"; blank on inside; scripture verse on back. \$10 (incl. p/h)

TO BE FAITHFUL IN LITTLE THINGS; to banish from our minds immediately the slightest temptation; ... and to regard nothing as useless that can bring us the slightest spiritual help.

TO BE FAITHFUL IN LITTLE THINGS: never to do mechanically and superficially the most insignificant tasks and those that recur daily, but with a view to God who in everything sees into our hearts; to perform every job willingly and exactly under the eye of God.

TO BE FAITHFUL IN LITTLE THINGS, especially in our crosses and sufferings, whenever they may come from; to see them as coming from divine Providence, and always to say: 'This is good for me. This is how God wants it. This is how God lets things happen. This is how he wants me to do penance for former frivolities. This is how he is trying to make me holy. May God be thanked.'

-- Francis Xavier Seelos, 1858





TESTIMONIALS



NATRONA HEIGHTS, PA

I made a novena to Blessed Seelos prior to my breast biopsy. On Oct. 5, his feast day, I learned that the tumor was benign, but should be removed as a precaution. When I came home from the hospital a month later following breast surgery, the November Seelos newsletter was waiting for me. I felt it was Father Seelos telling me he was with me all the way through the successful operation.

HAMMOND, LA

I am 64-years-old and was diagnosed with ovarian cancer in 2000. The cancer had already begun to spread and the doctors insisted that surgery should take place the very next day. Before surgery, a friend of mine blessed me with the relic of Fr. Seelos. I then started chemo and radiation, which would continue throughout the next 7 years. Throughout this ordeal, I was blessed 3 times with Fr. Seelos' relic and once at the Seelos Shrine. I prayed to Fr. Seelos every day and asked him to help me get through these bad days. Today I am in clinical remission. This is the first time in 7 years that I will not have to undergo chemo! I knew Fr. Seelos had heard my prayers and that is why I'm still here today. I carry his relic with me always. Every morning I wake up and say, "Thank you, Fr. Seelos & God for giving me another day in my life"-- a gift and miracle granted through Fr. Seelos' intercession.

FAIRMONT, WV

I am writing to tell you of a miracle granted to my son through the prayers of Blessed Seelos. My son suffered from

a severe case of psoriasis, which covered over 70% of his body. The disease grew to include psoriatic arthritis, a very painful and crippling form of arthritis. After being treated for a month, my son's skin was completely healed. I thank God every day for this miracle and I ask Blessed Francis to also thank God for me, because I am so grateful for this favor granted to me and my son.

FROM MISSISSIPPI

I was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in 2002. My wife told me about the Fr. Seelos shrine. Upon visiting, we were greeted by L.J. Brown who gave us a tour and account of Fr. Seelos' life and ministry. He placed Fr. Seelos' crucifix on my abdomen. Also present at the time of the laying of the cross were three seminary students. They also came over to pray along with my wife. After we prayed I felt a transformation in my soul, which I also believe healed my body. We obtained a first class relic of Fr. Seelos and I prayed every day, pressing that piece of bone on my side after my surgery from a Whipple and treatments of radiation and chemo. For the past five years I had several doctors tell me that I am lucky to be alive. I do not believe luck is why I am still alive. I now reside in Mississippi because of the loss of our home in Chalmette, LA. My wife and I are forever grateful to L.J. Brown and to the intervention of Blessed Fr. Seelos.

DUMONT, NJ

I've got a newly discovered devotion to Bl. Francis Xavier Seelos since a miraculous healing took place for me on Octo-

ber 5, his official feast day. Also, because of the story from his life that while going to visit the sick, he knelt down in reverence to the Blessed Sacrament on a ferryboat, only to come upon some anti-Catholic element. You see, my healing took place while I was doing a Holy Hour – the first time I spent a full hour with Our Lord (on my knees).

METAIRIE, LA

In December, my 84-year-old father's right leg began to swell and turn yellow-green. His doctor was fairly certain it was a deep vein thrombosis (blood clot). This would have been disastrous since he could not undergo surgery nor take blood thinners. I prayed to Bl. Seelos and blessed my father's leg with his relic. An ultrasound on my father's leg showed there was no blood clot, and his leg is now beginning to heal. Thank you Jesus for granting this favor through the intercession of Blessed Seelos.

BRIDGEVILLE, PA

I have a first class relic of Fr. Francis that I received a few years ago. Wanted to share his relic with others, so I placed it in a handmade reliquary at our parish of Holy Child, where I am the organist. In 2007, my urologist had me undergo ultrasound and CAT scan tests for a mass on my left kidney. I was anointed and asked friends and clergy to pray for me. I brought the relic with me on the day of testing, worriedly praying for a positive outcome. I am grateful to the Holy Trinity & Fr. Seelos' intervention. The doctor called and said they didn't find the mass.

"My mother still receives this newsletter, and she's been deceased for ten years."



If a similar experience sounds familiar to you, we apologize for the insensitivity on our part. Please know that "address correction service" by the U.S. Post Office is a luxury that small non-profit groups like ours can no longer afford along with the monthly cost of mailing this newsletter. If you would like to remove a family member, change the name of the recipient, or add new members to our monthly mailing, please use the form or e-mail your request to bmiller@seelos.org.

- Please delete me from your mailing list.
- Please delete multiple mailings to this address.

Kindly return in the enclosed envelope with any corrections or CALL 504-525-2495 or 2499 Allow a minimum of 30 days to process your request.

I'VE MOVED

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____