



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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BASILICA OF THE ASSUMPTION BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

"No other Catholic edifice in America can claim to have seen so much history made inside its walls," observed author George Weigel about the Baltimore Basilica, built from 1806-1821. It was the first great cathedral constructed in the U.S. after the Constitution was adopted. Officially known as the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, it quickly became a symbol of the country's newfound religious freedom. John Carroll, the country's first bishop, later Archbishop of Baltimore, & cousin of Charles Carroll, a signer of the Declaration of Independence guided the Basilica's design & architecture. It was in this historic Basilica that Francis Xavier Seelos was ordained a subdeacon on December 14, 1844.

ST. MARY'S CHURCH, ANNAPOLIS

The church & surrounding buildings are on land once owned by Charles Carroll (1737-1832), the only Catholic to sign the Declaration of Independence & the last signer to die. On the property is Carroll Manor, built c. 1730, his birthplace where he was married, lived during the Revolution, and entertained George Washington & other important figures of the Revolutionary era. Carroll's granddaughters in 1853 conveyed the property to the Redemptorists, who opened a Novitiate in the house & founded St. Mary's parish. Fr. Seelos was Provincial Consultor at the time of this acquisition. St. John Neumann, Provincial Vicar, blessed the cornerstone in 1858. Later, Seelos was pastor of this church during the Civil War, and rector & prefect of students at the Novitiate during this time.

OFFICIALLY OPENED!

An Inquiry Panel for the Seelos Cause was convened on May 19, 2009 at the Basilica of the Assumption in Baltimore, Maryland. At the Mass, Rev. Byron Miller, Vice Postulator of the Seelos Cause — in the name of Postulator General, Rev. Antonio Marrazzo, C.Ss.R. and the Redemptorist Congregation — petitioned Most Rev. Edwin F. O'Brien, Archbishop of Baltimore, to officially open the Diocesan Inquiry. Archbishop O'Brien accepted the petition by nominating all the Officials for the Inquiry. With one hand on the Book of the Gospels, each was asked to swear an oath to fulfill faithfully their task and to maintain the secret of office. Then each Official signed their names to the written oath. The Inquiry Officials are Episcopal Delegate, Rev. Gilbert Seitz, J.C.L. of the Baltimore Archdiocesan Metropolitan Tribunal; Promoter of Justice, Rev. William Graham, O.F.M. Cap.; Notaries, Deacon Neil Crisp & Leslie Engle; and Medical Expert, Dr. J. Lawrence Fitzpatrick, head surgeon at Mercy Medical Center, Baltimore.

The fact-finding Inquiry Panel will soon begin further investigation of the case and hear the testimony of Mary Ellen Heibel, her primary physician, and other key witnesses. When the Inquiry is completed and the Documentary Proofs are compiled, the report will be presented to the Vatican Congregation of the Causes of Saints for their determination on whether Heibel's cure of metastasized esophageal cancer is miraculous; if so, Seelos could be recommended to the Holy Father for canonization. Heibel, 71, a devout Catholic & parishioner of St. Mary's Church in Annapolis, has been cancer-free since January 2005, even though the disease had spread to her liver, lungs, back and sternum, and medical treatment had failed. The cancer disappeared one week after she began a Seelos novena in her parish.

Also in attendance at the special Opening Session Mass were Cardinal William H. Keeler, dozens of Redemptorists & other concelebrants, along with Mary Ellen Heibel and numerous Seelos devotees from far away as Texas & Illinois. Immediately after the Mass, Monsignor Arthur Bastress, pastor of St. Alphonsus Church, and his staff hosted a reception for Redemptorists and guests in the rectory where St. John Neumann & Bl. Francis Seelos served.

"The Bishop and all those who take part in the Inquiry must see to it with the greatest diligence and commitment that, in gathering all the proofs, nothing is omitted which in any way regards the cause. The positive outcome of the cause, in fact, depends to a great extent, on its good instruction...." --*Sanctorum Mater*, Art. 47, Congregation for the Causes of Saints, Rome 2007



Most Rev. Edwin O'Brien, Archbishop of Baltimore
Photo Credits: Sara Zervos & Stephanie Tracy



Msgr. Bastress



Frs. Seitz & Graham

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

The year is 1959 and the popular production on Broadway is "The Miracle Worker," with Patty Duke as Helen Keller and Anne Bancroft playing her teacher, Anne Sullivan. Mark Twain was an admirer of both women; the title comes from his description of Sullivan as a "miracle worker" for this deaf & blind child.

That same year a half century ago, the Seelos Center organizes its efforts for admirers of a miracle worker known as Father Seelos. And while Seelos was associated with miracles or extraordinary phenomena when he was alive, it's the miracles *after* his death that are required in the canonization process. For the Church, when miracles happen to praying people who invoke the deceased individual, it signifies that the candidate is truly in heaven with God, interceding for God to grant those miracles.

Mary Ellen Heibel & many other praying people invoked Blessed Seelos when she was diagnosed with terminal cancer, and no trace of that cancer presently exists! That much we are certain. Her cure has triggered the Diocesan Inquiry in Baltimore, which will eventually result in the "Acts of the Cause" to be compiled & presented to the Vatican. However, the Vatican is the sole determining body to officially declare miracles. Admittedly, the Redemptorists and Archdiocese of Baltimore would not have proceeded to this point if the case had little merit, but it is not a foregone conclusion until the Holy Father makes a decision on the matter.

In 2009 then, let us intensify our prayers that this cure will be accepted as the miracle to canonize our admirable "miracle worker," Francis Xavier Seelos!

Byron Miller, C.S.R.

Wheelchair ramp is formed at the new Seelos Welcome Center; Jack Crossland, Brad Shannon of Woodward Design+Build with Architect Rob Cangelosi.



ALMOST OPENED!

"On time" & "at budget" are sometimes considered foreign expressions when a major building project is involved. However, Carl E. Woodward Design+Build Company is to be commended for the quality of their work on the new Seelos Welcome Center and their diligence at staying on schedule. During the month of August, after final details are made to the building & property, the Seelos Center will begin the process of relocating from 2030 Constance Street to its new address at 919 Josephine Street!

Please participate in our Seelos Welcome Center building project with due recognition!

Faithful people pushed to begin the canonization cause of Fr. Seelos shortly after he died of yellow fever in 1867. By the turn of the 20th century, the Official Process began. In 1959, faithful people established the Seelos Center to help accelerate the Seelos Cause. By the turn of the 21st century, Fr. Seelos was officially beatified in Rome in 2000.

A new Seelos Welcome Center is needed to expand our ministerial outreach & develop new initiatives as we work toward Bl. Seelos' canonization.

Our commemorative wall will be a permanent symbol dedicated to enrich those who visit the Shrine's Welcome Center. It's a very special way to remember a family member, friend or co-worker with a deep devotion to Fr. Seelos for favors granted. Remember your loved ones or honor the life work of someone special.

Levels of Recognition

- HALO HELPERS (\$250 - \$499)
- SEELOS SHRINE ENTHUSIASTS (\$500 - \$999)
- SEELOS SHRINE SUPPORTERS (\$1,000 - \$2,499)
- SEELOS SHRINE SUSTAINERS (\$2,500 - \$4,999)
- (Helpers, Enthusiasts, Supporters, Sustainers are acknowledged in print.)*
- "SERVANT OF GOD" PATRONS (\$5,000 - \$9,999)
- "VENERABLE" SPONSORS (\$10,000 - \$19,999)
- "BLESSED" BENEFACTORS (\$20,000 - \$34,999)
- "SAINTLY" PHILANTHROPISTS (\$35,000 + UP)

(Acknowledged in print & engraved on the commemorative wall of the Seelos Welcome Center.)

Donations can be made cumulatively or in full through December 2009!



Seelos Center Services

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

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

☞ **Blessings of the Sick** with a Seelos Crucifix in designated area hospitals:

East Jefferson

Gerry Heigle: 504-482-4404
Teresa LaCour: 504-887-0214

Ochsner

Mark/Monica Surprenant 504-895-5371

Uptown/Innercity

Jack Pitkin: 504-524-6591
Dennis Waldron: 504-442-6336

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: 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

Pearl River

Gail Garay: 985-863-7562

Ponchatoula/Hammond

Gaspar Corpora: 225-294-5938

Prairieville/Gonzales

M/M Claude Bourgeois 225-673-6688

Shreveport/Bossier City

Tom & Marjorie Rivers: 318-797-3116

Slidell

Carmelie Mancuso: 985-502-7325
Mary Jo Stewart: 985-502-9033

St. Bernard/Arabi

Patricia Noote: 504-756-4163

☞ **Veneration of Bl. Seelos' Mission Crucifix** in St. Mary's Assumption Church at Josephine & Constance St.

☞ **Weekly Mass** celebrated for Seelos benefactors. Please include Special Intentions in the enclosed envelope.

Seelos Center Devotionals



Cheerful Ascetic, 480-pg. 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 & edge. Marked with .999 FS on reverse top. (Donation: \$58 - includes p/h).



Seelos Rosary Ring: Made in Italy, great gift for First Communion in honor of Mary for the month of May. (Donation: \$3, incl. p/h)



A Life of Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos, 108-page paperback biography, illustrated. (Donation: \$12 - 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: one-of-a-kind lasting remembrance for you or for someone dear, living or deceased. (Donation: \$25, contact Seelos Ctr. or website for enrollment)



Seelos, Tireless Intercessor, a 68-min. documentary on Seelos' miraculous life; seen on EWTN. (Donation: \$25 DVD / \$10 VHS - incl. p/h)



Death, Where Is Your Sting?, tender account of Seelos' final weeks of life as told by witnesses of his death to yellow fever. Seldom revealed details transport us to the bedside of a true martyr. Hardcover, 175 pp., photos. (Donation: \$24 - incl. p/h)



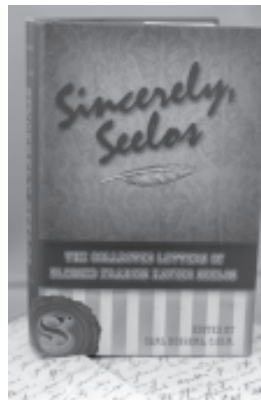
Sincerely, Seelos, the 201 collected letters of Fr. Seelos. Hardbound, 512 pgs., illustr. (Donation: \$35 - incl. p/h)

☞ **A Seelos Vigil Candle** will burn near his sacred resting place in Seelos Shrine, New Orleans, for an offering of \$4.

☞ **Seelos 1st, 2nd & 3rd-Class Relics/ Seelos Pamphlets & Prayer Cards** in English, Spanish, Vietnamese. Call Seelos Center, 504-525-2495 or 2499.



Please allow up to 2 weeks for delivery.



BOOK REVIEW

Sincerely, Seelos: The Collected Letters of Blessed Francis Seelos

Carl Hoegerl, C.S.S.R., ed.

Seelos Center, New Orleans, 2008

This collection provides insight into the deep interior life of Seelos who has been characterized as *The Cheerful Ascetic*. As we read his letters to family, friends, and those for whom he provided spiritual direction, we come away believing that he was zealous down to the taproots of his soul. Until a wary provincial told him to stop (we do not know the reason), he kept up a lively correspondence which can be read for one's own spiritual benefit, or to delve deeper into the church history of the day.

He shares his anguished opinions about the Civil War, his personal meeting with Abraham Lincoln, and his utmost patience with the gloom-ridden, but as yet unidentified, "Miss Mary." Surprising are the two letters in which he respectfully reprimands a bishop for what he considers harsh treatment by the prelate. On the other hand there is the telling of comical human episodes. One was his cleverly outwitting his train car seat-partner — a pickpocket, who got away with only a laundry ticket. Equally laughable is his narrative about another Redemptorist, St. John Neumann, who told Seelos of the horse who snatched — & promptly ate — Neumann's prized botanical specimen, freshly-gathered along a forest trail.

The reader will perhaps have to make allowances for the theological categories of the period that included an emphasis on "sorrowful and fallen human nature," the strong division between the "natural and the supernatural," and a view of marriage as preached in those days. But by and by, one may well conclude that the plight of the immigrant population in America was often grim — with widespread death from epidemics, wartime conditions, and abject poverty. It is in this context that Seelos lent genuine hope to people by urging them to look steadfastly toward the Suffering Servant and Savior, Jesus.

Many, but not all, of the letters are translations from the original German, and very readable translations. The letters are arranged by year, with introductions which give the reader a historical framework for that year. There are bibliographical and archival indexes at the end of this volume, replete with additional data for further research. What is lacking, unfortunately, is a general index to names, places, and topics contained within the letters. With its very attractive book jacket and its pleasant typeface and layout, as well as interspersed pencil sketches or photographs of some of the personages mentioned, *Sincerely Seelos* is highly recommended to period scholars and those looking for a very human and saintly model.

-- Gilbert A. Enderle, C.S.S.R. - Rome, Italy

Seelos Center News

A monthly newsletter for friends of BL. FRANCIS X. SEELOS

Denver Provincial Superior:

Very Rev. Thomas D. Pictou, C.Ss.R.

Seelos Center Executive Director / Editor:

Rev. Byron Miller, C.Ss.R.

Seelos Center Administrator: Joyce Bourgeois

Vice-Postulators: Frs. John Vargas & Byron Miller

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METAIRIE, LA

A friend, while traveling abroad in November, discovered a pea-sized lump in his neck that escalated into the size of a tennis ball in days. When he returned to the States, several doctors determined that it was a congenital cyst; however, because of its size, a surgeon removed it on Dec. 23. The initial observation of the mass was benign, but there were suspicious lymph nodes. Test after test, he & his wife were told that other parts of the body may be affected & that the throat/neck were probably not the source of cancerous origin. I had told them about my devotion to Fr. Seelos (introduced 3 yrs. ago by friends from Rayne, LA), & invited them to the January Healing Mass. I had already started the Seelos Novena & Perpetual Help Novena for him in November. After Mass, he received the Fr. Seelos crucifix blessing. Everything fell into place after that. He was accepted at MD Anderson for 6 weeks of very aggressive radiation treatment. He was told two weeks ago that he's cancer free!

PITTSBURGH, PA

God loves gratitude. As I listened to Fr. John Kelly talk at Mass, I thought of my own neglect in writing you of our thanks to Jesus. The doctors were not in favor of my 29-year-old niece's 4th liver transplant & they gave her a 30% chance of survival. The family was very upset. Fr. Kelly stormed heaven through the intercession of Bl. Seelos & we all prayed. When you believe in Jesus, He responds! There is no greater love. Thank you, Jesus; thank you, Blessed Seelos.

TESTIMONIALS

GLENN HEIGHTS, TX

I attended a women's Magnificat breakfast & our speaker brought a Bl. Seelos relic. We prayed for his intercession for our requests. I asked his prayers for my husband's health & also for our parish music ministry. Since that day, my husband has recovered from his infection & we have seen membership in our music ministry increase. A few of our music ministers who said "it would take a miracle" to get them to come back have, indeed, returned to sing for the Lord. As a convert to Catholicism since '06, praying to saints was a bit of a mystery. But, since the experience at the Magnificat breakfast, I've been praying to Bl. Seelos. I feel like he's a friend I have in heaven to help pray with me & I thank him for his powerful intercession.



Fr. John Kelly, C.S.S.R. of Pittsburgh & Mary Ellen Heibel of Annapolis at the Seelos "Opening Session" Mass, Baltimore Basilica, May 19, 2009 (Photo: Sara Zervos)

LAKE CHARLES, LA

I visited the shrine on Holy Thursday, April 9, and said a Novena to Bl. Seelos. I was moved to do this because of the importance of the date: Bl. Seelos was declared blessed on April 9, 2000. My 6-year-old son, who is handicapped, was born on April 9, 2003. I went with two intentions, for my son to be healed & for Bl. Seelos to be elevated to a canonized saint within the Church. Well, my son was not healed & that must not be God's plan for him now or maybe ever, but God is moving to elevate Bl. Seelos. God did something to let me know He heard me & was with me in my suffering. And, to our surprise, our church asked my son to get his feet washed at the Holy Thursday Mass.

KENNER, LA

I had a cyst removed on my left breast. I prayed hard to Bl. Seelos & to God. It is not cancer. With every test, I hold his relic in my hand & ask for his intercession. He always helps me. He is my good "buddy." I am a breast cancer survivor of 3 years and 2 months, thanks to Bl. Seelos.

SLIDELL, LA

In 2007 I was diagnosed with cancer of the left lung. The last test was done about six months ago. I am now in remission. Many prayers were said by friends & relatives to our Lord, to Mother Mary & all the saints – but especially, for Bl. Seelos' intercession. Thanks for the miracle!

Please check out www.seelos.org as we near our 160,000th visitor!

- Please delete me from your mailing list.
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Kindly return in the enclosed envelope with any corrections or call 504-525-2495 or 2499 or e-mail to bmiller@seelos.org Allow a minimum of 30 days to process your address change request.

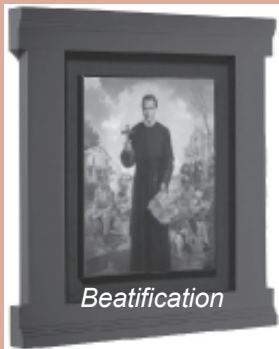
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Beatification

SEELOS WINDOW

Please specify "Beatification," "Lithograph" or "Lomuscio" \$95 donation includes certified P/H

The Seelos Window is a timeless treasure featuring a profound ceramic image. The tile print is not a decal – the ink actually permeates the tile to ensure a vivid, long-lasting image. This is an expensive process but with dramatic results. Tile mounted on raised panels to create a three-dimensional effect and set in a natural wood frame that is finished front-to-back. Excellent craftsmanship! Measures 15.5 x 16.5 in.; weighs approx. 6 lbs.



Lithograph



Lomuscio

New Designs!