



VOLUME 100

SEELOS CENTER NEWS

JUNE 2023

from the National Shrine of Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos, C.Ss.R.

Dear Devotees of Blessed Seelos,

Jesus knew the constant love of his Father, who would send him only what he needed.

“When you are praying, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; they think that they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.” (Matt. 6:7-8)

Sometimes that is hard to believe. Think of Jesus as he was making the Way of the Cross. Did the Father think Jesus “needed” this? We know that he trusted the Lord, even while praying for the cup to pass him by. How could Jesus endure this? He knew the love of the Father for him and, in return, Jesus’ love for his Father. He said, “I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of Him who sent me.” (John 6:38)

This love between the Father and the Son was so pronounced that when Jesus taught the disciples how to pray, he gave us the Our Father: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts.” (Matt. 6:9-12) In this prayer, we hear the love between the Father and the Son.

This month, we extend this kind of relationship beyond the Trinity when we celebrate Father’s Day. We pause to remember the good things our fathers have done for us in their love and in return we express the honor we have for them. Admittedly, this is not always the case. Love and honor are absent because of sin – this is a terrible burden to carry.

There are some who do not address God as Father. They do not want to ascribe a masculine term to God. I don’t think Jesus was teaching about gender identity when he gave his disciples the Lord’s Prayer. “Father” is a very honorable title and I am so happy that this is the relationship I have with God. We are sons and daughters of a gracious God who loves us.



Fr. Richard Boever, C.Ss.R.
*Director, National Shrine of Blessed
Francis Xavier Seelos, C.Ss.R.*

Fr. Richard Boever, C.Ss.R.

★ *On June 21st we celebrate the 50th anniversary of Fr. Rich’s ordination to the priesthood. Happy jubilee, Fr. Rich!* ★

🌿 Celebrating Sainly Men in June 🌿



Saint Boniface

Boniface, known as the apostle of the Germans, was an English Benedictine monk who devoted his life to the conversion of the Germanic tribes. On his first missionary journey in 719, Boniface found that paganism was a way of life. What Christianity he did find had either lapsed into paganism or was mixed with error. The clergy were uneducated, lax and disobedient to their bishops. When Boniface reported this on his return visit to Rome, the Holy Father instructed him to reform the German Church. In the Frankish kingdom, he met great problems because of lay interference in bishops' elections, the worldliness of the clergy and lack of papal control. During a mission to the Frisians, Boniface and 53 companions were massacred while preparing converts for confirmation. Boniface is a model of the Christian rule: To follow Christ is to follow the way of the cross. For him, this meant not only physical suffering or death, but the painful, thankless, bewildering task of Church reform. St. Boniface's feast day is June 5.



Saint Anthony

In 1195, Fernando Martins was born into a wealthy family in Lisbon, Portugal. At the age of fifteen he asked to be sent to the Abbey of Santa Cruz in Coimbra. When Franciscan friars settled a small hermitage outside Coimbra, Fernando felt a longing to join them. He received permission to leave the Abbey so he could join the new Franciscan Order. Upon admission, he changed his name to Anthony.

Some time later, Dominican friars came to visit the Franciscans and there was confusion over who would present the homily. The Dominicans were known for their preaching, thus the Franciscans assumed it was they who would provide a homilist, but the Dominicans assumed the Franciscans would provide one. It was then the head of the Franciscan hermitage asked Anthony to speak. Though he tried to object, he delivered an eloquent and moving homily that impressed both groups. Soon, news of his eloquence reached Francis of Assisi and they became friends. In 1224, Francis entrusted his friars' pursuits of studies to Anthony. Anthony had a book of psalms that contained notes and comments to help when teaching students and, in a time when the printing press was not yet invented, he greatly valued it. When a novice decided to leave the hermitage, he stole Anthony's valuable book. When Anthony discovered it was missing, he prayed it would be returned to him. The thief did return the book and returned to the Order as well.

Anthony was only 35 when he died. Upon exhumation some 336 years after his death, his body was found to be corrupted, yet his tongue was totally incorrupt. St. Anthony is the patron saint for lost articles, and is credited with many miracles involving lost people, lost things and even lost spiritual goods. His feast day is celebrated on June 13.



Saints Peter & Paul

On June 29 the Church celebrates the feast day of Sts. Peter & Paul. Together, they are the founders of the See of Rome. Peter was a fisherman of Galilee and a bold follower of the Lord. He was the first to recognize that Jesus was the Messiah and eagerly pledged his fidelity until death. In his boldness, he also made many mistakes, such as losing faith when walking on water with Christ and betraying the Lord on the night of His passion. Yet despite his human weaknesses, Peter led the Apostles as the first pope and ensured that the disciples kept the true faith.

Peter spent his last years leading the Church through persecution and eventually being martyred in the year 64. He was crucified upside-down at his own request.

St. Paul was the Apostle of the Gentiles. Before receiving the name Paul, he was Saul, a Jewish pharisee who persecuted Christians in Jerusalem. Saul's conversion took place as he was on his way to persecute a Christian community. As he was traveling along the road, he was suddenly surrounded by a great light. He was blinded and fell off his horse. He then heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" He answered: "Who are you, Lord?" Christ said: "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting." Saul continued to Damascus, where he was baptized and his sight was restored. He took the name Paul and spent the remainder of his life preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles of the Mediterranean world. In the year 67, Paul was imprisoned and taken to Rome, where he was beheaded.

In a sermon in the year 395, St. Augustine of Hippo said of Sts. Peter and Paul: "Both apostles share the same feast day, for these two were one; and even though they suffered on different days, they were as one. Peter went first, and Paul followed. And so we celebrate this day made holy for us by the apostles' blood. Let us embrace what they believed, their life, their labors, their sufferings, their preaching, and their confession of faith."

Blessings for the Sick

*Hospital visits with a Seelos Crucifix
(Only family members may request)*

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GRACES RECEIVED & PRAYERS ANSWERED

BOSTON, MA

Our 14-year-old daughter, Thelma, was born on July 14, 2008 with congenital scoliosis. Over the years, Thelma has undergone 17 surgeries. She was admitted to the hospital in November 2022, for the first of two surgeries to finally correct this condition. Before the first surgery, we took her to our parish priest, Fr. John Worgul, who blessed her with anointing oil of the sick. After surgery, she recovered without any complications.

Before her next surgery in December, we invited Fr. Anthony Michalik, C.Ss.R. to pray and to give her Holy Communion. The surgery again went well. They moved her into the ICU for recovery and that's when things got complicated. Thelma spent an abnormally long period in the ICU, 9 days. When she transitioned from the ICU she was able to communicate with us for about one day, then she completely shut down. She was non-responsive, could not recognize anybody, communicate, eat, etc. The medical experts were confused. They said it could be due to side effects of a medication. They took her off of this medication and said she should recover in a few days, but this never happened. They did an MRI and an EEG. Both results showed no abnormality. The doctors did not know what to do.

On January 13th, Thelma's siblings and I arrived at the hospital to visit her and her mom. There was no change in Thelma's condition. While pondering what else could be done, I listened to *Catholic Meditation*, a podcast by Fr. Blessed Ambang Njume. In the Gospel and meditation of that morning, Fr. Njume reminded us that when our loved ones are sick, we take them to the best hospitals, look for the best doctors, but often forget to take them to the Lord. He said, "Doctors treat, but it is the Lord who heals." With this reminder, we contacted Fr. Anthony to come again to pray and bless Thelma. He arrived the same morning, bringing

holy water, anointing oil, and a first-class relic of Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos.

Fr. Anthony met Thelma in the same, non-responsive state. We prayed together and he anointed her with holy oil and gave her Communion. Then, Fr. Anthony blessed her with the Seelos relic. Thelma reached out to take the relic and held it close to her face. She touched her forehead, her eyes, her cheeks, then her mouth. Everyone looked on with amazement at how quickly and with what determination Thelma did this – with no one prompting her to do so. As she held tightly to the relic, Fr. Anthony said, "I think you like him, and I think he wants to stay with you." He told us to keep it for the time being and to pray for her healing.

When Fr. Anthony left, we sprinkled holy water around the room. After a few hours, her siblings and I left Thelma, her mom and the nurse and went to the lobby. A few minutes later, mom called and said we should come back to the room. She said that Thelma had spoken, saying that her back hurt. The nurse asked if she would take pain medicine in tablet or liquid form. She replied, "tablet." The nurse gave her the tablet with a glass of water, and she drank for the first time.

When we returned to the room, Thelma engaged us in a very friendly and familiar conversation, asking us why we left last time without bidding her goodbye. This is someone who was non-responsive that same morning. Mom asked if she would like to eat rice and stew and she accepted. She ate the food very cordially and smiled.

Considering the slow progress we saw regarding Thelma's recovery within those two weeks, we strongly believe that Fr. Anthony's prayers and blessing with the relic of Blessed Seelos that morning significantly contributed to the amazing improvement seen just a few hours later.

SHRINE, MUSEUM & WELCOME CENTER HOURS
Monday-Saturday 10am-2pm | Please see SEELOS.org for visiting guidelines.



Prayer for Fathers

God our Father, you made the family a community of love. Bless our fathers as they follow your Son, Jesus. Let their faith, hope, and love shine in our families, and show us the way to you.

Strengthen our fathers as they serve our families and communities. May their example reflect your protective care for all of us. We also pray for fathers who have died, that you may bring them into the fullness of your love.

May we, the sons and daughters of these men, always honor them with gratitude and hold them in prayer.
Amen.

– University of Notre Dame

HOT IN THE SHOP ~ GIFTS FOR DAD



NEW! LAPIZ BLUE SEELOS RELIC ROSARY – \$57

Eye-catching rosary with striking blue beads, a double-sided medallion featuring a 2nd class relic of Bl. Seelos and his image, Our Mother of Perpetual Help medals, and a crucifix with “Be faithful in little things” inscribed on the back. Gift box included.



ST. JOSEPH & JESUS WOODEN BOX – \$15

This small wood box features a distressed painting of St. Joseph holding Jesus.



FATHER'S DAY PRAYER SET – \$19

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MINI SLEEPING ST. JOSEPH STATUE & PRAYER BAG – \$21

This gift features a 3½” wide statue of St. Joseph and a canvas bag with prayer instructions.



SEELOS HOME PRAYER KIT – \$39

This kit includes a 4” Seelos statue, laminated relic prayer card, holy oil in a glass bottle, and holy water in a plastic container.

Quantities are limited. Prices **include** shipping/handling. Prices online and in the Welcome Center Gift Shop may vary.

SUPPORT THE MISSION OF THE SHRINE



LIGHT A CANDLE: A vigil candle will burn near Seelos' sacred resting place for an offering of \$3-\$4. Please visit SEELOS.org/light-a-votive-candle.



REQUEST A RELIC: 3rd Class Relics are available in either laminated prayer cards or as a crocheted memento for an offering of \$2.50 each. 2nd Class Relics are available in small envelopes for an offering of \$2.50 each.



SHOP ONLINE: Items in the Gift Shop are available at SEELOS.org/gift-shop.

VISIT SEELOS.ORG OR CALL (504) 525-2495 TO ORDER



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