



VOLUME 82

SEELOS CENTER NEWS

DECEMBER 2021

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

Dear Devotees of Blessed Seelos,

If you've been to any of the larger stores to purchase almost anything lately, there's no doubt that Christmas is coming. It's not unusual to hear announced the number of days remaining to do your shopping. In the church, the Advent wreath counts the four Sundays before the carols legitimately are sung on Christmas day, acknowledging the wonderful day when God broke through our human history.

Blessed Seelos celebrated Christmas Masses with great delight in Baltimore in 1859. He had been invited back from Cumberland to the parish he served earlier, St. Alphonsus. The pastor asked Seelos to celebrate three Masses while he was there. He first celebrated midnight Mass at the convent of the Visitation Sisters. He wrote his sister back home that "the solitude in the convent of the sisters at midnight, their peaceful devotion and their unforgettably beautiful chapel—oh, how delightful all was." His second Christmas Mass was at the orphanage under the care of the Sisters of Charity. "At five-thirty, all the children were present at the Sisters of Charity," Seelos wrote.



"[The children] really sang out with one accord as if all the shepherds of all of Palestine had gathered together to bring to the Christ Child their innocent hearts and carols."

Lastly, Seelos celebrated the High Mass at St. Alphonsus Church. His former parishioners were so happy to see him in his return visit that "there was nothing else I could do," he wrote, "but say at least a few words in the parlor to the many who came without interruption and brought me gifts of all kinds." Father Seelos enjoyed with devotion and joy that holy Christmas.

Christmas in our own times is celebrated with joy, but the deeper meaning penetrates our hearts when we can experience a special presence of the Christ Child in our lives. We celebrate Christmas freely today, but it was not always like that. Roman Catholics in England, for instance, from 1558 until 1829 were not permitted to celebrate their faith openly. Nonetheless, they knew how to celebrate the twelve days of Christmas secretly.

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SAVE THE DATE

— + —
HEALING MASS

Sunday, January 9, 2022
St. Mary's Assumption Church
and on Facebook Live



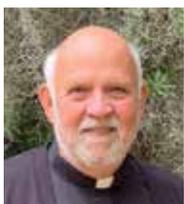
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The hidden meaning of Christmas for the persecuted church in old England came out in a song we still sing today—"The Twelve Days of Christmas". Of course, there's a literal meaning to the song, but the real message is deep down within the symbolism of the twelve days. It was a coded way to remember their catechism and the "true love" giving gifts was known to the soul as the Savior. Let's look at the twelve days of Christmas gifts given us by Jesus through the Church.

<p>1</p>  <p>The partridge in a pear tree represents Christ himself because, like that partridge he was willing to sacrifice his life to protect those He loves.</p>	<p>2</p>  <p>Two turtle doves are for the Old and New Testaments in the Bible.</p>	<p>3</p>  <p>Three French hens represent the virtues of faith, hope and charity.</p>	<p>4</p>  <p>Four calling birds are for the evangelists who announced the Good News: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.</p>
<p>5</p>  <p>Five golden rings are for the first five books of the Old Testament, the Torah, which shows God's great love for us despite our human weakness.</p>	<p>6</p>  <p>Six geese a-laying represent the six days of creation found in the opening lines in the Book of Genesis.</p>	<p>7</p>  <p>Seven swans a-swimming are for the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety and fear of the Lord.</p>	<p>8</p>  <p>Eight maids a-milking represent the eight beatitudes taught by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount.</p>
<p>9</p>  <p>Nine ladies dancing are for the fruits of the Holy Spirit: charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, mildness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.</p>	<p>10</p>  <p>Ten lords a-leaping are for the Ten Commandments.</p>	<p>11</p>  <p>Eleven pipers piping represent the eleven faithful apostles.</p>	<p>12</p>  <p>Twelve drummers drumming are for the twelve points of the Apostles' Creed.</p>

Christmas has a lot of secular traditions for us, family tradition and, of course, the reason for the season—Jesus Christ is born. Christmas is a great feast day, a season to be jolly but also, most importantly, the day we praise God for his great love for each one of us.

A blessed Christmas to one and all,



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

Fr. Rich Boever, C.Ss.R.

Blessings for the Sick

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

JEFFERSON / ORLEANS

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Donna Johnson (713) 826-4191

GRACES RECEIVED & PRAYERS ANSWERED

NEW ORLEANS, LA

I have been a Seelos devotee for 11 years and I truly believe in his medical miracles. In December 2020, I tested positive for Covid-19. I had a severe case and was sick for a month. I prayed for Fr. Seelos' intercession to heal me and my sense of smell and taste was restored within 14 days. I was spared any permanent effects of the virus.

While recovering from Covid, I discovered two skin ulcers. In February 2021 a biopsy was performed. I was placed on a heavy course of antibiotics and creams but nothing was working and the pain was increasing every day. Desperate for healing, I visited the Seelos Center on Friday, March 3. I was greeted by an incredible volunteer, Gina. As tears streamed from my eyes, I explained my situation. She escorted me to Mass at St. Mary's and told me that a prayer partner would bless me with a Seelos relic after Mass.

When Mass concluded, a young man approached me and asked if I was the person who needed to be blessed with the relic. I explained my situation to Norris, the prayer partner. I explained how painful it is to walk, sit, or sleep. My quality of life was going downhill fast. Norris typically volunteers at the Shrine on Mondays, but he said God told him that someone needed him that day. He handed me the relic and recited a beautiful healing prayer. While he was praying with me, my pain began to subside. Later that evening, I discovered one ulcer had completely disappeared.

A few days later, I visited my dermatologist for further testing. She asked what happened to my second ulcer. I explained that I was blessed with the relic and it disappeared! We were both stunned. The second set of biopsies confirmed that I had squamous cell carcinoma. On March 23, I met with my oncologist. The cancerous tumor that remained was very large. I prayed to Fr. Seelos for a miracle to shrink my tumor and it decreased by 3 centimeters. Unfortunately, my cancer spread to a lymph node and six weeks of chemo and radiation were prescribed. I prayed to Fr. Seelos every day during treatment and applied holy oil on my surgical scars. I visualized God, Fr. Seelos, and my late father during the 27 radiation treatments. I made a fast recovery and returned to work one week after surgery. I did not have any delays or complications. I **ATTRIBUTE THIS TO GOD, FR. SEELOS, AND MY GUARDIAN ANGELS.**

I attended the Healing Mass on October 10. On October 13, I had a pet scan to determine if the chemo and radiation were effective in preventing the spread of my stage 3 cancer. By the grace of God and Fr. Seelos, my pet scan was clear and I am now in remission. I would like to thank Gina, Norris, Fr. Enderle, Fr. Seelos, my medical care team, friends and family who prayed for me and helped me. I continue to apply my holy oil every day and night after reciting my Fr. Seelos prayer. I will continue to praise Fr. Seelos for his intercession.



Submit Your Testimonial Online!

Your words offer encouragement to others in need of Seelos' intercession.

www.SEELOS.org/submit-a-healing-or-favor

SHRINE, MUSEUM & WELCOME CENTER HOURS

Monday-Saturday 10am-2pm | Please see SEELOS.org for visiting guidelines.

HOT IN THE SHOP - SPREAD THE JOY!

“Little Song to Child Jesus”

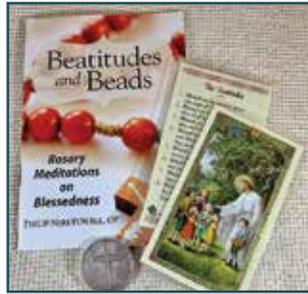
Christmas Hymn by St. Alphonsus Liguori

From starry skies descending,
Thou comest, glorious King,
A manger low Thy bed,
In winter's icy sting;

O my dearest Child most holy,
Shudd'ring, trembling in the cold!
Great God, Thou lovest me!
What suff'ring Thou didst bear,
That I near Thee might be!

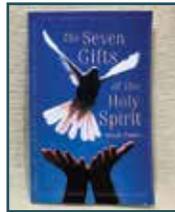
Thou art the world's Creator,
God's own and true Word,
Yet here no robe, no fire
For Thee, Divine Lord.

Dearest, fairest, sweetest Infant,
Dire this state of poverty.
The more I care for Thee,
Since Thou, O Love Divine,
Will'st now so poor to be.



BEATITUDES GIFT SET – \$8

New in the Gift Shop, this gift set includes the “Beatitudes and Beads” pamphlet, “The Beatitudes” laminated prayer card, and a cross pocket token with the inscription “As a Christian, and as an expression of my faith, I carry this coin with the Cross to remind me of God’s love” on the back.



“THE SEVEN GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT” BOOK – \$17

A discussion of the seven gifts and how they figure into the lives of Catholics.



MY LORD'S CROSS – \$12

This 4” tall stone cross features a curved design that fits comfortably in your hand.



RED CARDINAL ORNAMENT – \$16

Beautiful hand-blown, hand-painted, glittered Old World glass ornament. (Stand not included)



LARGE PRAYER CANDLE – \$48

Made by Heidi Groat, this 8” prayer candle features antique bronze detailing and a Miraculous Medal.

Prices listed above 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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The National Shrine of Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos, C.Ss.R. is a member of the National Association of Shrine and Pilgrimage Apostolate.

DONATION & CONTACT INFORMATION FORM

I would like to support the Seelos cause by donating \$_____ to be used for:

The ministry and maintenance of the Shrine My 1-year newsletter subscription renewal (\$12)

Other: _____

Make checks payable to “National Shrine of Blessed Francis Seelos”.

Please remove change my name and address as follows:

Name: _____

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