

Stella Maris

apostleshipofthesea.org.uk

April 2019

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**Apostleship
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Supporting Seafarers Worldwide

Stella Maris (Apostleship of the Sea) is a Catholic charity supporting seafarers worldwide.

We provide practical and pastoral care to all seafarers, regardless of nationality, belief or race. Our port chaplains and volunteer ship visitors welcome seafarers, offer welfare services and advice, practical help, care and friendship.

Stella Maris is the largest ship visiting network in the world, working in 339 ports with 227 port chaplains around the world.

We are only able to continue our work through the generous donations of our supporters and volunteers.

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Stella Maris provides seafarers with **practical support, information and a listening ear**

Sunday at Sea 7th April 2019 - 5th Sunday of Lent *Commentary by Fr Colum Kelly*

Gospel Gospel John 8:1-11

Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. At daybreak he appeared in the Temple again; and as all the people came to him, he sat down and began to teach them.

The scribes and Pharisees brought a woman along who had been caught committing adultery; and making her stand there in full view of everybody, they said to Jesus, 'Master, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery, and Moses has ordered us in the Law to condemn women like this to death by stoning. What have you to say?' They asked him this as a test, looking for something to use against him.

But Jesus bent down and started writing on the ground with his finger. As they persisted with their question, he looked up and said, 'If there is one of you who has not sinned, let him be the first to throw a stone at her.' Then he bent down and wrote on the ground again. When they heard this they went away one by one, beginning with the eldest, until Jesus was left alone with the woman, who remained standing there. He looked up and said, 'Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?' 'No one, sir,' she replied. 'Neither do I condemn you,' said Jesus 'go away, and don't sin any more.'



The Gospel and You

We are in Jerusalem, and it is not long before Jesus's own death. He knows he is in danger, and knows he is surrounded by enemies

The Scribes have a problem.

A woman has committed the sin of adultery. The Law of Moses says she should be executed and the rules of the Romans do not allow for that. Do they follow the Law of Moses which as Jews they are required to do, and risk the consequences? Or do what the Romans command?

The scribes and Pharisees approach Jesus and present the dilemma. The woman is undoubtedly guilty of adultery, and according to the Law of Moses she should be punished by death.

Jesus recognises immediately that it is a set-up. It is a trick question.

He knows that if he pronounces the sentence of death on the woman, he is breaking Roman law. If he lets her off, he is breaking the Law of Moses. What is he to do?

Instead of answering, Jesus does something unexpected. He bends down and writes with his finger on the ground.

There is the possibility he will slip up when he responds, and if this happens they can organise some sort of accusation that will get him into serious trouble with the authorities. The crowd look on with great interest.

And then the famous words of Jesus both challenge and dismiss them. "Let he who is without sin cast the first stone" And to the woman "Sin no more"

This story does not condemn the sinner, but calls the sinner to change, to be saved. Jesus wished each person there in the Temple courtyard that morning to see that they themselves were sinners, and that their chief responsibility was to mend their own ways before passing judgement on others.

Do we find it easy to condemn, or try to understand the weakness in others. Or are we so perfect that we can pass judgement on others.

Palm Sunday

14th April 2019

Gospel Luke 23:1-49

The whole assembly then rose, and they brought him before Pilate.

They began their accusation by saying, We found this man inciting our people to revolt, opposing payment of the tribute to Caesar, and claiming to be Christ, a king. Pilate put to him this question, Are you the king of the Jews? He replied, It is you who say it. Pilate then said to the chief priests and the crowd, I find no case against this man. But they persisted, He is inflaming the people with his teaching all over Judaea; it has come all the way from Galilee, where he started, down to here. When Pilate heard this, he asked if the man were a Galilean; and finding that he came under Herod's jurisdiction he passed him over to Herod who was also in Jerusalem at that time.

Herod was delighted to see Jesus; he had heard about him and had been wanting for a long time to set eyes on him; moreover, he was hoping to see some miracle worked by him. So he questioned him at some length; but without getting any reply. Meanwhile the chief priests and the scribes were

there, violently pressing their accusations. Then Herod, together with his guards, treated him with contempt and made fun of him; he put a rich cloak on him and sent him back to Pilate. And though Herod and Pilate had been enemies before, they were reconciled that same day.

Pilate then summoned the chief priests and the leading men and the people. He said, You brought this man before me as a political agitator. Now I have gone into the matter myself in your presence and found no case against the man in respect of all the charges you bring against him. Nor has Herod either, since he has sent him back to us. As you can see, the man has done nothing that deserves death, so I shall have him flogged and then let him go. But as one man they howled, Away with him! Give us Barabbas! This man had been thrown into prison for causing a riot in the city and for murder.

Pilate was anxious to set Jesus free and addressed them again, but they shouted back, Crucify him! Crucify him! And for the third time he spoke to them, Why? What harm has this man done? I have found no case against him that deserves death, so I shall have him punished and let him go. But they

kept on shouting at the top of their voices, demanding that he should be crucified, and their shouts were growing louder. Pilate then gave his verdict: their demand was to be granted. He released the man they asked for, who had been imprisoned for rioting and murder, and handed Jesus over to them to deal with as they pleased.

As they were leading him away they seized on a man, Simon from Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, and made him shoulder the cross and carry it behind Jesus. Large numbers of people followed him, and of women too who mourned and lamented

for him. But Jesus turned to them and said, Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep rather for yourselves and for your children. For the days will surely come when people will say, 'Happy are those who are barren, the wombs that have never borne, the breasts that have never suckled!' Then they will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us!'; to the hills, 'Cover us!' For if men use the green wood like this, what will happen when it is dry? Now with him they were also leading out two other criminals to be executed.

When they reached the place called The Skull, they crucified him there and the criminals also, one on the right, the other on the left. Jesus said, Father, forgive them; they do not know what they are doing. Then they cast lots to share out his clothing.

The people stayed there watching him. As for the leaders, they jeered at him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Christ of God, the Chosen One. The soldiers mocked him too, and when they approached to offer him vinegar they said, If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself. Above him there was an inscription: 'This is the King of the Jews.'

One of the criminals hanging there abused him, saying, Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us as well. But the other spoke up and rebuked him, Have you no fear of God at all? You got the same sentence as he did, but in our case we deserved it: we are paying for what we did. But this man has done nothing wrong. Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom. He replied, Indeed, I promise you, today you will be with me in paradise.

It was now about the sixth hour and, with the sun eclipsed, a darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour. The veil of the Temple was torn right down the middle; and when Jesus had cried out in a loud voice, he said, Father, into your hands I commit my spirit. With these words he breathed his last. (All kneel and pause a moment.) When the centurion saw what had taken place, he gave praise to God and said, This was a great and good man. And when all the people who had gathered for the spectacle saw what had happened, they went home beating their breasts.

All his friends stood at a distance; so also did the women who had accompanied him from Galilee, and they saw all this happen.

The Gospel and You

In Churches all over the world, people will receive Palm Crosses today, reminding them yet again, of the unconditional love of God for all his people. The cross is also a reminder of the fickleness of those same folk in the story of Holy week. The week begins with crowds shouting psalms of praise as Jesus enters Jerusalem; and ends with the same people shouting "Crucify Him".

It seems there may have been two processions entering Jerusalem for the beginning of the Festival. One led by Pontius Pilate, coming on horseback, armed and with a military force to maintain power and peace in the city during Passover. The second, a mixed group waving palm branches following a man on a donkey, a man offering a different version of service, and a different kind of peace, not one imposed by violence.

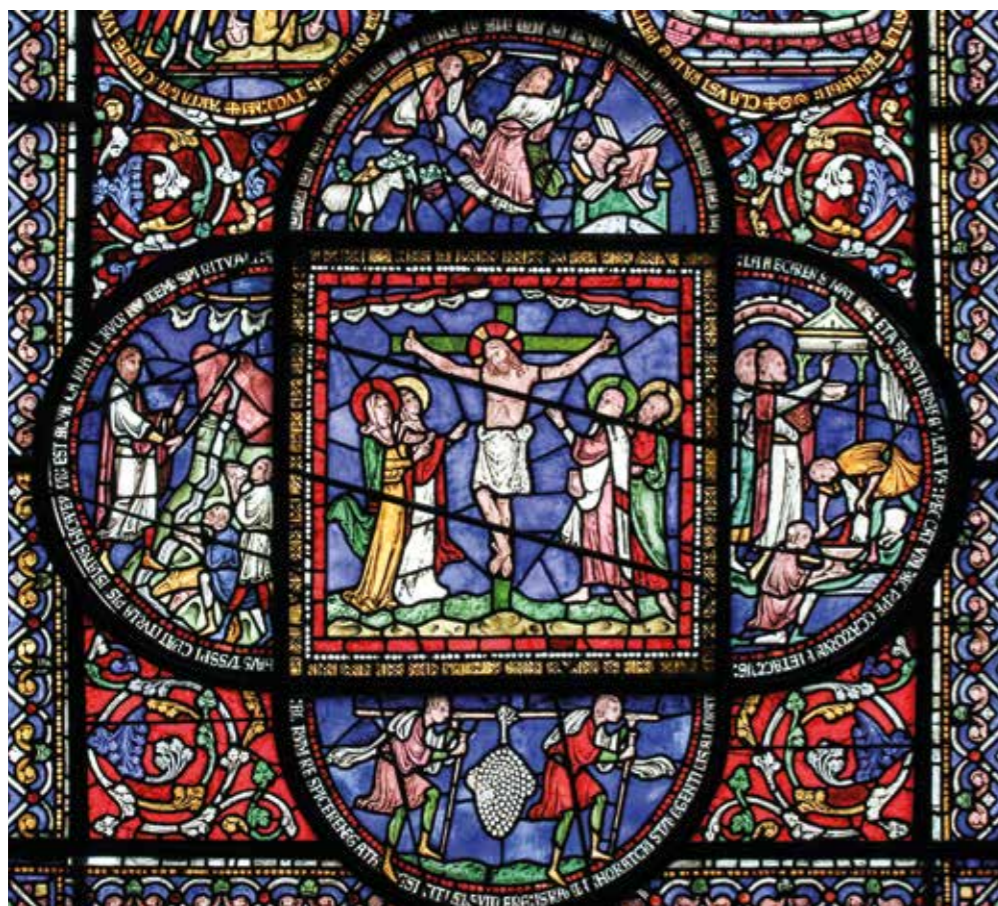
What a contrast, two very different images of Kingship and power. Jesus comes on a borrowed donkey. Now what kind of king is this? Jesus was born in a borrowed stable and laid in a borrowed manger. On Palm Sunday we hear he enters the city on a borrowed donkey. Soon he would eat his final meal in a borrowed room, be crucified on a borrowed cross. His body placed in a borrowed tomb. He came into the world with nothing, and left the world with nothing. A life of total service not encumbered by acquiring many things.

But think too of the loneliness of Jesus in this Holy Week, one day proclaimed Messiah and yet as the week goes on, even his friends begin to desert him. Hearts of love turning into hearts of stone.

When seafarers enter ports there are no cheering crowds. Their welcome may only come when one or two chaplains and volunteers from Stella Maris visit the vessel.

They will ask about families back home and offer to do all they can to make time in port more comfortable and maybe bring new palm crosses. That's a real welcome.

But think too of the loneliness of Jesus in this Holy Week



Easter Sunday

21st April 2019

Gospel John 20:1-9

It was very early on the first day of the week and still dark, when Mary of Magdala came to the tomb. She saw that the stone had been moved away from the tomb and came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved. 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb' she said 'and we don't know where they have put him.'

So Peter set out with the other disciple to go to the tomb. They ran together, but the other disciple, running faster than Peter, reached the tomb first; he bent down and saw the linen cloths lying on the ground, but did not go in. Simon Peter who was following now came up, went right into the tomb, saw the linen cloths on the ground, and also the cloth that had been over his head; this was not with the linen cloths but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple who had reached the tomb first also went in; he saw and he believed. Till this moment they had failed to understand the teaching of scripture, that he must rise from the dead.

Nothing is beyond change. His disciples betrayed him but no betrayal is final.

The Gospel and You

Again we come to celebrate the greatest feast in the Christian calendar.

What the resurrection of Jesus promises is that things can always be new again. It's never too late to start over. Nothing is beyond change. His disciples betrayed him but no betrayal is final. Every form of death can be overcome. There isn't any loss that cannot be redeemed. Every day is a new possibility.

It means that the Resurrection is not just a historical fact, it's a continuing experience. We do not say: "Christ rose;" we say: "Christ is risen." He is risen now. "Where two or three are gathered in my name..." He is present in his spirit – in his word, in the Mass, in Holy Communion, in other people. He's here as our inspiration, our Saviour and Lord.

To believe in this is to have faith that the risen Lord sails with us, both on our ships and within the hearts and minds of all who believe in him. Despite all that goes on around us in the troubled world of the sea, Easter tells us never to lose sight of the Risen Lord and the hope he brings to brighten up the darkness of our lives.

However, the challenge of living this out is not just that of believing that Jesus rose physically from the grave, but also, to believe that no matter our age, mistakes, betrayals, wounds, and deaths – we can begin each day afresh.

Second Sunday of Easter (Divine Mercy Sunday)

28th April 2019

Gospel John 20:19-31

In the evening of that same day, the first day of the week, the doors were closed in the room where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews. Jesus came and stood among them. He said to them, 'Peace be with you,' and showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Lord, and he said to them again, 'Peace be with you.'

'As the Father sent me, so am I sending you.'
After saying this he breathed on them and said: 'Receive the Holy Spirit.
For those whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven; for those whose sins you retain, they are retained.'

Thomas, called the Twin, who was one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. When the disciples said, 'We have seen the Lord,' he answered, 'Unless I see the holes that the nails made in his hands and can put my finger into the holes they made, and unless I can put my hand into his side, I refuse to believe.' Eight days later the disciples were in the house again and Thomas was with them. The doors were closed, but Jesus came in and stood among them. 'Peace be with you,' he said. Then he spoke to Thomas, 'Put your finger here; look, here are my hands. Give me your hand; put it into my side. Doubt no longer but believe.' Thomas replied, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him:

'You believe because you can see me. Happy are those who have not seen and yet believe.'

There were many other signs that Jesus worked and the disciples saw, but they are not recorded in this book. These are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing this you may have life through his name.

Like Jesus, we too will have our sufferings and crucifixions, yet our faith in the resurrection invites us to live beyond these.

The Gospel and You

No matter what we've done, our future is forever bursting with wonderful new possibilities. Resurrection is not just a question of one day, after death, rising from the dead, but it is also about daily rising from the many fears that surround us.

Like Jesus, we too will have our sufferings and crucifixions, yet our faith in the resurrection invites us to live beyond these. To journey through these days knowing you have a helper, a source of strength and comfort, never far away. The Risen Christ calls us to believe, to trust and hope.

In the gospel today we meet the character of Thomas, the man who originally missed out on an extraordinary encounter with the risen Christ, because he was somewhere else. We know that the main group of disciples were hiding away in a safe place for fear of the Jews. When Thomas eventually came to join them, he noticed a change in them and heard their remarkable story of how the Risen Lord had appeared to them. But he could not bring himself to believe that such a thing could have happened.

I wonder if his friends were a bit hurt that he could not find it within himself to believe what they were telling him. We can understand Thomas for we too are people who want evidence to get to the truth rather than merely hear the claims of others. On our vessels we become tired of the boasts of others, telling us how we are missing out on something they have experienced. Our life experiences teach us to filter out what may be true and what we have every right to doubt.

Thomas needed to see for himself and to touch the Lord, no words could ever replace that. He wanted solid proof, and there's a side of us that needs it too. We have great faith in those we love but maybe, even there, we need reassurance that our faith and trust are not misplaced. Being away from home on such long voyages brings its moments of doubts when we least expect them. Have we misheard or misunderstood something in a call to a loved one? The doubts may linger until the next call when things can be put right.

There is one phrase from today's gospel that we can carry with us wherever we go. His final words of faith in the Risen Lord. "My Lord and my God!" May that always be our great prayer of faith and trust in a God who never doubts us, even for a second.



When facing criminal charges or an investigation by local authorities, it is crucial that seafarers are treated fairly, regardless of the circumstances and the guilt or innocence of those involved. The International Transport Workers' Federation's (ITF) legal assistant Jonathan Warring offers guidance if this happens to you

The Good Life

Criminalisation: What to do if you face criminal charges

1 Know your rights

Seafarers operate in countries with varying legal systems and levels of respect for human rights. However, if you know some of your basic human rights, you can insist on them being observed.

The International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) details the rights that should be afforded to all people when arrested, detained and tried by any state.

The Joint IMO/ILO Guidelines on fair treatment of seafarers in the event of a maritime accident were drawn up with international human rights instruments, including ICCPR, in mind. This instrument provides specific advice to seafarers, shipowners, flag states and port states on the how to ensure seafarers are treated fairly.

2 Seek help

When facing an investigation, detention or charges, contact people and organisations who can assist you. It is important that they are aware of the situation. Some examples of people to contact are:

- The shipowner or your employer
- Union officials
- Local ITF Inspector
- Local consul or embassy for the flag state
- Local consul or embassy for your home state
- Family
- Stella Maris port chaplain, contact details are here www.apostleshipofthesea.org.uk/world-map

3 Your conduct

If you are interviewed by police or local authorities in relation to an incident, you should be co-operative and provide truthful information. Remember that you have the right not to self-incriminate. This means that you do not have to give any information that may indicate that you are at fault or have committed an offence. To exercise this right, you should answer questions with 'no comment' or silence.

If the investigating authorities are using a language with which you are not familiar, they should provide an interpreter. If they do not, you should ask for one to be provided. It is your right to refuse to sign documents which have not been translated into a language you understand.

4 Legal representation

The right to legal representation is applied differently from state to state. If you are arrested by the police, or detained by state authorities, you should be allowed legal representation. You may be able to get free representation, or, in some circumstances, you could ask your employer to provide a lawyer. You should be allowed to speak to your lawyer on a confidential basis.

More sources of information and advice

www.itfseafarers.org/ITI-criminalisation.cfm

www.seafarersrights.org/seafarers-guides-list-search/

www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZhgHD_MEB00&feature=youtu.be

This article first appeared in the ITF Seafarers' Bulletin no.32/2018 and is reproduced with permission



Port Focus: Albany, Australia



The Port of Albany is the oldest deepwater port in Western Australia dating back to 1826. It welcomed the first European settlers who arrived at the King George Sound on Boxing day in 1826. Aboard the Brig Amity were 23 convicts who had been punished for their crimes by being sentenced to settling in Australia. They were left in Albany together with 18 soldiers and some livestock and founded the settlement which is now a thriving port town.

A full size land-mounted replica of the Ship Albany can be seen overlooking Princess Royal Harbour opposite the commercial port. Despite being considerably smaller than Perth or Fremantle, Albany is the capital of the state of Western Australia. It retains this honour due to the fact that its foundation predates these larger cities by several years.

The area around surrounding the Port was used by indigenous groups of the Menang Noongar tribe who called the area Kinjarling which means 'place of rain'.

The Stella Maris Centre in Albany is open 0900-2200 every day including weekends and public holidays. It is located in Lot 9, Princess Royal Drive, Albany 6330 WA.

There are two buses provided by Stella Maris running from ships to the centre from 1000 to 1700 every day and one every hour from 1800-2200. The Roman Catholic church is 1.5 kilometres away from the Port. Buses are available when needed. The seafarers' centre WIFI is free to seafarers with unlimited data and fast connection. There are also facilities for basketball, Ping-pong, a Barbecue Area and a Chapel.



Replica of the Brig Amity which first arrived at Albany in 1826

The Stella Maris seafarers' centre WIFI is free to seafarers with unlimited data and fast connection.



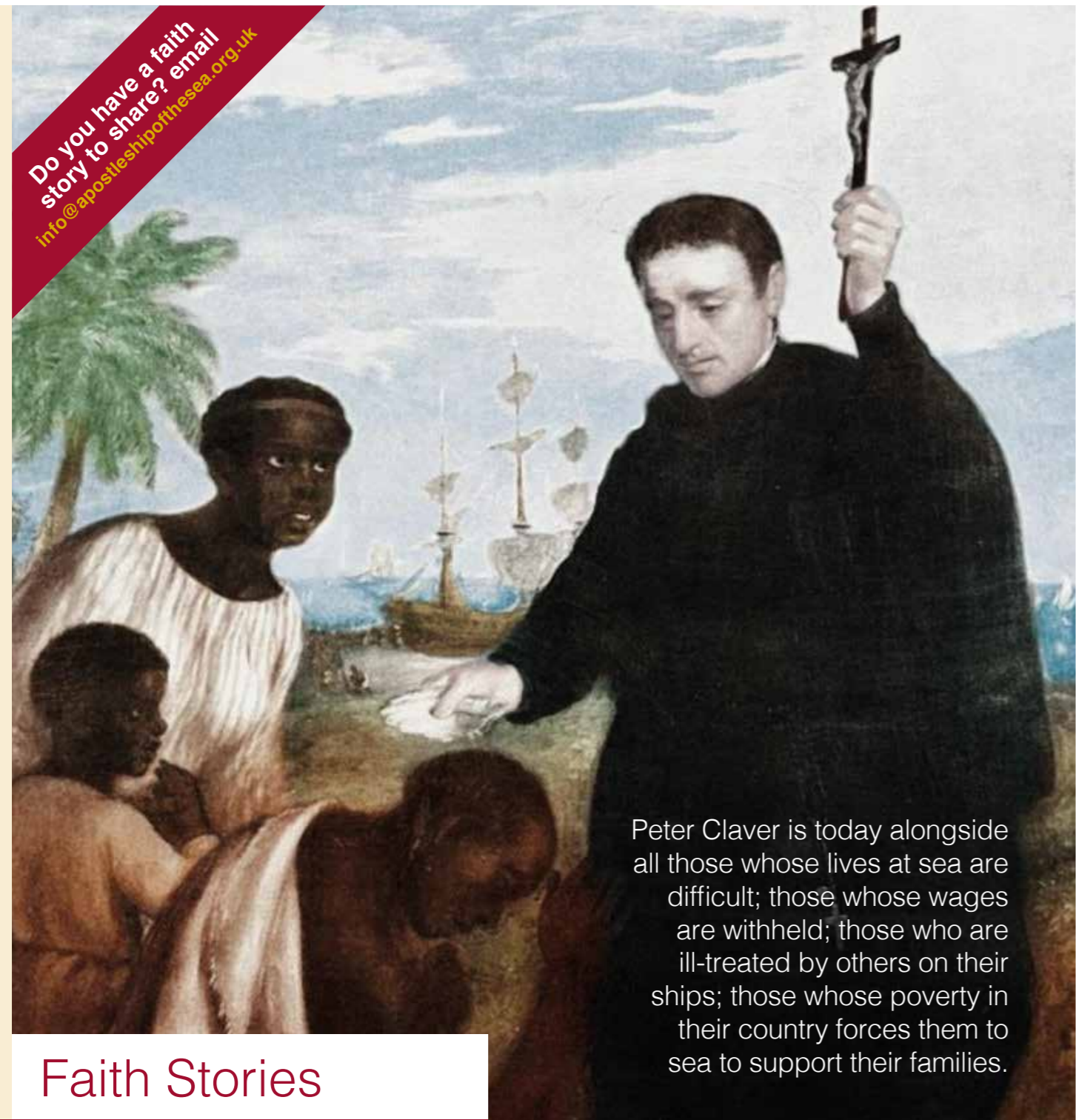
The Old Lighthouse at Point King, Albany

Stella Maris contacts in Albany

Marilou Lomas, Director of Stella Maris seafarers' centre Albany, Australia
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The Port Chaplain is Fr. Chris Saminal from the Philippines.

He celebrates Mass and blessings onboard when requested by the captain.



Do you have a faith story to share? email info@apostleshipofthesea.org.uk

Peter Claver is today alongside all those whose lives at sea are difficult; those whose wages are withheld; those who are ill-treated by others on their ships; those whose poverty in their country forces them to sea to support their families.

Faith Stories

St Peter Claver was a Catholic Priest from Spain who has become the Patron Saint of Seafarers. St Peter Claver had a mission to those who were mistreated and abused. He gave his life to bring to them the light of the Gospel and the compassion of Christ. His mission is continued today in the work of Stella Maris, the Apostleship of the Sea.

Peter Claver was born in Catalonia, Spain in 1580. The son of a farmer, his mother died when he was thirteen. His father sent him to college in Barcelona. It was there that Peter decided to join the Jesuit Order, which at that time was a new movement in the Church. Peter's father was

reluctant to let him leave and join this new movement, but in the end he consented. During his formation Peter was sent to Majorca, where he was befriended by the college doorkeeper, Alphonsus Rodriguez. Alphonsus was a retired businessman who had joined the Jesuits when his wife had died. In conversations with Peter, Alphonsus suggested that the young man go to the West Indies to preach the Gospel. Fired up by Alphonsus, Peter offered himself for the work of mission. Peter Claver saw Spain for the last time in April 1610. He sailed for Cartagena, in what is now Colombia.

It was in this bustling port with its hot and humid weather that he spent most of his life. Situated near tropical swamps, the area was blighted by fever transported

by swamp insects. One of the chief reasons for Cartagena's importance was its major role in the transportation of slaves. Peter was to be God's instrument at a period when the inhuman trafficking in slaves was rapidly expanding. To provide cheap labour in the newly discovered Americas, various European countries were shipping thousands of Negro slaves from West Africa to the Americas. Slaves were sold in Cartagena for fifty times the price they were bought for in Africa. The voyage from Africa lasted two months, with a third of the slaves dying on the journey. When he made his final vows Peter added one of his own: to be for life the slave of the Negro slaves who arrived in their thousands in awful conditions on slave ships from Africa. Every day Peter began his day with a period of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. The young priest knew that he had to be rooted in regular prayer and the practice of self-denial, so that he could give himself entirely to those God had called him to serve. Sometimes Peter wouldn't wait for the slaves to be unloaded but would go by canoe out to the ships, boarding and quickly descending to the stinking holds in which the slaves had been imprisoned on their crossing. Peter brought them medicine, food and clothing, for 'We must speak to them with our hands, before we try to speak to them with our lips.'

Peter's first care when a ship arrived was for the sick. He personally dressed their sores, often throwing his cloak over the most revolting wounds to preserve their dignity. But most of all, Peter brought them to God, calling them to convert their hearts and lives to him. When he visited the slaves on their ships and in the sheds they were kept in before being moved on, he brought holy pictures to instruct them in Christ's death and the other truths of the faith. He explained to them that God loved them more than man abused them. Most of the slaves Peter met in his nearly forty years of mission were not Christian and had never met a Christian or heard the Good News. With great patience Peter taught them simple prayers. This was slow work, as it was something completely new to the slaves, who were often overwhelmed by the suffering they were immersed in. So unused were they to the Christian message and so burdened by their sufferings that at baptism each group of ten were given the same name – simply to help them remember it.

While Peter waited for slave ships to arrive he toured the town begging for food and comforts such as biscuits, brandy, tobacco and lemons for the slaves. The slave-traders despised Peter: his mission often inconvenienced their plans and his love and compassion showed up their treatment of the slaves for what it was.

After the slaves had been sold and moved on from the slave pens in the docks of Cartagena, Peter did all he could to keep contact with them to sustain their faith. Each Easter he would visit the plantations or mines that used the slaves to revive the faith he had planted in their hearts. Those who had been helped by Peter

were filled with joy when they saw him again. When not visiting slaves, Peter would often be found in the city square preaching to anyone who would listen. In his nearly forty years of mission Peter taught, baptized and nursed no fewer than 300,000 slaves.

One day he returned from his work, incredibly weak: God's call to his kingdom was getting louder. For the last four years of his life, paralysed, in constant pain and confined to bed, he was assigned one of the slaves, Manuel, to look after him. Manuel did not look after him well. Some days he didn't leave Peter food and whilst dressing him would sometimes push him. On one occasion Peter was heard saying about his treatment by Manuel, 'My sins deserve more punishment than this.' Peter died quietly, on the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, for whom he had a great love. Crowds attended the funeral to bid their farewell to Peter Claver. In 1888, Pope Leo XIII canonized him as someone who lived the Gospels in a heroic way.

Though Peter Claver is no longer with us in body, he is amongst the communion of saints in heaven continuing his work and interceding for all those who suffer. His intercession and inspiration are with all those who visit ships in the name of Christ and his Church through Stella Maris, the Apostleship of the Sea; those who try to speak to seafarers with their actions, with practical support, before they try to speak to them of Christ. Peter lives on in all those Port Chaplains and ship visitors who ask God to help them reach out to those in need of friendship and material support, and above all the gift of the sacraments and the gospel. The spirit of Peter manifests itself too in those generous individuals who give of their time, prayer and money to support Stella Maris in its care for seafarers.

Peter Claver is today alongside all those whose lives at sea are difficult; those whose wages are withheld; those who are ill-treated by others on their ships; those whose poverty in their country forces them to sea to support their families. St Peter Claver, pray for us.





Easter Prayer

O God, who on this Easter day, through your Son, have conquered death and unlocked for us the path to eternity, grant, we pray, that we who keep the solemnity of the Lord's Resurrection may, through the renewal brought by your Spirit, rise up in the light of life. Amen



**Apostleship
of the Sea**

Supporting Seafarers Worldwide