



MAY  
2022

# Stella Maris

SUPPORTING SEAFARERS AND FISHERS AROUND THE WORLD

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# Stella Maris 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 332 ports with 227 port chaplains around the world. We also run 53 seafarers' centres all over the world.

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

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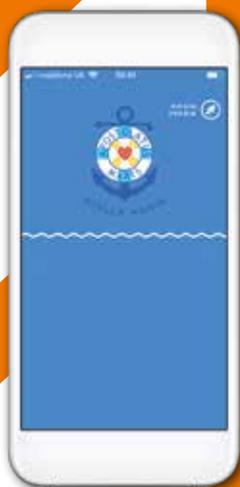
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Stella Maris  
provides seafarers  
with practical  
support, information  
and a listening ear

# RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL

In the 1870s, with the construction of the Doca da Alfândega, the first projects for the development of the Port of Rio de Janeiro emerged. But the inauguration of Port Rio de Janeiro did not take place until 20th July 1910. The Port of Rio de Janeiro is located on the west coast of the Guanabara Bay, with an almost seven thousand meters long pier and thirty-one berths. Port Rio de Janeiro is also the third busiest port in terms of cargo volume, and it is a centre for cruise vessels.

In 2020, the Port Rio de Janeiro loaded and uploaded over eight million cargos including thousands of tons of wheat, dry bulk and paper goods, and millions of tons of iron, steel and liquid bulk cargo, and also thousands of vehicles. In the same year, when many travel restrictions were imposed in port cities because of COVID-19, over 220,000 passengers still passed through the Praça Mauá of Port Rio de Janeiro on different cruise vessels. After many changes and developments, the port is now managed by Companhia Docas de Rio de Janeiro.

Stella Maris – Rio de Janeiro, founded in May of 1998 by Missionaries of Saint Charles – Scalabrinians, is located next to dock 18, inside Port Rio de Janeiro. Today it has an active presence in Port Rio de Janeiro, with its chaplains, staff and volunteers. Every day we organise our ship visits, bringing magazines, bibles, rosaries and information to seafarers,

and especially our friendship and kindness to them. Besides that, we often offer our services onboard like: masses, blessing, counselling, ecumenical celebrations and spiritual care. Moreover, we invite all seafarers to our centre, which has telephones, computers, free wifi, a library, a games room, recreations and documents. We also arrange hospital visits to sick seafarers.

From 2009 to 2010, we extended our services to seafarers in port Itaguaí, which is located in the municipality of Itaguaí on the north coast of Sepetiba, a distance of

ninety kilometres from Rio de Janeiro city.

Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, we have never stopped our services to seafarers; we also help in small ways by (for instance) buying fruit, fast food and personal items.

We do the small things with great love and care for them. Stella Maris is always willing to attend to the needs of all seafarers, respecting their races, cultures and religions; and are happy to be a part of their family whenever they arrive in Port Rio de Janeiro.



## Stella Maris Rio de Janeiro Center

Rodrigues Alves Street – inside Port Gate – Next to Dock 18

**Mailing Address:** Rua Álvaro Ramos 385, Botafogo, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil, Zip code: 22280-110

**Service Hours:** Mondays to Fridays: 08:00 – 21:00  
Saturday and Sundays: by request

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# Sunday at Sea with Fr Colum Kelly

**THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER**  
SUNDAY 1ST MAY

## GOSPEL JOHN 21:1-14

Jesus showed himself again to the disciples. It was by the Sea of Tiberias, and it happened like this: Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee and two more of his disciples were together. Simon Peter said, 'I'm going fishing.' They replied, 'We'll come with you.' They went out and got into the boat but caught nothing that night.

It was light by now and there stood Jesus on the shore, though the disciples did not realise that it was Jesus. Jesus called out, 'Have you caught anything, friends?' And when they answered, 'No,' he said, 'Throw the net out to starboard and you'll find something.' So they dropped the net, and there were so many fish that they could not haul it in. The disciple Jesus loved said to Peter, 'It is the Lord.' At these words 'It is the Lord', Simon Peter, who had practically nothing on, wrapped his cloak round him and jumped into the water. The other disciples came on in the boat, towing the net and the fish; they were only about a hundred yards from land.

As soon as they came ashore they saw that there was some bread there, and a charcoal fire with fish cooking on it. Jesus said, 'Bring some of the fish you have just caught.' Simon Peter went aboard and dragged the net to the shore, full of big fish, one hundred and fifty-three of them; and in spite of there being so many the net was not broken. Jesus said to them, 'Come and have breakfast.' None of the disciples was bold enough to ask, 'Who are you?'; they knew quite well it was the Lord. Jesus then stepped forward, took the bread and gave it to them, and the same with the fish. This was the third time that Jesus showed himself to the disciples after rising from the dead.

## THE GOSPEL AND YOU

My name is Chris and I work at a large port as chaplain to seafarers. I understand their world and have been part of this great mission of the church for some years. My work is very much based on the teachings and example of the Lord and I get great strength from hearing the word of the Lord especially when things are difficult for seafarers and I struggle to help. Sr Joan is an important inspiration to me.

The Gospel I heard at Mass today is an account of one of Jesus's appearances to his disciples after his resurrection. Some of the disciples find it easier to believe than others, a bit like me, for being a chaplain does not make belief any easier. I find this story one of the most dramatic in all the gospels. There is a similar account in the earlier gospels with the same cast. Jesus, the disciples, a huge catch of fish, so great the nets break.. not so this time: we are told the nets did not break.

What is so different this time?

Yes, we have the same cast, but resurrection has happened and things will never be the same again. Nets, once broken, are now mended; eyes and ears closed to new possibilities are now open. That is what changed in the life of the disciples as they gradually come to understand Jesus in a new way.

As I am about to board my next ship with these thoughts ringing in my head I reflect that this is one of my easy ships. It is a regular in the port and a good ship. The crew are treated well and seem a happy bunch. Just as Jesus shared food with his disciples by the lakeside I will probably be invited to have something to eat with my friends, and very likely fish. We will chat about their lives and families back home and even share some thoughts on the gospel of this week. So I pray.

"May the Lord be in my heart and on my lips that I may worthily proclaim his holy Word."

## FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER SUNDAY 8TH MAY

### GOSPEL 10:27-30

Jesus said:

'The sheep that belong to me listen to my voice;  
I know them and they follow me.

I give them eternal life;

they will never be lost

and no one will ever steal them from me.

The Father who gave them to me is greater  
than anyone,

and no one can steal from the Father.

The Father and I are one.'

### THE GOSPEL AND YOU

Hello, Chris here again. I mentioned to you last week how much I was looking forward to visiting a favourite ship, not so today for I know this one is not going to be easy.

Today, Good Shepherd Sunday, we know we are cared for and loved by God but what is asked in return is that we care for and guide those the Lord has entrusted to our care.

And I do not only mean our immediate family but anyone who is in need.

The Good Shepherd knows each of us personally. To God we are more than a name, we are the focus of his tenderness and love. Our relationship with Jesus is a deeply personal one, but it is a force in our life that we are invited to share with others. What a beautiful thing that God knows us by our precious name. By knowing our name he responds to our most profound yearnings, our deepest needs.

We are asked to listen to his voice.

We are surrounded by many voices. There's rarely a moment within our days that someone or something isn't calling out to us demanding our attention.

Some voices promise us a wonderful life if we do this or buy that. Other voices call us towards hatred, bitterness and anger, while others call us towards love and forgiveness.

Which is the voice of God? The voice of God is recognised in what calls us to go beyond what we consider to be our limits. It calls us to holiness, to humility, to complete selflessness in the service of others. That is the voice of the Good Shepherd.

Let me tell you a little about the ship I am about to board. It arrived with us three weeks ago and soon it was obvious there was a major problem. The ship has very little food on board, most of it provided by Stella Maris volunteers. The crew have not been paid for six months. You can understand their anger and their fears. Yet I have to believe that the gospel of today is good news even for them in their awful plight.





## FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER SUNDAY 15TH MAY

### GOSPEL JOHN 13:31-35

When Judas had gone Jesus said:  
'Now has the Son of Man been glorified,  
and in him God has been glorified.  
If God has been glorified in him,  
God will in turn glorify him in himself,  
and will glorify him very soon.  
My little children,  
I shall not be with you much longer.  
I give you a new commandment:  
love one another;  
just as I have loved you,  
you also must love one another.  
By this love you have for one another,  
everyone will know that you are my disciples.'

**“But the power to do this is based on the new image of humanity given us by Christ, and because we have his living presence with us, to help us love others in his way.”**

### THE GOSPEL AND YOU

I have been to Mass this morning and brought four seafarers with me. They were delighted to be able to attend Mass. On the way back to the ship we talked about the Gospel today. Ronald commented that the Gospel was very short and he liked that. He was right; it is the shortest of all the Gospels in the year, merely five verses, but what an impact they have.

It takes us to the heart of the Christian message: God's love for us is total and unconditional, and our love of others must be the same. Just like God's love for us, it will be costly — that is the nature of real discipleship; it never comes easy.

The really hard question is whether such love is possible. While giving a hesitant yes to this as a possibility, it is clear that most of us, most of the time clearly fail to live this new commandment fully. We can only love in this way by cooperating very generously with the grace of God. But the power to do this is based on the new image of humanity given us by Christ, and because we have his living presence with us, to help us love others in his way.

It is a very demanding ideal to love our neighbour as ourselves or even to love our neighbour in any way at all.

Love asks the best from us, and brings out the best in us. Being loved gives us a surprising energy and courage. Love makes us fruitful, productive, strong and courageous. I read somewhere that love is the flame that warms our soul, energises our spirit and supplies passion to our lives. It's our connection to God and to one another.

We talked about how difficult the commandment to love is onboard with a crew of different temperaments and backgrounds. Joey said that it was easier to love each other when we are under pressure like when we are all working together to save the ship in a fierce storm.

Now there's a thought.

## SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER SUNDAY 22ND MAY

### GOSPEL JOHN 14:23-29

Jesus said to his disciples:  
 'If anyone loves me he will keep my word,  
 and my Father will love him,  
 and we shall come to him  
 and make our home with him.  
 Those who do not love me do not keep my words.  
 And my word is not my own:  
 it is the word of the one who sent me.  
 I have said these things to you while still with you;  
 but the Advocate, the Holy Spirit,  
 whom the Father will send in my name,  
 will teach you everything  
 and remind you of all I have said to you.  
 Peace I bequeath to you,  
 my own peace I give you,  
 a peace the world cannot give, this is my gift to you.  
 Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid.  
 You heard me say:  
 I am going away, and shall return.  
 If you loved me you would have been glad to know  
 that I am going to the Father,  
 for the Father is greater than I.  
 I have told you this now before it happens,  
 so that when it does happen you may believe.'

**“We never really say  
 goodbye to the Son of  
 God, for he stays always  
 with us.”**



### THE GOSPEL AND YOU

One of the difficult situations we meet as chaplains is helping seafarers who have just left home and family to be away from loved ones for up to twelve months. Endings never come easy because so much is uncertain in a future without a loved one who has to go on a new road or make a different voyage. For seafarers who have spent a couple of months at home, such departing must bring much heartache. The long months ahead in dangerous waters are unpredictable.

What can we say? There's maybe some help in today's Gospel.

In our reading we find a very sad group of disciples as they realise their time with Jesus is coming to an end.

He promises them a gift. "I am leaving you with a gift — peace of mind and heart." What a beautiful promise, what a special gift. Peace is not the absence of war.

It is the presence of something real and tangible. It is something I can experience, a gift we have received.

A positive way of coping with the many goodbyes in life is to see ourselves as a pilgrim people, on the move. We need faithful friends who travel with us on this journey. Jesus alerts his disciples that he will soon be leaving them, and leaving this earth, "I am going away, but I shall return." We never really say goodbye to the Son of God, for he stays always with us.

If only we could take these words and promises of Jesus into our hearts but in reality we do feel lonely and frightened sometimes and in those times it is the absence of God that we feel rather than his presence. There can be few lonelier places than being on watch on a ship's bridge at night. Darkness all around and even the occasional glimmer of light in the distance can be a cause for fear as much as a sign of hope.



**THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD**  
SUNDAY 29TH MAY

**GOSPEL: LUKE 24:46-53**

Jesus said to his disciples: 'You see how it is written that the Christ would suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that, in his name, repentance for the forgiveness of sins would be preached to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses to this.

'And now I am sending down to you what the Father has promised. Stay in the city then, until you are clothed with the power from on high.' Then he took them out as far as the outskirts of Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them. Now as he blessed them, he withdrew from them and was carried up to heaven. They worshipped him and then went back to Jerusalem full of joy; and they were continually in the Temple praising God.

**THE GOSPEL AND YOU**

As port chaplains, our mission is twofold. We help the seafarers in whatever way we can to make their stay in port a comfortable one. We listen to their stories and maybe even get them what is their due in case of unpaid wages or other forms of injustice. Also, as disciples of Christ, we have a duty to

“go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature”

Though the Gospel for today tells us Jesus ascended into heaven it makes clear that he is still with us in a special way

Jesus didn't simply dissolve into thin air. On Ascension day, it is easy to think that he removed himself into a new form of divine life. But no, it is exactly the opposite. In being with God, Jesus is here with us in a new and very specific way. Only by his physical separation from our world can his spiritual union be complete with all the world for all time. Jesus one day left the world in order to be available to everyone through all time. He had to dissolve the bonds he had made with his friends, in order to be available for everybody. In Jesus, the future has already begun.

So how is the Risen Lord with us? The New Testament and Church Tradition offer a rich array of “presences.” Christ is present in my neighbour who is in need. He is present in Word and sacrament whenever the disciples gather in the presence of the Holy Spirit. Perhaps we do not always feel this presence, but the words of Jesus are a guarantee that no matter what is going on in my life or my ship or my church, he is still with us.

The richness of this feast can be lost as it comes between the great dramas of Easter and Pentecost, yet its message is comforting. As I wander this port or climb the next gangway the Spirit of God is with me in all the difficulties I may have to face.

*Come Holy Spirit. Come.*

# How to Love Your Neighbour

by Fr Stephen Wang



**“Love thy neighbour” is a radical call to love without conditions, without calculation, without expecting any reward. It’s tough. And sometimes we don’t like this teaching. We are called to a sacrificial love that seems to go beyond the normal call of duty and even beyond what seems reasonable.**

You can have lots of theories about love, but what does it actually mean in practice? St Martin of Tours was a young soldier in the fourth century. He was riding his horse in the coldest part of the winter when he met a beggar sitting at the side of the road by the city gate. He had nothing to give him, but in a moment of inspiration he drew his sword, cut his cloak in half, and gave one half to the beggar.

That night, St Martin had a dream. In the dream, Jesus was wearing the half of the cloak that Martin had given away. Jesus said to the angels, “See how Martin has clothed me with his robe.” It’s a true story, and a beautiful symbol of the love of neighbour that all Christians are called to.

Jesus said to his followers: “You must love your neighbour as yourself.” Then he went further and said, “Love one another, as I have loved you”. And he went even further and said, “Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.”

It’s a radical call to love without conditions, without calculation, without expecting any reward. It’s tough! And let’s admit that sometimes we do not like this teaching. We are called to a sacrificial love that seems to go beyond the normal call of duty and even beyond what seems reasonable.

But it doesn’t mean we become everyone’s doormat. Sometimes we need to stand up for ourselves, to stand up for others, and to stand up for justice. And it doesn’t mean that we are without joy. So many of the encounters that Jesus has with others are filled with joy. There is a lovely phrase. It goes like this: “Life grows by being given away.” We receive more, in unexpected ways, when we give more.

Mother Teresa was a nun in India, teaching in a girls’ school, doing good work. But one day she felt an inner calling, to leave the monastery and the school, to go out into the slums of Calcutta, and to serve the poorest of the poor. She wanted to go to those who had nothing, to share their life, and to bring the light of Christ into the darkness of the slums.

She brought the sick and dying into her homes; she educated the abandoned children she met and gave them food and hope; she gathered nuns around her who would

do this work in some of the poorest places in the world.

Mother Teresa went beyond the walls of her settled life to seek out her neighbour in the poorest of the poor. She is such a powerful symbol of Christian joy and selfless love. We may not choose the same path as her, but we can have the same desire to love others, in the ordinary circumstances of our own lives. She was simply following the example of Jesus.

At the Last Supper, Jesus took off his outer garments and bent down to wash the feet of his disciples. It’s a symbol of humble service, as the Son of God goes on his knees before us. But it’s also a symbol of great tenderness and compassion, the selfless love of a friend for his friends, of a brother for his brothers.

The story of the Good Samaritan is probably the greatest illustration of what it means to love one’s neighbour. A man has been stripped and beaten and abandoned by robbers. A Samaritan traveller is the only one who is willing to cross the road and help him. He is moved with compassion; binds up his wounds; and cares for him at the nearest place of lodging.

The Good Samaritan goes the extra mile. His love is kind, compassionate, generous, practical, selfless. It’s a sacrificial love, but it is filled with tenderness and affection.

This is the kind of love we are called to have for others. For those we are close to, who are sometimes the hardest to love: family, neighbours, colleagues at work. For those we see each day but never acknowledge. For the unexpected visitor, the stranger, the foreigner. And especially for the poor, the sick, the vulnerable, the lonely, the elderly, the dying.

This is what it means to love your neighbour. This is what it means to be a Christian.

## Questions for reflection

Who is the most loving person you have known personally and why?

Who is the greatest example of human goodness you have heard or learnt about? What makes them so special?

What do you think is the purpose of life?

# St Joseph & How Christians Can Deal With Stress



➤ If you're feeling stressed, look to the example of St Joseph, a great example of how to deal with responsibility and a multitude of tasks.

Joseph was a carpenter from Nazareth in Galilee (Mt 13:55). He was not wealthy, although he descended from King David (Mt 1:1-16; see Saint 1.24). Joseph loved Mary so much that he was prepared to silently separate from her when he heard she was pregnant without his involvement (Mt 1:19). Another in his place might have denounced her, with the result of her being stoned as an adulteress. After Joseph had thus demonstrated his compassionate character, he had a dream while he was sleeping. An angel told him not to be afraid to take Mary as his wife, and to accept her child as his own, because the child came from God and not from a man (Mt 1:20-21). Thus Joseph became Jesus's foster father. He must have died young, for he is not mentioned in Jesus's later life.

## # HE IS THE BOSS

Joseph had a lot on his plate. And so do you! 'I want so much in my life; there is always more work than I can finish!' 'I am worried about the outcome of...' 'I am afraid that something will happen to...' Do such thoughts sound familiar? Anxiety and stress are part of the life of most people. But there is no need for this at all! Ultimately, God is in charge, not you. You can only do so much.

Allegedly it was St Ignatius who said that we have to work as if everything depends on us, but to pray as if everything depends on God. That summarises perfectly the attitude that we should have as Christians. It is very healthy to lay the ultimate responsibility for the outcome of your work in the hands of God. He is the Boss! Yes, he depends on you to apply your mind, your heart and your hands to your tasks, and to do so with all you can give. However, he does not ask more from you than that.

## # NO STRESS

St Joseph is a great example of how to deal with responsibility and a multitude of tasks. Did you notice what he did in probably the most stressful moment of his life, when his loved and trusted bride to be seemed to have betrayed him and all his world was crumbling down? He went to sleep, trusting God! Precisely by going to sleep he made it possible for God to act (in his case through a dream). Jesus spoke of a farmer casting seeds: the seed sprouts and grows while he sleeps (Mk 4:26-29). Often, our stress is making it more difficult for God to help us, as we stand in the way and do not listen!

## # STEPS AWAY FROM STRESS

God knows you need your rest, and just before going to sleep you may entrust everything you worry about into his hands. But what if you cannot sleep because you are too stressed? Here are a few tips.

- First, pray and communicate. Tell God about your worries, asking for his help. Speak to someone like a friend and write down all your worries and tasks.
- Second, prioritise: order the list in order of importance, so that you can get at least the essential things done.
- Third, ask help from others and learn to say 'no': you can only do so much by yourself.
- Fourth, go to sleep. The next day you can take a brief moment of prayer for God's help and review your priorities. Then get started, beginning with what is most important.
- Fifth, work hard, but leave the rest in God's hands. If you make your relationship with him your top priority, you will find that eventually you have time for all the things that really matter. Resolve to leave the outcome in his hands. And ask St Joseph to pray for you. Can you believe that this will change your life?

*O God, Joseph knew how stressful I sometimes let my life become. Help me leave all my worries in your hands and concentrate on the essential alone. St Joseph, pray for us!*

**'I have great love for St Joseph, because he is a man of silence and strength. On my table I have an image of St Joseph sleeping. Even when he is asleep, he is taking care of the Church! Yes! We know that he can do that. So when I have a problem, a difficulty, I write a little note and I put it underneath St Joseph, so that he can dream about it! In other words I tell him: pray for this problem!... Like St Joseph, once we have heard God's voice, we must rise from our slumber; we must get up and act (Rom 13:11)... Faith does not remove us from the world, but draws us more deeply into it. This is very important! We have to be deeply engaged with the world, but with the power of prayer. Each of us, in fact, has a special role in preparing for the coming of God's kingdom in our world.'**

**[Pope Francis, Speech to families in Manila, 16 January 2015]**



## ASCENSION PRAYER

LORD Jesus Christ, in whose Ascension we rejoice: who have borne our human nature to your Father's right hand; hear our prayer, we ask you, that we who here on earth fight under your banner as our King, may in the strength of your Holy Spirit come to your kingdom in heaven, where you, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, reign in eternal glory. Amen.



STELLA MARIS

Stella Maris is the largest ship-visiting network in the world. We improve the lives of seafarers and fishers through our network of local chaplains and seafarer centres, expert information, advocacy, and spiritual support.



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