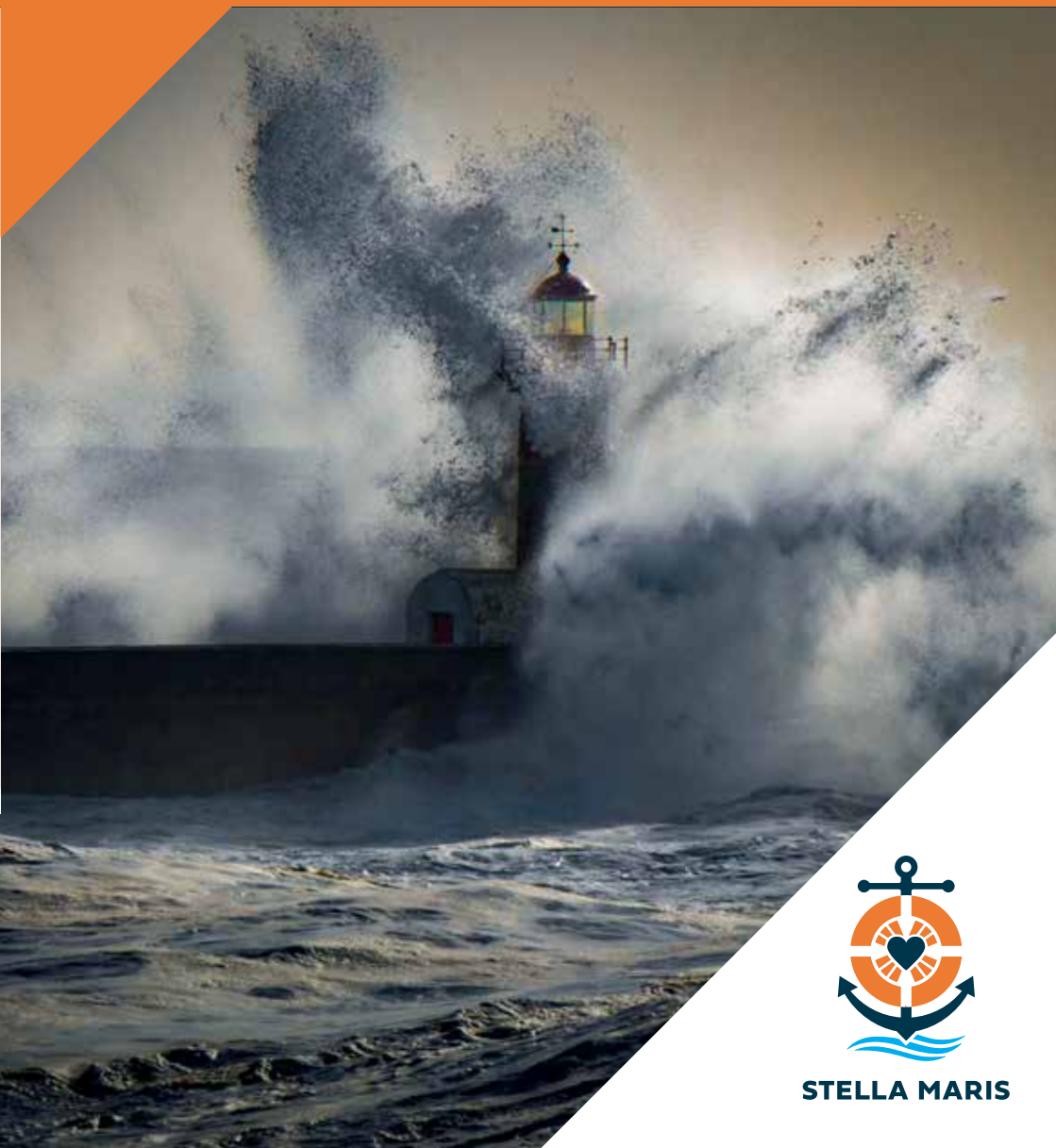


> Supporting seafarers and fishers worldwide

Serving through the storm **Annual review 2021**



STELLA MARIS

> View from the bridge



It's stormy out there. 2021 was a year of turmoil, challenge and poor mental health for seafarers and fishers. Covid-19 restrictions continued around the world, dramatically impacting the oceans' frontline workers and the cruise ship industry, and adding a layer of complexity to every port visit.

But through it all, Stella Maris was a steadfast support. Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of our supporters and the amazing commitment of our volunteers, seafarers and fishers were not alone. They had a friend in port and at the end of the phone. Stella Maris served through the storm.

In this report, you'll see how we supported seafarers in five key ways:

- 1 The friend when one was needed.** Day in, day out, we checked in with seafarers and responded to their needs. The impact of this kindness can never be under-estimated.
- 2 Support in a crisis.** Our Centenary Emergency Fund went to work to ensure no seafarer faced a crisis alone. Seafarers and their families were supported through bereavement, medical emergencies or ship abandonment.
- 3 Advocating for change.** We continued to champion the rights of seafarers around the world, raising the profile of their work and advocating for better welfare.

4 Faith on board. Most seafarers we met have a Christian faith background, and many are Catholic. We provided faith resources, prayer and live-streamed Masses for them.

5 Extending our reach. Not only did Stella Maris expand into new countries in 2021, we also diversified our support by providing emergency aid to seafaring families hit by large-scale catastrophes.

So much has been achieved – and I am grateful to all those who have been with us in this ministry.

Looking forward, 2022 will not be plain sailing. The war in Ukraine affects the seafaring community: one in seven seafarers is either Ukrainian or Russian. Seafarers and fishers globally will face the impact of the global economic downturn. Covid-19 continues to affect seafarers' life, work and travel at the start/end of contracts. And mental health at sea is a growing concern.

But with you on board, we are ready for what lies over the horizon. Thank you.

Martin Foley, CEO, Stella Maris UK

> Disembarking: a look back at 2021

Stella Maris: The world's largest ship visiting network

Based in **328** ports in **54** countries

1,171 seafarers in UK helped to contact family members via internet or phone

113,982 seafarers and fishers helped in the UK

67 seafarers and families supported by our Centenary Emergency Fund

1,000+ chaplains and volunteers

1,889 gifts of essential items provided to seafarers visiting the UK

53% increase in ship visits in UK compared to 2020

5,181 ship visits around the UK

Many of the world's **1.5** million commercial seafarers helped globally

How did we adapt our services to support seafarers during the pandemic?



Visits to gangways instead of on board



Masses and other faith support live-streamed or emailed on board



Supplies delivered via a bucket/bag lowered over the side of the vessel



Increased use of social media and technology to stay in touch with seafarers



Prayers for seafarers transmitted by radio



Longer-term support given to crews stuck in ports due to travel restrictions



Throughout 2021, right around the world, our chaplains and ship visitors provided a friendly face, a listening ear, and words of comfort. Often, it was the small acts of kindness that made the greatest difference...

In Spring, many supporters submitted prayers in response to our Lent Appeal. These were forwarded to the Vatican for inclusion in a special Stella Maris Mass there. Similarly, many of you kindly wrote Christmas cards to seafarers with messages of thanks. These were distributed to seafarers in ports around the UK over the Christmas period. Thank you for supporting seafarers in these ways.

To mark World Mental Health Day in October, we distributed a booklet packed with tips to help seafarers protect their mental health. It included advice on diet, physical health and socialising with other crew members on board.

When our ship visitor in the Tees asked a crew if they needed anything, the response was clear: "Clothes please!" So our volunteer, Billy, promptly went to buy t-shirts, jeans, socks, jumpers and overalls. The crew, who'd been on board for nine months, were delighted. In the first quarter of 2021 alone, our Tees team provided 100 warm jackets to seafarers.

The Ever Given container ship hit the headlines in 2021 when it became stuck in the Suez Canal – but our chaplain's first thought, as it arrived in Felixstowe afterwards, was for the crew. While large crowds lined the beach to spot the infamous vessel, our chaplain Julian Wong went on board to deliver support, chocolates and a card. The seafarers were touched by his kindness, and thanked him for the visit.

In Cape Town, South Africa, our chaplain Fr Rico Talisic delivered everything from guitar strings and Bibles to medicine and mobile phone cards, to fishers unable to leave their vessels. Hand sanitisers and face masks were also among the most requested items he provided.

Vital mental health support With limited shore leave, long contracts, fear of catching Covid-19 and money worries, seafarers' stress and anxiety levels increased in 2021. Our support was vital. More industry partners reached out to us when seafarers were in distress – and there was a growing recognition that faith made a difference in hard times. The value of face-to-face interactions could not be forgotten or replaced.

100 hats knitted for seafarers by two supporters, 100-year-old Jennie McRae and her daughter Denise Nicholas, from Stonehaven, Scotland – were distributed by our chaplain and volunteers in Aberdeen port and helped to keep 100 seafarers warm. Thank you!

A crew abandoned. And a chaplain who wouldn't give up



In the shadow of the pandemic, we encountered seafarers in crisis. But thanks to the Stella Maris Centenary Emergency Fund, they were not alone.

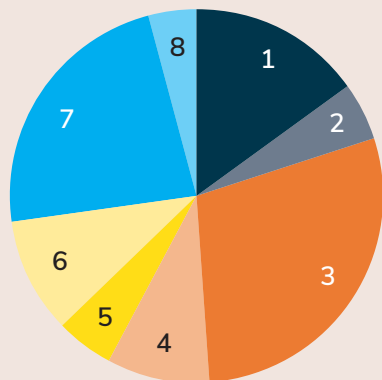
Right around the world, Stella Maris chaplains and ship visitors reported one common message in 2021: seafarers are struggling.

On rain-drenched gangways, we heard heart-breaking stories of loneliness. On vessels stranded for months, we befriended desperate men and women. We supported crews grieving lost colleagues, and we

stood with seafaring families in their worst moments.

When the usual systems of support broke down, seafarers were often totally alone. Time and again, Stella Maris was a lifeline when all else failed.

Thanks to our Centenary Emergency Fund – kindly supported by our partners in the maritime industry – we provided intensive, bespoke care to 67 seafarers and their families in urgent need in 2021. Between them, they received £50,000 in emergency support across a variety of issues:



1. Abandonment	15%
2. Bereavement	5%
3. Covid-19 support	29%
4. Family support	9%
5. Medical	5%
6. Repatriation	10%
7. Support to victims of abuse	23%
8. Unemployment	4%

In March, 16 seafarers were abandoned in Mombasa, Kenya – and Stella Maris became a lifeline for them.

The vessel's owners were uncontactable. The crew of Indonesians, Koreans and Vietnamese had run out of food. And the men on board were owed a full year's wages. They couldn't leave the ship as it would mean relinquishing their claim on unpaid wages – plus, they had no money to get home.

Hungry, desperate and worried about their families struggling with the loss of income, the men had nowhere to turn.

That's when our chaplain Margaret Masibo stepped in. Margaret provided groceries, oil, meat and rice. She drew on our Centenary Emergency Fund to support the crew while the case went through the Kenyan legal system. And she provided vital pastoral care. In early 2022, the courts ordered the vessel to be sold with the proceeds funding the repatriation of the remaining crew.

“The seafarers on board were extremely appreciative and thankful for the support we provided.”



Margaret Masibo, Stella Maris Kenya National Director

This Fund allows us to extend our support beyond practical and pastoral care, to help seafarers in desperate circumstances. Following a death, in cases of abandonment, during medical emergencies, we act fast and effectively to offer critical support.

> A story of modern slavery



When a fisherman got in touch with our chaplain Deacon Nick O'Neill (pictured), we uncovered a shocking catalogue of abuse. Forced to work 20-hour shifts, the crew had been allowed just four hours a day to eat, sleep, shower and contact their family. They had been denied adequate drinking water and one man had even been refused medical attention following an injury. Verbal, physical, emotional and racial abuse had been constant.

Nick immediately contacted the police and port authorities. We found emergency shelter for the men, provided them with food and clothes, and arranged spiritual support and legal representation.



> Advocating for change

3

Piracy, 'key worker' status and seafarer rights were all under the spotlight in 2021, as Stella Maris raised the profile of seafarer welfare and advocated for change.

In February, we joined growing calls for seafarers to be given 'key worker' status. As the frontline workers of the maritime industry, shifting 90% of global trade, we believe seafarers should have priority access to Covid-19 vaccines and better transport connectivity to facilitate crew changes.

We were one of more than 850 companies and organisations that signed the Neptune Declaration on Seafarer Wellbeing and Crew Change.

In May, Stella Maris added its weight behind demands to end piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. This dangerous stretch of water, off Africa's west coast, accounted for nearly half of all piracy incidents in the first three months of 2021.



We were one of the first charities to sign the declaration, which called on governments and enforcement agencies to find long-term solutions to the problem. We believe seafarers should not have to face the risk of attacks by pirates while doing their jobs moving the world's trade.

In July, the Vatican urged governments and ship owners to ensure seafarers' human rights are respected.

Cardinal Peter Turkson (pictured above), then head of the Vatican's Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, appealed: "We would like to invite the maritime industry to act as one by facilitating crew changes and vaccinations and strengthening the implementation of international standards to enhance and protect the human and working rights of the People of the Sea."

Areas of operation



Philippines: Providing food and courses
1,655 seafarers across 12 cities in the Philippines had been unable to work for 18 months due to the pandemic, and risked falling into acute poverty. We gave them food vouchers, wellbeing and skills refresher courses to help them return to work, with support from the Seafarers International Relief Fund.



Mauritius: Counselling a distraught crew
Following the alleged murder of a ship's captain, we provided vital support to crew on board a ship. The captain was found dead in his cabin, while the vessel was in the Indian Ocean. On the ship's arrival in Mauritius, our chaplain Fr Jacques-Henri David, went on board to hold a prayer service and to offer a listening ear and support to the traumatised crew.



Germany: Assisting stranded seafarers
In Germany Stella Maris, together with local charities, supported 129 seafarers from Kiribati and Tuvalu who were stranded in Hamburg for months due to Covid-19 restrictions. Our chaplain Monica Doring and her team visited regularly, supplied essential items, provided pastoral support, and helped the seafarers pass the time with activities such as bicycle rides. They were eventually repatriated via Fiji.



India: Care in the pandemic
Our partners in Cochin, India, supported the seafaring community through a devastating wave of Covid-19. With support from the Seafarers' International Relief Fund, we provided an oxygen generator to the local hospital, and food parcels to help 5,500 seafarers, fishers, and their families who were affected. We also provided a counselling service to support the mental wellbeing of 3,943 members of the local community.



UK: Supporting a dying fisher
A Filipino was seriously unwell when we met him on board a fishing boat. We immediately took him to hospital in Northern Ireland. Tragically, he was diagnosed with advanced terminal illness. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, his family were unable to visit. So we helped him say goodbye to them via video link from the hospice. When he died, we arranged his funeral and live-streamed it to his family back home.



Philippines: Helping typhoon hit families
Seafarers and their families in Bohol, Philippines were badly affected by Typhoon Odette (Rai). There was significant destruction followed by intermittent electricity, shortages of water and food, and increasing food prices. Three of our chaplains were working there: Fr John Mission, Fr Mark Diola, Fr Victor Bompat. We received a grant from The Seafarers Charity to buy and distribute sacks of rice to 2,000 extended families.



Brazil: Supporting stuck seafarers
Our chaplain in Santos, Brazil supported seafarers from Kiribati who were stuck in the city due to the pandemic, awaiting repatriation. Fr Samuel Torres and his team made them feel at home. They went to our seafarers centre every day. Fr Samuel provided free WiFi so they could contact their families, organised football matches, sightseeing, karaoke evenings and barbeques. He ensured their practical and pastoral needs were met.



Italy: Maintaining ship visiting
During 2021, despite the pandemic, our team in Genoa, Italy, visited 2,322 ships, serving 71,537 crew members. Seafarers were not allowed to disembark but our team were allowed to go on board ships. So they distributed 20,000 face masks, 3,000 gift packages, 2,000 bottles of sanitizer, 1,700 other essential items and 600 mobile phone SIM cards to crew members stuck on board.

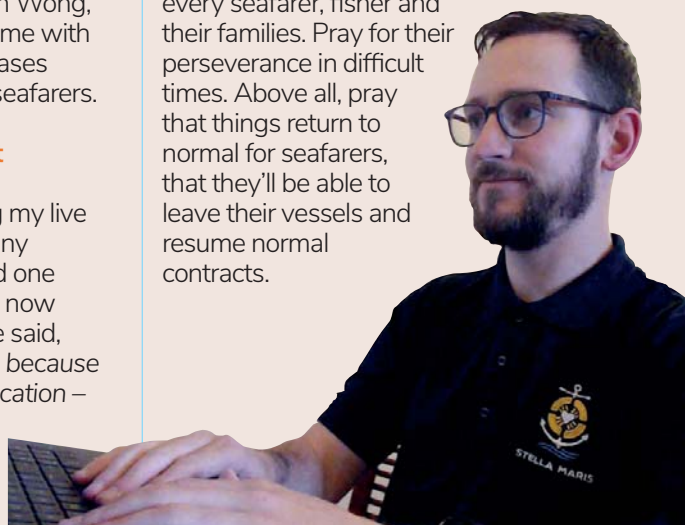
With churches mostly closed, seafarers often not allowed to disembark, and chaplains generally unable to board vessels, we had to adapt our faith support for seafarers in 2021. Our chaplain Steve Willows (pictured) takes us behind the scenes...

Q. How did Stella Maris support seafarers' faith in the pandemic?

A. Throughout 2021, we had to find new ways to support seafarers in their faith. I started doing a live 15-minute Gospel reading on Facebook every Wednesday. I even got seafarers and supporters to film themselves giving the readings. It was just a short reflection, and a decade of the rosary. We're still doing that now. In Southampton, our chaplains created videos of the Gospel and a reflection every Sunday. Another chaplain, Julian Wong, started a weekly radio programme with prayers for seafarers. In some cases Masses were livestreamed for seafarers.

Q. What response did you get from seafarers?

A. I got 10-20 people watching my live prayer sessions, and I know many watched them afterwards. I had one message from a seafarer who's now studying to become a priest. He said, "Hi Brother Steve, I am thankful because your group helped me to my vocation – that is, the priesthood. Let us pray for one another!"



Q. 2021 was a hard year to be a seafarer. Why was faith important?

A. Having a faith is really important for seafarers, particularly when things are tough. They need to feel part of something bigger, part of a global faith community. When we could not arrange Masses on board for most of 2021, or take seafarers to the local church, it was hard for them. I know seafarers relied much more on the faith resources we provided.

Q. What other creative ways did chaplains provide faith support to seafarers?

A. Deacon Doug Duncan, our chaplain in Aberdeen, parked his car on the quayside, and converted it into a sort of mobile confessional. Seafarers took turns to sit in the back, and a priest sitting in the driver's seat heard their confession. Everything was sterilised after each visit, so it was Covid-secure! For me, I started making rosaries for seafarers... I found it quite prayerful and meditative.

Q. How can supporters pray for seafarers?

A. Please ask for God's protection over every seafarer, fisher and their families. Pray for their perseverance in difficult times. Above all, pray that things return to normal for seafarers, that they'll be able to leave their vessels and resume normal contracts.



11 Masses on board in UK ports



1,941 Stella Maris faith magazines provided in UK ports



1,399 other faith materials including rosaries and prayer books provided in UK ports



In response to growing needs among seafarers, in 2021 we shone the light of Stella Maris into new places, among more of the worldwide seafaring community, to have an even greater impact.

Going into new regions and countries

Stella Maris in **Denmark** was re-established for the first time since the 1960s, with one chaplain and 25 volunteers covering seven ports. We also began work in **Northern Ireland** with two chaplains and eight volunteers covering four ports. Additionally, we started activity in **Chile**.

Building capacity among teams in Africa

Stella Maris UK worked with Stella Maris **Kenya** and **South Africa** to help develop their strategic and fundraising skills and thus increase their long-term impact. We have been helping each branch to register as an independent charity, raise funds locally, and implement systems to track vessels and provide good quality monitoring and evaluation.

Reaching the seafaring community during catastrophes

When fishers and their families in Chennai, **India**, were impacted by Covid-19 and serious flooding, we and our partners stepped in to help. This marked something of a new direction for us, as we diversified our work to include humanitarian aid for seafaring communities in response to large-scale catastrophes.

Supporting the UN Sustainable Development Goals During 2021, our work supported eight of the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):



Goal 1:
No poverty
We helped seafarers to claim their rightful wages.



Goal 2:
Zero hunger
We provided emergency food supplies to seafarers.



Goal 3:
Good health and well-being
We supported seafarers' physical and mental health.



Goal 6:
Clean water and sanitation
We supported seafarers with issues about conditions onboard.



Goal 8:
Decent work and economic growth
We supported seafarers to get fair working conditions.



Goal 9:
Industry, innovation and infrastructure
We supported seafarers' rights and campaigned for improvements.



Goal 14:
Life below water
We participated in international conferences on fishing industry issues.



Goal 17:
Partnerships
We worked with other organisations to support seafarers in need.

Celebrating and thanking our supporters

When **Margaret Chick** retired from a life at sea, she wanted to give something back. Ever since, Margaret, based at St John Fisher Church in Bolton, has been one of Stella Maris' most active parish volunteers. She holds fundraising

events in her parish, runs Sea Sunday in her church, collects money to buy Easter eggs for seafarers, and places collection tins in a number of local businesses.

Meanwhile, **Anne-Marie Stephen** was inspired to become a Stella Maris volunteer following the death of her seafarer husband, Erland. Today, Anne-Marie visits ships, runs fundraising collections, gives talks, recruits more

volunteers and organises Sea Sunday at St Mary's Cathedral, Edinburgh.

These are just two of our amazing volunteers and supporters – and we want to thank them, as well as every person who donates, prays, gives their time or has left a gift in their will to support seafarers. This ministry is only possible thanks to the kindness and compassion of thousands of supporters like you – thank you very much.

Thanks to our corporate supporters:

- Avenir LNG
- Baltic Exchange
- Britannia P&I Club
- Caley Timber & Building Supplies Ltd
- CSL Shipping
- GEFO
- HFW
- ILAMA
- Isle of Man Ship Registry
- J&J Denholm Ltd
- Nord
- Scotline
- SlimScotland
- Tunnock's Ltd
- WFW

Thanks to our trust and foundation supporters:

- ITF Seafarers Trust
- Merchant Navy Welfare Board
- Porticus
- Seafarers International Relief Fund
- The Seafarers' Charity
- TK Foundation
- Trinity House



Sea Sunday

Thanks very much to all our Parish Contacts who helped organise Sea Sunday Masses in July in churches all over the country from St Mary Immaculate in Falmouth, Cornwall to St Mary's in Inverness. We express our thanks to all the speakers who kindly read out appeals for our work at the end of Masses nationwide.



Sea Sunday: in 2022 will be held on 10th July. If you would like to help get your parish involved in Sea Sunday, please contact our office on 0207 901 1931 for more details.

> Funding this vital work

We're so grateful for the faithful generosity of Stella Maris supporters.

Alongside grants from trusts, and donations from companies in the maritime industry, our donated income from people like you supports our chaplains and provides everyday care for seafarers and fishers in ports around the world.

Registered with



FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR

Member Organisation

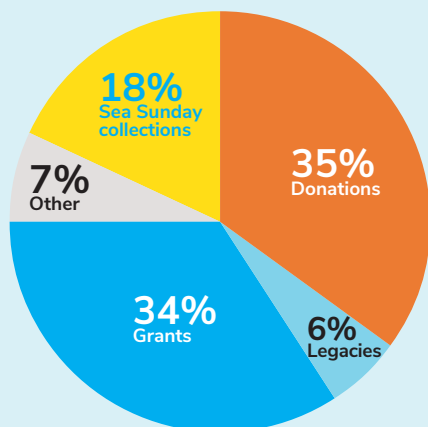


Chartered
Institute of
Fundraising

Income

Donations, legacy gifts and other income received in 2021 amounted to £2,130,169. If you made a gift during the year, thank you so much for your kindness and care.

We remember with deep gratitude all those who kindly left a donation in their will to Stella Maris. Leaving a legacy gift is a special way to support seafarers and fishers into the future. Members of the Stella Maris community who passed away in 2021, including those who left a gift in their will, were remembered in a special memorial Mass, held in London in November.



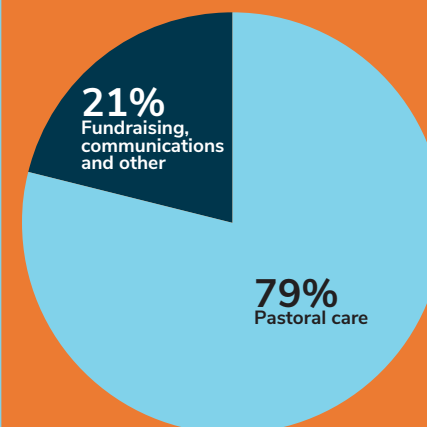
“You are the steadfast support that kept Stella Maris serving during the stormy waters of 2021. In a challenging year for the seafaring community, your dedication and generosity shone through. Thank you for being a friend to seafarers and fishers at a critical time.”

Martin Foley, CEO,
Stella Maris UK

Expenditure

We used our resources wisely and carefully to have the greatest impact. We supported 20 chaplains covering 92 ports around the UK.

Our team provided financial grants to seafarers in need across the world. We helped the work of Stella Maris in Denmark, Kenya, South Africa, Ukraine and several other countries. We also coordinated global emergency responses from our London office, to ensure seafarers in crisis got the help they needed.



> On the horizon: focus on Ukraine crisis



As we look forward in 2022, Covid-19 continues to affect the world. But, just as we are learning to live with the pandemic, a new crisis has emerged: war in Ukraine. The situation there is volatile and deadly – and we are supporting seafarers in the midst of the war.

Our chaplain Fr Alex Smerechynskyy (pictured above) and our ship visitor Rostik Inzhestoikov are based in the southern Ukrainian port of Odesa. They've stayed, despite the risks, to provide essential aid to seafarers and port workers. The pair have set up a soup kitchen on the dockside, and are getting urgent supplies to crews stranded in the Black Sea.

Fr Alex explained, "There is fear of war, but the Church does not flee." Rostik added, "It's not easy for seafarers to leave the ships, so we use mobile phones. We ask: are you alive, are you ok? It's important to talk in such hard times."

Around 4% of the world's seafarers – 105,000 men and women – are Ukrainian. A further 10% are Russian. We've met crews of Ukrainians and

Russians united in their heartbreak at what's happening in Ukraine.

Stella Maris is also helping Ukrainian seafarers and their families seeking refuge in Poland. Thanks to Fr Edward Pracz, our Poland National Director, a retreat centre and adjoining property is providing emergency accommodation to 54 people at a time, before they move onto somewhere permanent. Each family receives food, clothes, toiletries and other essentials from our team.

Meanwhile, our chaplains around the world are providing free phone cards and wifi to Ukrainian and Russian seafarers anxiously trying to contact loved ones at home. Please pray for this vital frontline work.

Also in 2022, we are continuing to increase our ship visiting in the UK and globally as the world continues to emerge from the pandemic. We are also growing our presence in the North West of England, and expanding into Greenland and the Faroe Islands through our new Danish branch. As always, we are glad to have you on board as we enter these new waters.

➤ “I would like to offer you a message and a prayer of hope, comfort and consolation in the face of whatever hardships you have to endure. I would also offer a word of encouragement to all those who work with you in providing pastoral care for maritime personnel. May the Lord bless each of you, your work and your families, and may the Virgin Mary, Star of the Sea, protect you always.”
Pope Francis



Pope Francis meets members of Stella Maris and receives a personalised Stella Maris hi-vis vest.
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