



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

PORT STANLEY, FALKLAND ISLANDS

The monthly magazine is always welcomed here at the Lighthouse Seafarers Mission way down in the South Atlantic. It is very popular with seafarers of all or no religious denominations.

It is also good to see what some of the ports around the world look like. Generally those pictures show lines of ship-to-shore cranes backed by vast stacks of containers.

For the Port of Stanley in the Falkland Islands has no such hardware. We do have stacks of containers and these are mainly reefers which are stored a little way from the main port.

Unloading of vessels is effected by either shore based mobile cranes or the ships' own derrick cranes.

FIPASS (Falkland Interim Port and Storage System) was constructed following the 1982 invasion of the Falkland Islands. The word Interim is interesting here because it was given a life of ten years. It is the 40th anniversary of the invasion and FIPASS is still our port facility.

However planning for a new port facility is well underway and is expected to happen within the next two to three years. Standing against this backdrop is the Lighthouse Seafarers Mission, an independent 'stand-alone' Mission who in 2022 mark our 25th anniversary.

It's been twenty-five since Mike and Kirsten Hughes sailed into Stanley and followed their Christian vision of providing for and serving seafarers, mainly fishermen who at that time had nowhere to go ashore other than the pubs of Stanley.

That vision has continued, often in something of a roller-coaster manner. Finances and staffing are only two of the mountains of issues faced over the years.

I am the Port Chaplain, and my wife Debbie and I are now the longest serving people to have run the Mission.

Two second-hand donated portacabins kicked the Mission facilities off all those years ago. Those units have now been completely renovated both inside and out and are now known as the Lighthouse Haven. Three bedrooms with five bed spaces serves as a place of recuperation and recovery from sickness or illness for seafarers. It is a full board accommodation and provision is commensurate with nationalities/cultures and religion.

The main mission which is open 24/7 when vessels are in port, provides a true 'Home from Home' for all seafarers. Fishermen, merchant, cruise ships, research ships, Royal Navy, yachts people: all are made welcome.

With the current situation between Russia and the Ukraine, we have given special attention to the many seafarers of both nationalities who, despite the tragedy in those countries, serve together on reefers, tankers and a most recent vessel to come into Stanley, Research Ship NOOSFERA, formerly RS James Clarke Ross, now under the flag of Ukraine and manned by Ukraine seafarers.

Being able to go on board was a real privilege and to chat with the

Captain and his crew showed just how stoic the Ukrainian people are.

At the Lighthouse Seafarers Mission, we face perhaps one of the biggest challenges in our history.

With the new Port facility being built the Mission is physically in the wrong location and we are looking to move closer to the main causeway onto the new port.

We feel confident that this will be achieved and in the process amongst other benefits both improve and increase the bed spaces to care for sick or injured seafarers.

This is a massive challenge, but one that we will face with confidence and trust in our Father God that he will answer our prayers as we seek to continue his work amongst the many seafarers who find themselves in the South Atlantic.



Lighthouse Seafarers Mission

Stanley, Falkland Islands
FIQQ 1ZZ

Tel: 00 500 22780

Mobile: 00 500 51779

Work time: 24/7 opening when vessels in port.

Port Chaplain/Staff: 7 days each week either at the Mission or on call.

Sunday at Sea with Fr Pio Idowu

**FOURTEENTH SUNDAY
IN ORDINARY TIME**
SUNDAY 3RD JULY

GOSPEL LUKE 10:1-12,17-20

The Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them out ahead of him, in pairs, to all the towns and places he himself was to visit. He said to them, "The harvest is rich but the labourers are few, so ask the Lord of the harvest to send labourers to his harvest. Start off now, but remember, I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. Carry no purse, no haversack, no sandals. Salute no one on the road. Whatever house you go into, let your first words be, "Peace to this house!" And if a man of peace lives there, your peace will go and rest on him; if not, it will come back to you. Stay in the same house, taking what food and drink they have to offer, for the labourer deserves his wages; do not move from house to house. Whenever you go into a town where they make you welcome, eat what is set before you. Cure those in it who are sick, and say, "The kingdom of God is very near to you." But whenever you enter a town and they do not make you welcome, go out into its streets and say, "We wipe off the very dust of your town that clings to our feet, and leave it with you. Yet be sure of this: the kingdom of God is very near." I tell you, that on that day it will not go as hard with Sodom as with that town.'

The seventy-two came back rejoicing. 'Lord,' they said 'even the devils submit to us when we use your name.' He said to them, 'I watched Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Yes, I have given you power to tread underfoot serpents and scorpions and the whole strength of the enemy; nothing shall ever hurt you. Yet do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you; rejoice rather that your names are written in heaven.'

'The harvest is rich but the labourers are few, so ask the Lord of the harvest to send labourers to his harvest. Start off now, but remember, I am sending you out like lambs among wolves.'



THE GOSPEL AND YOU

Jesus sent out his disciples to evangelise, to visit people in their homes and among the many instructions he gave them, he said: "Whatever house you go into, let your first words be, 'Peace to this house!'" A simple form of greeting, yes, but at the same time, a powerful prayer asking God's blessings on others.

Peace is the absence of hostility and violence. It implies friendship and harmony; harmony between persons and, more especially for us Christians, harmony between God and man. From a Christian point of view, peace is more than the absence of conflict or war: it signifies completeness, well-being, and what St Augustine called the 'tranquillity of order'.

The Hebrew word for peace is 'shalom' and when used as a form of greeting, it was an expression of best wishes, another way of saying "I hope you are well." In the Bible, the Hebrew word 'shalom' was also used to describe the peace achieved as a result of a covenant between two parties. For peace to reign, the conditions of the covenant had to be faithfully observed. If one party broke the covenant, peace no longer reigned between them.

The seafarer's life is not an easy one. Away for many months from family and loved ones, it is natural that one worries about their safety and wellbeing. The worry is even more pronounced in times of war, when loved ones are in imminent danger and there is almost nothing one can do to help them. Because of the absence of peace in the world around us, there is no peace, there is no tranquillity within us.

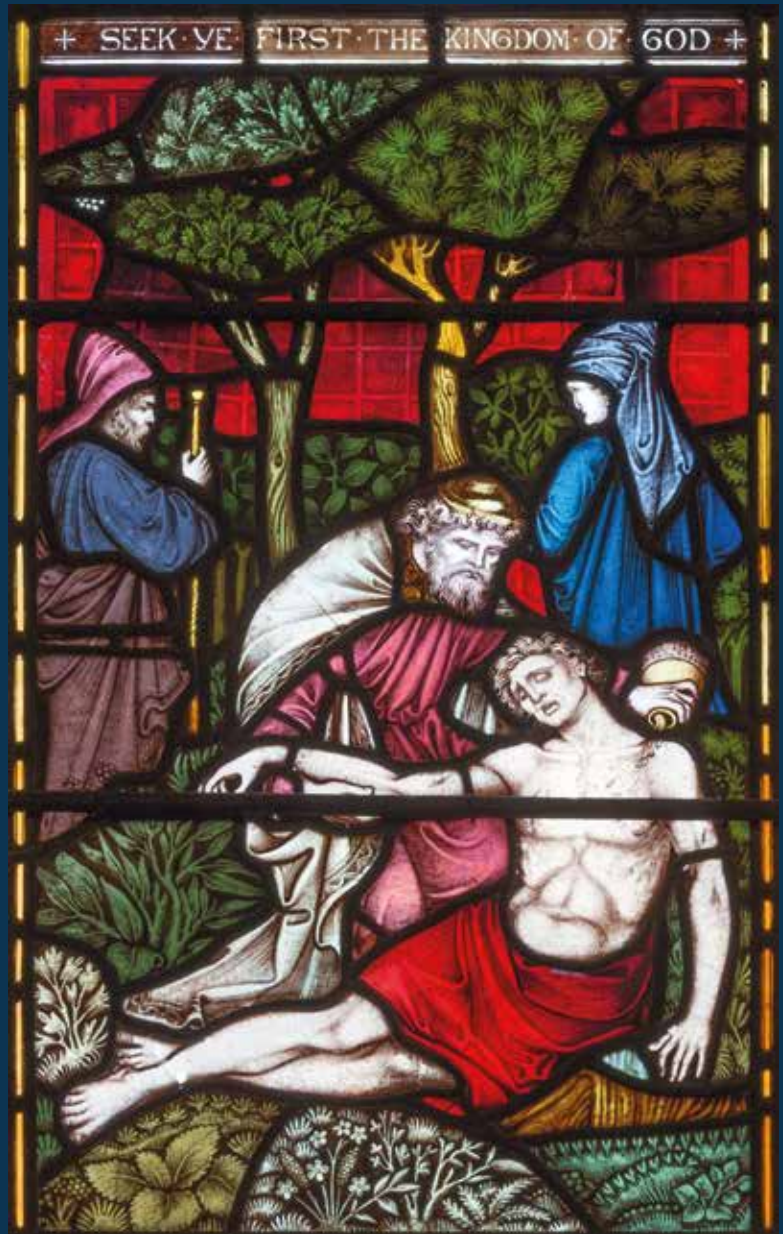
In moments of anxiety and worry, may we recall to mind this greeting of peace which Christ taught to his disciples: 'Peace to this house'. And may the peace of Christ reign in your hearts. May Christ, who is the Prince of Peace, dwell within you and banish from you all worry and anxiety.

**FIFTEENTH SUNDAY
IN ORDINARY TIME
SUNDAY 10TH JULY**

GOSPEL LUKE 10:25-37

There was a lawyer who, to disconcert Jesus, stood up and said to him, 'Master, what must I do to inherit eternal life?' He said to him, 'What is written in the law? What do you read there?' He replied, 'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbour as yourself.' 'You have answered right,' said Jesus 'do this and life is yours.'

But the man was anxious to justify himself and said to Jesus, 'And who is my neighbour?' Jesus replied, 'A man was once on his way down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell into the hands of brigands; they took all he had, beat him and then made off, leaving him half dead. Now a priest happened to be travelling down the same road, but when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. In the same way a Levite who came to the place saw him, and passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan traveller who came upon him was moved with compassion when he saw him. He went up and bandaged his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them. He then lifted him on to his own mount, carried him to the inn and looked after him. Next day, he took out two denarii and handed them to the innkeeper. "Look after him," he said "and on my way back I will make good any extra expense you have." Which of these three, do you think, proved himself a neighbour to the man who fell into the brigands' hands?' 'The one who took pity on him' he replied. Jesus said to him, 'Go, and do the same yourself.'



THE GOSPEL AND YOU

One of the scribes tried to put Jesus to the test by asking him this question: "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life". Jesus answered by reminding him of what was written in the Law: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbour as yourself". But the scribe, wishing to justify his question, asked: "And who is my neighbour?"

In answer to this question, Jesus tells the parable of the Good Samaritan and he invites us to imitate the example of this Samaritan who, even though he was not a Jew, was able to show compassion to a man who had fallen victim to robbers. The priest and the Levite, mentioned in the parable, avoided touching the wounded man for fear of corruption. But the Samaritan, who also followed the Mosaic Law, however did not allow himself to be hindered by the legal requirements

of purity, but personally cared for the wounded man.

Out at sea, or when the ship is docked, we meet and work with people from different walks of life and different socio-cultural backgrounds. There is the temptation to stay away from people we do not know or understand and only to mix with those with whom we have something in common. But Our Lord wants us to understand that there shouldn't be any form of prejudice among us. We must show charity and compassion to anyone who is in need.

Once, on a visit on board a ship, we met a group of sailors who were very friendly and jovial. Each person in the group was from a different cultural background, yet they had no difficulty bonding with each other and sharing intimate moments of friendship. Getting to heaven isn't difficult. All it requires is that we love one another with a love that is true and compassionate.



**SIXTEENTH SUNDAY
IN ORDINARY TIME**
SUNDAY 17TH JULY

GOSPEL LUKE 10:38-42

Jesus came to a village, and a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. She had a sister called Mary, who sat down at the Lord's feet and listened to him speaking. Now Martha who was distracted with all the serving said, 'Lord, do you not care that my sister is leaving me to do the serving all by myself? Please tell her to help me.' But the Lord answered 'Martha, Martha,' he said 'you worry and fret about so many things, and yet few are needed, indeed only one. It is Mary who has chosen the better part; it is not to be taken from her.'

THE GOSPEL AND YOU

I daresay that life on a ship out at sea can be very uneventful. Sometimes, one might have nothing but the wide blue ocean to distract one's thoughts. Most certainly, seafarers out at sea cannot enjoy the luxury of visits from close friends like Martha and Mary who received Jesus into their home. And Jesus probably did not come alone as we are told that Martha "was distracted with much serving".

There was definitely a lot for her to deal with because she eventually went up to Jesus and complained about her sister not helping her with the chores, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me". In fact, Mary, Martha's sister, instead of helping out with the serving, had chosen to sit at Our Lord's feet and listen to his teaching. It wasn't every time you had someone like Jesus come to visit you in your home. Therefore, Mary could be excused for not helping her sister in the kitchen.

But Martha also had a right to complain, because as the mistress of the house, she had to see to it that her visitors were well taken care of and that they lacked nothing. Hence, it was important that the other members of her household fulfilled diligently their respective duties.

So also it is on a ship. Each crew member has his duties and responsibilities, and the smooth running of the ship depends on the care and attention of each crew member to his duties. One moment of inattention could ultimately lead to disastrous consequences either on board the ship or for the owners of the ship.

Yet, Our Lord told Martha that Mary had chosen the better part. What Christ wants us to understand is that while we must never neglect our duties and responsibilities, these things must never distract us from that which is most important: listening to God's Word and putting it into practice.

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME SUNDAY 24TH JULY

GOSPEL LUKE 11:1-13

Once Jesus was in a certain place praying, and when he had finished, one of his disciples said, 'Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.' He said to them, 'Say this when you pray:

"Father, may your name be held holy,
your kingdom come;
give us each day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins,
for we ourselves forgive each one who is in debt to us.
And do not put us to the test."

He also said to them, 'Suppose one of you has a friend and goes to him in the middle of the night to say, "My friend, lend me three loaves, because a friend of mine on his travels has just arrived at my house and I have nothing to offer him"; and the man answers from inside the house, "Do not bother me. The door is bolted now, and my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up to give it to you." I tell you, if the man does not get up and give it him for friendship's sake, persistence will be enough to make him get up and give his friend all he wants.

'So I say to you: Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you. For the one who asks always receives; the one who searches always finds; the one who knocks will always have the door opened to him. What father among you would hand his son a stone when he asked for bread? Or hand him a snake instead of a fish? Or hand him a scorpion if he asked for an egg? If you then, who are evil, know how to give your children what is good, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!

THE GOSPEL AND YOU

Faraway from family and friends, the seafarer at sea is constantly worried about what is happening back home. Due to a limited access to phone services and the internet, the seafarer is not always able to communicate with his or her loved ones at home and at times the only consolation he or she has is in prayer. But we must know how to pray, we must know how to ask God for the right things. One of the disciples, after watching Jesus pray, said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples".

Perhaps you may have your favourite prayer or devotion, but there is no prayer as great as the Our Father. In this simple yet profound prayer, we perform a few actions that are essential to a true prayer. First, we acknowledge God as Our Father, we then ask that all men come to acknowledge him as God as the angels do in heaven. Then we ask him to supply for our material and spiritual needs: the daily bread we need to survive in this world, the forgiveness of our sins and the grace never to commit any more sins.

Our prayer should never be a collection of empty words. We must learn from Jesus how to pray. What struck the disciples was the way Jesus prayed so much so that one of them asked, "Lord, teach us to pray". Jesus prayed all the time in a very intimate way with the Father. And most especially, he prayed before every major event of his public life. This is something we can learn from the example of Jesus: in every decision we will have to make, let us learn to entrust everything to God with filial confidence. And God, who will never allow himself to be outdone in generosity, will always provide for our needs and take care of our worries.





**EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY
IN ORDINARY TIME**
SUNDAY 31ST JULY

GOSPEL LUKE 12:13-21

A man in the crowd said to Jesus, 'Master, tell my brother to give me a share of our inheritance.' 'My friend,' he replied, 'who appointed me your judge, or the arbitrator of your claims?' Then he said to them, 'Watch, and be on your guard against avarice of any kind, for a man's life is not made secure by what he owns, even when he has more than he needs.'

Then he told them a parable: 'There was once a rich man who, having had a good harvest from his land, thought to himself, "What am I to do? I have not enough room to store my crops." Then he said, "This is what I will do: I will pull down my barns and build bigger ones, and store all my grain and my goods in them, and I will say to my soul: My soul, you have plenty of good things laid by for many years to come; take things easy, eat, drink, have a good time." But God said to him, "Fool! This very night the demand will be made for your soul; and this hoard of yours, whose will it be then?" So it is when a man stores up treasure for himself in place of making himself rich in the sight of God.'

THE GOSPEL AND YOU

The story is told of an elderly gentleman who, after a number of years suffering from hearing problems went to the doctor who had him fitted for hearing aids that allowed him to hear better than ever. The old man returned to the doctor one month later for an evaluation of his new hearing aids, and the doctor said, 'Your hearing is perfect. Your family must be really pleased that you can hear again.' The gentleman replied, 'Oh, I haven't told my family yet. I just sit around and listen to the conversations. I've changed my will three times!'

In today's Gospel reading we hear that someone in the crowd, listening to Jesus, said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." In reply, Jesus strongly cautions not only the man standing before him but also all of those who are overly concerned about earthly possessions, 'Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions'. And Our Lord uses the parable of the rich fool to drive home this very important truth.

The honest and hard-working labourer has a right to a just recompense. This also applies to the seafarer who is part of a ship's crew. But the temptation to place one's happiness in the accumulation of material wealth is very real for every man who seeks to make ends meet. We must remember however that we possess a soul, and we belong to God. Hence, while doing what we can to better our situation in society, let us never forget to nurture in us the gift of God's grace, a clean and upright heart, a heart filled with love of God and neighbour. Money is a good thing to have, yes, but what profit will it be if one is not rich in things that matter to God?

How to Discover Your True Identity

> Have you ever asked yourself... Who am I? What is my identity? Many people struggle with the question of identity all their lives. Find out why the true answer to this question will always result in great happiness. By Fr Stephen Wang



If I say to you, "Tell me something about yourself", what would your answer be? Well, it might be: "Mind your own business!" But if you are happy to play along, how would you respond?

It's the question of identity. Do you start with your name? Your nationality? Your job? Do you show them your Facebook feed or your Instagram account? Is this you? Is there more? Let me tell you two stories, one very ancient and one very recent.

St Ignatius of Loyola was a Spanish soldier whose only interest was in winning fame and fortune. He had huge ambition and a fierce temper. In one battle his leg was shattered by a cannon ball. It was a horrific injury, and he spent months recovering. He started to reflect on his life for the very first time.

He read about the lives of the Christian saints, and he felt that his own life, in comparison, had so little meaning. They seemed to have found a great treasure, a secret, that made life truly worthwhile.

Ignatius decided to follow their example, and to follow Jesus Christ, and found a happiness he had never known before. At that moment his life truly began. The turning point

came when he left his sword – the symbol of all his worldly ambition – in a monastery outside Barcelona and walked away a free man.

Another story. Very recently I heard a young woman speak about her time at university. At the end of her first year, she was utterly miserable. Everyone had told her that these would be the best years of her life. It hadn't come true yet. She was trapped (these are her words) in an endless cycle of boring lectures, binge-watching Netflix through the afternoon, and soul-destroying nights out in club-land. It certainly wasn't making her happy.

One day she felt drawn to visit a church. As she sat there, she felt very clearly that Jesus was present with her in that moment. She had an overwhelming sense that she was loved by God. She felt her insecurities fall away. She could be herself. She didn't have to pretend anymore. It was so moving to hear her tell this story. She said that the peace she experienced hadn't left her since.

This young woman, and St Ignatius, lived in very different times and had very different experiences. But they both discovered a deeper truth about their identity, that comes through knowing the love of Jesus Christ.

It's to discover that you, personally, are loved by God. That you are his beloved son or daughter. That your life has meaning and purpose, even if you can't see the whole picture yet.

It's to be honest about your mistakes, your sins, the things you have done wrong. And to know that you can say sorry to God, and receive his forgiveness. So many of us feel trapped by the mistakes we have made; we even feel condemned. It is such a gift to know that Jesus wants to forgive us, and that with his help we can make a new start.

It's to be filled with the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God comes into our hearts and changes us from the inside. He gives us the ability, the power, to do things that simply wouldn't be possible through our own efforts alone. He helps us to believe, to hope, to love. He gives us the gifts of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, self-control; the gifts of wisdom, understanding, courage. Amazing gifts.

Our deepest identity is actually to live a life of holiness, to be a saint. The saints are just ordinary people like you and me, but they have come to know God's love for them in Jesus Christ, and want to love him in return. They have learnt to love deeply, truly, passionately, joyfully, often at great cost.

But they are the happiest people on earth. That's an identity worth living for.



Questions for reflection

- What would you like to achieve in life?
- What would you like to be remembered for?
- When you were a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?

St Thomas the Apostle and Christianity in India



➤ **The 3rd July is the feast of St Thomas the Apostle. The Christian heritage of South Asia stretches back to the time of the Apostles. Discover the history of St Thomas the Apostle, St Francis Xavier and the evangelisation of the region.**

According to a long-established tradition **the faith was brought to India by the Apostle Thomas**, believed to have reached the Malabar Coast in 51 AD: he landed at the ancient port of Muziris, near Kodungallur in present-day Kerala, and **after planting and nurturing seven churches, sailed around to the east coast to die a martyr's death** at Mylapore, Chennai (Madras).

Keeping the Faith

Towards the end of the second century St Pantaeus, an intellectually brilliant Jewish convert to Christianity, and principal of the famous Catechetical School of Alexandria in Egypt, accepted an invitation to travel to India to engage in dialogue with the Hindu philosophers. While he was there he met up with the local Christians, and was shown a Hebrew copy of the Gospel of Matthew.

In 345 AD another Thomas arrived in Kodungallur.

This was Thomas of Cana, leader of a well-organised group of Christian families, accompanied by clergy. They had fled as refugees from Persia, where thousands of their co-religionists were suffering martyrdom in a ferocious persecution.

The newcomers quickly made contact with the local Christians, revitalised their community, helped them become better organised, and established regular contact between them and the Church of the East – though, sadly, it was not long after this link-up that communion was broken between the Church of the East and the Sees of Rome and Constantinople. The Malabar churches adopted Syriac as their liturgical language, and were placed under the jurisdiction of a bishop on the Persian Gulf. **Five stone crosses have been found in India which date back to the first millennium.** Similar crosses found in Sri Lanka point to there also having been a small Christian community there, though it did not survive for longer than a few generations.

In search of Christians and spices



In 1497-98 a Portugese expedition, led by Vasco da Gama, sailed round Africa into the Indian Ocean to land on the Malabar Coast, announcing

that they'd come in search of "Christians and spices". Another objective was to encircle and wage war against the Muslim world, and as soon as this became apparent it sparked conflict. The Portuguese were nevertheless welcomed by the Hindu Rajah of Kochi, an important trading centre for black pepper quite close to Kodungallur. They built a fort and a church in Kochi, and drove out the local Muslim traders, which delighted the St Thomas Christians as it allowed them to take over the lucrative pepper trade.

St Francis Xavier

The first Jesuit missionary, St Francis Xavier, arrived in Goa in 1542 and used it as a base for travelling around the region. He is particularly remembered for consolidating the nascent Christianity of the Parava fishworkers who operated the pearl fisheries between Kanyakumari, at the southernmost tip of India, up to Tuticorin. The Paravas had readily agreed to be baptised in return for Portuguese protection from Muslim raiders, **but before Fr Xavier's arrival they hardly knew anything about the faith they'd committed themselves to.** Fishing communities on the island of Mannar off Sri Lanka, hearing about his work among the Paravas, sent a message asking him to come and preach to them too: he was unable to go personally, but sent another priest instead.

When in 1544 the King of Jaffna, infuriated with the Portuguese, decreed a crackdown on Christianity; the Mannar converts refused to renounce their new-found faith, and **some six hundred men, women and children died as martyrs.** After Fr Xavier's death in the Far East, in 1552, his body was brought back and enshrined in Goa: he was canonised in 1622.

Setbacks and Challenges

In 1653, when many of the St Thomas Christians resolved to reject papal authority altogether, others appealed to the Pope to send emissaries who would be genuinely neutral, and able to broker a just solution. The Pope then sent out Carmelite Fathers, and they were successful in reconciling the majority of the St Thomas Christians, whose descendants today comprise the Syro-Malabar Church, **the second-largest Eastern Church in Communion with Rome.**

By Jean Olwen Maynard, courtesy of CTS



St James whose feast day is on the 25th July is the Patron of Pilgrims and Travellers

A PRAYER FOR TRAVELLERS

All-powerful and ever-living God, when Abraham left his own land and departed from his own people, you kept him safe all through his journey. Protect us, who also are your servants: walk by our side to help us; be our companion and our strength on the road and our refuge in every adversity. Lead us, O Lord, so that we will reach our destination in safety and happily return to our homes.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. 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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