

JANUARY – MARCH
2023



Stella Maris

SUPPORTING SEAFARERS AND FISHERS AROUND THE WORLD

Inside:

Port Focus

Bell Bay, Tasmania, Australia

The Church Year at Sea

January to March

Lectio Divina

Epiphany and Lent

The Good Life

Good Sleep

Learning the faith

Am I too flawed to become a saint?



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.

To support Stella Maris with a donation visit www.stellamaris.org.uk/donate

Stella Maris 39 Eccleston Square,
London, SW1V 1BX, United Kingdom

Tel: +44 020 7901 1931

Email: info@stellamarismail.org

f facebook.com/StellaMarisOrg

www.stellamaris.org.uk

Registered charity in England and Wales number 1069833

Registered charity in Scotland number SC043085

Registered company number 3320318

Cover and pages 3-15 courtesy of istockphoto.com.

Page 2 and back cover courtesy of Stella Maris.



NEED HELP?



Please scan the QR code to get in touch, or contact us via WhatsApp or SMS on +44 7883 303529

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



BELL BAY, TASMANIA, AUSTRALIA

The Bell Bay port is located on the eastern bank of the Tamar River 48 km north of the city of Launceston, Northern Tasmania. The port is adjacent to a major Tasmanian industrial estate. It lies in deep sheltered waters and it is a major port for domestic and international bulk goods as well as container services. It mainly exports cargo to Asia and mainland Australia but the port also imports cargo. It is served by road and rail and it has seven berths including Long Reach South Forico. The first wharf opened back in 1927. In the year ended June 2021, 3.6 million tonnes of exports and imports passed through Bell Bay. It is one of four major ports in Tasmania. The Bell Bay Seafarers Mission is an ecumenical centre formed by the various Christian churches in George Town back in 1989. It officially opened in February 1991. The mission operates at a house which is located in the port precinct. The house is owned by the local port authority Tas Ports. The mission has many services including a lounge area with TV, an eight-ball table, kiosk where seafarers can purchase snacks, toiletries, souvenirs, etc., a chapel, free Wi Fi, books and magazines. We have a small group of dedicated volunteers who assist with

the operation of the mission. We had to close the mission back in March 2020 due to the Covid 19 outbreak as the seafarers were not allowed to leave their ships whilst in port. After two years the mission reopened in April 2022. During the pandemic we packed care packs for the seafarers and these were given to the ships' agents for distribution to the crews. Renato Zanchetta is the Catholic representative and lay person and he has conducted Communion Services at the chapel for the seafarers.

Bell Bay Seafarers Mission Inc,
C/O Tas Ports, P.O Box 221, George
Town, 7253, Tasmania, Australia

Opening times:

19.00 – 22.00 each day depending on
availability of ships in port.

Email:

bellbayseafarerstas@hotmail.com

Lay Person representative:

Renato Zanchetta

Mobile phone: 0428774633



THE CHURCH YEAR AT SEA

1ST JANUARY

SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD

As we start a new calendar year, the Church celebrates Mary's title as Theotokos, 'God-bearer', defined by the Council of Ephesus (431AD). Mary is the Mother of Jesus Christ, true God and true man; hence she is the 'Mother of God'. She brought Jesus into the world and continues to bring people to him, 'to Jesus through Mary.' She is indeed the Mother of the Church and we are called to share in her Motherhood. As St Bernard wrote: 'what use would it be to me that Christ was born once of Mary in Bethlehem if he were not born of faith in my soul too?'

Let us dedicate this new year to
Mary, Mother of God and our Mother!

3RD JANUARY

THE MOST HOLY NAME OF JESUS

On the day of his Circumcision the Lord received the name Jesus, meaning 'God saves.' Devotion to the Holy Name was popularised in the fifteenth century by St Bernardine of Siena and St John Capistrano, who both carried the monogram of Jesus (IHS) with them on their preaching tours. We honour the Holy Name not only because it is the name of our Saviour but because it is, in itself, a powerful prayer.

Let us call on the name of Jesus in
our need and be careful not to use
his name blasphemously ourselves,
or allow others to do so.

21ST JANUARY

SAINT AGNES, VIRGIN AND MARTYR

St Agnes (+ c.304 AD) came from a noble Roman family. According to a fifth century Life, she was about thirteen years old when she suffered martyrdom by being stabbed in the throat, after refusing to be married to a pagan. She was buried on the Via Nomentana and her name is included in the Roman Canon. She is often shown with a lamb, a symbol of her purity and also a play on her name (which in Greek means 'chaste') and the Latin word agnus (meaning 'lamb').



25TH JANUARY

THE CONVERSION OF SAINT PAUL THE APOSTLE

This Feast commemorates the conversion of Saul of Tarsus while he was on his way to Damascus to persecute Christians. He was blinded by a light and thrown from his horse to the ground, hearing the words, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?' As Pope Benedict XVI wrote, 'the Risen One spoke to Paul, called him to the apostolate and made him a true Apostle, a witness of the Resurrection, with the specific task of proclaiming the Gospel to the Gentiles.'

Look for opportunities to emulate St Paul in preaching Jesus to those who have never heard of his love.

28TH JANUARY

SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS, PRIEST AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

St Thomas Aquinas (c.1224-1274 AD) was a Dominican friar who became one of the most important Christian philosophers and theologians. Known as the 'Angelic Doctor', he had an astonishing mastery of theology and a profound holiness of life. His greatest work, the *Summa Theologica*, is still widely used. Pope Leo XIII declared him patron of Catholic schools.

Think of all your children or relatives who are at school – pray that God may give them understanding and wisdom.

31ST JANUARY

SAINT JOHN BOSCO, PRIEST

St John Bosco (1815-1888) was born in Piedmont (Italy) and devoted his life to Catholic education. This 'Apostle of Youth' founded the Salesian Order, named in honour of St Francis de Sales, and, with the help of St Mary Mazzarello, the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians. Despite meeting much opposition, his aim was, above all, to educate through love.

Think of all the young people you know, friends and family – that they may stay faithful to God.

2ND FEBRUARY

THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD

The Presentation of the Lord, popularly known as 'Candlemas,' traditionally concludes the celebration of Christmas. It commemorates the presentation of Jesus in the Temple forty days after his birth, an occasion when offerings were made and the mother was ritually purified. Simeon's prophecy referred to Jesus as 'a light to enlighten the pagans', summing up the Christmas theme of light coming into the darkness, but also points towards the Paschal Mystery, for Jesus was 'destined to be a sign that is rejected'.

Ask Jesus to shine his light into your life and onto your ship and all its crew!



11TH FEBRUARY

OUR LADY OF LOURDES

The feast marks the first apparition of the Blessed Virgin Mary in 1858 to fourteen-year-old St Bernadette Soubirous. There were eighteen apparitions in all, the last of which was on 16 July 1858. The message of Lourdes is a call to personal conversion, prayer and charity. In a special way, the shrine has become closely associated with the sick.

Pray today especially for all those you know who are sick and suffering.

22ND FEBRUARY

ASH WEDNESDAY

On Ash Wednesday, our foreheads are marked with ash reminding us that “you are dust and to dust you shall return” (Gn 3:19). In order to help us focus on Christ’s self-sacrifice and more eagerly celebrate his Resurrection, the Church asks us to practise a certain amount of self-denial during Lent. Christians who are in good health should eat just one whole meal on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. We should also refrain from meat on those days. During the whole forty days, we might consider giving up or consuming less of something we like: chocolate, alcohol. Better still, we might devote some of our precious time to prayer or spending time with the sick and lonely. In comparison with the sacrifice of Christ, our relatively small sacrifices, if done in the right spirit, will enable us to make a more loving response to God.



LENT

The word ‘Lent’ comes from the old English word ‘lencten’ (meaning Spring) and refers to the lengthening of days that occurs at this time of year in the northern hemisphere. As the natural world undergoes rebirth and renewal during this season, so Lent is a time for Christians to reflect on our rebirth in Baptism and engage in spiritual renewal in preparation for Easter. To help us in that task, the ‘landscape’ and worship of the Church is noticeably different. Purple vestments are worn, hymns and songs are more reflective in nature, the Gloria is not sung at the Sunday Eucharist and the Hebrew word ‘alleluia’ (meaning ‘Praise God’) is also omitted from the liturgy. Traditionally, crucifixes and images are veiled to emphasise how sin separates us from God.

FORTY DAYS

Lent is forty days long counting from Ash Wednesday and comes to its climax with Holy or Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and the Saturday before Easter Sunday. The six Sundays during Lent are not counted because Sunday is always a celebration of the Resurrection. The forty days help us to identify with Jesus, who spent forty days of fasting and prayer in the wilderness before beginning his public ministry. The number forty is connected with other biblical events. It is no coincidence that Moses spent forty days of fasting and prayer before receiving the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai. After escaping captivity in Egypt by crossing the Red Sea, the Hebrew tribes spent forty years wandering in the desert before reaching the promised land of Canaan.

7TH MARCH

SAINTS PERPETUA AND FELICITY, MARTYRS

St Perpetua, a young mother of noble birth, and St Felicity, a heavily pregnant slave girl, were imprisoned at Carthage in 203 AD because of their Christian faith. Before they met their death (they were thrown to wild beasts in the arena), Felicity gave birth to a girl; Perpetua was still nursing her new-born son. The Passion of St Perpetua provides a particularly vivid account of their martyrdom. They are included in the Roman Canon.

17TH MARCH

SAINT PATRICK, BISHOP, PATRON OF IRELAND

St Patrick (385-461 AD) was born into a Christian Romano-British family. His first encounter with Ireland was as a slave after he was captured by raiders at the age of sixteen. After escaping, he probably studied in Gaul and was ordained a priest. Around 432 he returned to Ireland as a missionary bishop and succeeded in consolidating the faith in large parts of the country



19TH MARCH

SAINT JOSEPH, SPOUSE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Not a single word of his is recorded in Sacred Scripture and yet St Joseph is one of the greatest and most popular saints, largely because of his humility and his closeness to Our Lord. He died before the beginning of Jesus's public ministry and, since he probably died in the presence of Jesus and Mary, is venerated as the patron of a good death. St Pius IX named him patron of the universal church and Blessed John XXIII added his name to the Roman Canon.



25TH MARCH

THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD

On the floor of the Holy House in Nazareth, an inscription reads 'Verbum caro hic factum est'; 'the Word was made flesh here'. When the Blessed Virgin said 'yes' to the Angel Gabriel, the Word became flesh and dwelt in her womb for nine months. The Annunciation is the prologue to the mysteries of Holy Week: the Incarnation happened so that we could be redeemed; the child conceived on this day was born to die for our sins and conquer death.



Lectio Divina – a short introduction

How to link up with Jesus and with God if you can't get to Mass? Read the Word of God in scripture. It is like a letter from home, written specially for you – and God is writing to you. Perhaps light a candle to show God's presence.

Take a short passage, perhaps the Sunday gospel. Put yourself in the presence of God, open yourself to God, for God is all around you.

What is God writing to you about? What is Jesus saying to you? Imagine the scene. You are one of the disciples, listening and watching. Ask Jesus what he means for you.

Read the passage again, until it enters your heart. It may help to do this with others, to share with them and learn from them what Jesus is saying to them. Always end with a blessing, a sign of real friendship for your brothers and sisters and a prayer for each one's needs.

Epiphany – the Wise Men greet the Baby King

GOSPEL

Herod secretly summoned the wise men and sent them on to Bethlehem, saying, 'Go and find out accurately about the child, and when you have found him, report back to me, so that I too may go to worship him.' When they had heard the king, they set out. And see, the star went before them. Seeing the star, they rejoiced with very great joy, and going into the house they saw the child with Mary, his mother, and falling down they worshipped him. (Matthew 2.7-11)



REFLECTION

The visit of the Wise Men to Jesus at Bethlehem is the climax of Matthew's story of the Birth of Jesus. Herod, the king of the Jews, has rejected Jesus and plans to kill him, but the pagan Wise Men seek him out and worship him. They stand for the unexpected strangers who are open to God's salvation. The same happens at the end of the gospel, in the story of Jesus's passion: the Jewish high priest condemns Jesus, while the pagan Pilate seeks to release him. How often we Christians fail to recognize Christ in others while seeming pagans recognize him and welcome him!

The Wise Men submit their wisdom (and its rich rewards!) to Jesus. Do I recognize that all wisdom comes from Christ? My wise decisions are due to him. Am I grateful to him as king of the universe for all the good things I receive?

Lent – A time to prepare and to become more like Christ

GOSPEL

'Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the parapet of the Temple and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God throw yourself down.' Jesus said to him, 'It is also written, "Do not put the Lord your God to the test".'

Next, taking him to a very high mountain, the devil showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to him, 'These shall be yours if you fall at my feet and worship me.' Then Jesus replied, 'Away with you, Satan! For it is written, "The Lord your God shall you worship, and him alone shall you serve".' (Matthew 2.7-11)

REFLECTION

The forty days of Lent, which this year begins on 22nd February, centre on two ideas. It is the time when Christians prepare for the passion, death and especially the Resurrection of Christ, the focus of all our hope. During this time we try to come closer to Jesus, and especially to share in small ways in his sufferings, borne for us. Many Christians pick three small ways of doing this: a particular prayer each day, give up a bad habit (like smoking or drinking), being more Christ-like (being kind to someone you find difficult, more attentive to your own family).

A second focus helps: be more like Jesus during his forty days in the desert, thinking out his mission. Join Jesus in those days on his own, praying with God, his Father, lonely and prayerful. Resist those temptations from the devil to greed (Jesus didn't turn stones into bread), or pride (Jesus didn't leap off the Temple wall to be unhurt), or power (Jesus refused to worship the devil in exchange for power), or sex. How can I be a better Christian? Then the Sunday of the Resurrection, Easter Sunday, will bring real joy.



Good Sleep



➤ **Good sleep is essential to maintain optimal health and well-being throughout our life. Getting enough quality sleep at the right times can help protect our mental health, physical health, quality of life, and safety.**

Key facts

- Good sleep is incredibly important for your health. In fact, it is just as important as eating healthy and exercising.
- Sleep helps your brain work properly. While you are sleeping, your brain is preparing for the next day.
- The amount of sleep you need depends on various factors – especially your age. On an average, an adult needs seven hours of good sleep.
- Not having good sleep for few days makes you feel tired and irritable the next day, but it will not harm your health much. Sleep deprivation for longer term can lead to fatigue and many other physical and mental health problems.
- Simple practical measures can help to have good sleep.

Why is good sleep important?

- Poor sleep is linked to weight gain and obesity by affecting hormones that regulate appetite.
- Good sleep can improve concentration and productivity.
- Sleeping less than average seven hours per day increases the risk of heart disease and stroke.
- Sleep affects glucose metabolism and type 2 diabetes risk.
- Poor sleeping patterns may lead to different mental health problems like depression, particularly for those with a sleeping disorder.
- Sleep affects body's inflammatory responses. Poor sleep is linked to inflammatory bowel diseases and can increase the risk of disease recurrence.

- Good sleep can improve immune function and help fight the common cold.
- Regular sleep disruptions can cause trouble conceiving for both men and women by reducing the secretion of reproductive hormones.

Practical tips for good sleep

- Try to go to sleep and get up at the same time every day. This helps set body's internal clock and optimize the quality of sleep.
- Make sure the bed is comfortable, keep the bedroom dark and cool at 17-20 degrees Celsius.
- Do not use bed in the daytime for things like watching TV, working, playing games on devices or talking on the phone etc.
- Switch off electronic devices at least half an hour before bedtime.
- Avoid caffeine, nicotine, alcohol, heavy meals late or before going to bed.
- Wherever possible, get out in the sun, even for a short time. Exposure to sunlight boosts serotonin levels, which allow your body clock to regulate sleep patterns.
- Thinking about sleep too much or trying to force yourself to sleep will only keep you awake. Relaxation activities like yoga, mindfulness, meditation, deep breathing can help to have good sleep.
- While napping is a good way to make up for lost sleep, if you have trouble falling asleep or staying asleep at night, napping can make things worse.
- People who exercise regularly sleep better at night and feel less sleepy during the day. Do not exercise late in the evening.
- Avoid drinking too many liquids in the evening. Drinking lots of fluids may result in frequent bathroom trips throughout the night.

Tips for shift workers for sufficient sleep and rest

- Try not to work a number of night shifts in a row. You may become increasingly more sleep-deprived over several nights on the job. You are more likely to recover if you can limit night shifts.
- Avoid frequently rotating shifts. If you cannot, it is easier to adjust to a schedule that rotates from day shift to evening to night rather than the reverse order.
- If you have a fixed night shift, treat the shift as your normal working day, adjust your meals and sleep times around it.
- You may have the opportunity to take naps during breaks before or after your full/long sleep, which may help you feel more alert or rested.
- Nap of up to two hours can be a good way to prepare for a night shift. Allow yourself at least thirty minutes after waking to overcome groggy and less clear-headed feelings.
- Exposing yourself to as much light as possible on your night shift will help the body with its natural day-night light cycle. Avoid turning off lights in the office or turning the brightness down of devices during night shift.
- Limit caffeine. Drinking coffee/tea at the beginning of the shift will help promote alertness. However, do not consume caffeine later in the shift.
- Keep your bedroom as dark as possible even if you are sleeping in the daytime.

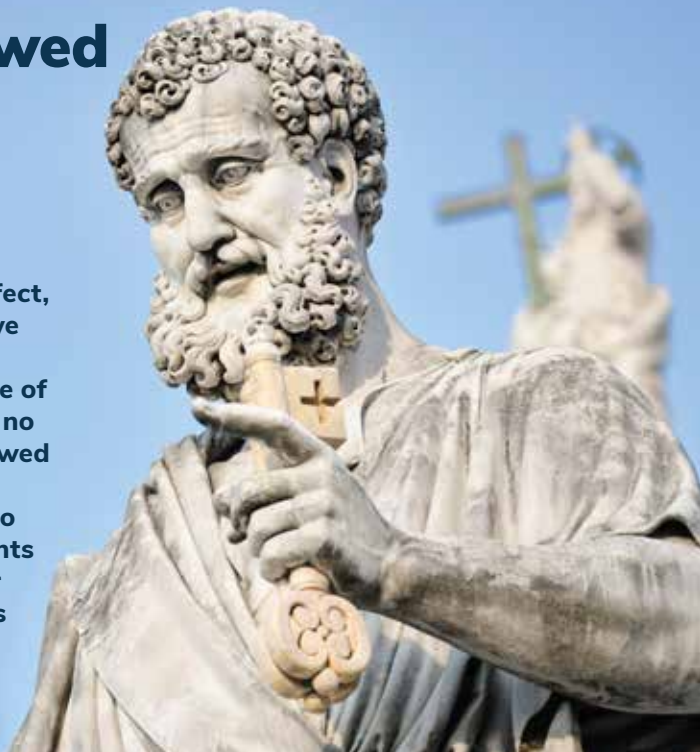


Courtesy of the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF)

Am I too flawed to become a saint?

By Fr Michel Remery

➤ **The saints may appear perfect, leading us to believe that we are too flawed to become saints. The unlikely example of St Peter can console us all: no one is too human or too flawed to become a saint! On the contrary, Jesus calls us all to follow him and become saints in the process – each in our own way, with our qualities and flaws.**



By exploring the life of St Peter, we see that the saints were not perfect and that flawed people can become saints.

Simon Peter was a fisherman from Bethsaida in the Holy Land. He was a very unlikely saint! Although he was an enthusiastic follower of Jesus, he often spoiled things because of his impetuous behaviour. Jesus made Peter the first pope, calling him the rock on which he wanted to build his Church – the Greek word ‘petra’ means ‘rock’ (Mt 16:18-19). But immediately afterwards, Jesus found reason strongly to rebuke him, for he was obstructing God’s saving mission by focusing only on human reasoning and desires (Mt 16:22-23). Peter knew of his many mistakes, and told Jesus at one point: ‘Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!’ (Lk 5:8). The evening of the Last Supper, Peter assured Jesus passionately

that he would never leave him (Mk 14:18-31). But only a few hours later he felt how dangerous it was to admit his faith, and three times he denied that he knew Jesus (Mk 14:66-72). Although he wept bitterly when he realised what he had done, these examples demonstrate that Peter was deeply flawed.

IMPATIENCE

One of the biggest problems in spiritual life can be the patience you need in order to learn to pray and discern God’s Will. The temptation is to get up and start doing things, even when you do not as yet know God’s Will. Yet Peter shows how his impetuous behaviour leads him into trouble time and time again. He follows his first impulse without checking how it corresponds with God’s Will. How often is

this true for you too? One day, Peter was waiting for Jesus to tell him and the others what to do. But he got tired of waiting and decided to go fishing. Obviously, he did not catch anything, as his actions did not correspond with God's Will. Only when Jesus appeared and told Peter to throw out his nets, did he catch many fish, so many that the nets were overflowing (Jn 21:3-6). It will be the same for you. Be patient and keep searching: when you find God's Will for you, you will be able to bear much fruit.

A NEW MAN

After receiving his mission to go out into all the world and preach the gospel (Mk 16:15), Peter appeared a new man. He preached with fire, seemingly without fear for himself or his life, even when he was arrested and beaten because he confessed that he loved Jesus. He was even able to perform miracles, although he did not claim them for himself: Jesus acted through him (Acts 3:6). It can be the same for you! Probably you will perform no visible miracles, but indeed Jesus can work through you too, as long as you allow him. This is the best way to become a saint

yourself: be ever closer to Jesus and try to do his will at every moment. You will probably fall, but the important thing is getting up again and again.

TOO FLAWED?

Saint Peter's unlikely example can console us all: no one is too human or too flawed to become a saint! On the contrary, Jesus calls us all to follow him and become saints in the process – each in our own way, with our qualities and flaws. Becoming a saint is more than living a life in accordance with the commandments: it has to do with growing in closeness to God and in recognising his will for you. Peter's experience shows us how: by loving Jesus more than anyone. Three times Peter denies Jesus. Three times Jesus asks Peter whether he loves him (Jn 21:15-23). He also asks you: do you love me, more than anyone?



QUO VADIS – WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

'Peter came to Rome!... Perhaps the fisherman of Galilee did not want to come here. Perhaps he would have preferred to stay there, on the shores of the Lake of Genesareth, with his boat and his nets. But guided by the Lord, obedient to his inspiration, he came here! According to an ancient tradition... Peter wanted to escape Rome during Nero's persecution. But the Lord intervened: he went to meet him. Peter spoke to him and asked. "Quo vadis, Domine?" "Where are you going, Lord?" And the Lord answered him at once: "I am going to Rome to be crucified again". Peter went back to Rome and stayed here until his crucifixion'.

[Pope John Paul II, Homily for the inauguration of his pontificate, 22 October 1978]

O God, Peter became a saint, in spite of his many flaws. Help me to see that my weaknesses can be ways in which your greatness becomes clear. St Peter the Apostle, pray for us!

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.*



STELLA MARIS REGIONAL COORDINATORS

NORTH AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

Deacon Paul Rosenblum

Stella Maris Port Chaplain, Charleston Diocesan

Email: paul.rosenblum@stellamarismail.org

Mobile: +1 (843) 822-3572

AFRICA INDIAN OCEAN

Fr Jacques Henri David

Stella Maris Port Chaplain, Port-Louis, Mauritius

Email: jachenri@intnet.mu

Mobile: + 230 57287348

WEST AFRICA

Fr Celestin Ikomba

Stella Maris National Director, Ivory Coast

Email: ikomba_celio@yahoo.fr

Mobile: +225 08041035

LATIN AMERICA

Fr Samuel Fonseca, CS

Stella Maris National Director, Brazil

Email: samufonto@hotmail.com

Mobile: +55 (13) 9772 1191

EUROPE

Martin Foley

Stella Maris National Director, UK

Email: martin.foley@stellamarismail.org

Mobile: +44 7941 231628

SOUTH ASIA

Fr Johnson Chirammel

Stella Maris Port Chaplain, Cochin, India

Email: chirammelj@yahoo.com

Mobile: +91 9447308759

EAST-SOUTH EAST ASIA

Fr Paulo Prigol

Stella Maris Director, Manila, Philippines

Email: pauloprigol@yahoo.com

Mobile: +63 908 819 0230

OCEANIA

Sr Mary Leahy, RSJ

Stella Maris Port Chaplain, Sydney, Australia

Email: srmaryleahy@gmail.com

Mobile: +61 (418) 724 713

www.stellamaris.org.uk
facebook.com/StellaMarisOrg
twitter.com/StellaMarisOrg



STELLA MARIS