

APRIL – JUNE
2024



Stella Maris

SUPPORTING SEAFARERS AND FISHERS AROUND THE WORLD

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With Fr Henry
Wansbrough OSB

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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.

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

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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

MILFORD HAVEN, WALES



Milford Haven in Welsh is known as Aberdaugleddau which means 'mouth of the two Rivers Claddau'. The town is situated on the north side of Milford Haven waterways, in Pembrokeshire County, South Wales which is one of the deepest natural harbours in the world. It is also one on the longest terminals in North Western Europe. It has the capacity to handle or accommodate both the longest and widest vessels. Admiral Nelson on his part described Haven Port as one of the finest harbours in the world, while the local inhabitants today call it 'the Little London'.

The decline in the fishing industry around the 1950s paved the way for a new economic chapter in the history of Milford Haven Port. The diversification of the economy in the area of oil and gas industry opened another door of prosperity. Major refineries were built beginning with the Esso refinery in 1960; in the 1970s, Milford Haven Port became the second largest oil port in Europe. Due to the decline in oil this has decreased but is still a significant part of operations in the vicinity of Milford Haven which handle about 25% of UK's energy/gas consumption.

The Stella Maris Chaplaincy is actively involved in providing essential services to the numerous seafarers visiting the port of Milford Haven and the Pembroke refinery. This includes providing transport services that enable the seafarers to have recreation

time away from their vessels and to do their shopping from time to time. We also provide pastoral care and support which includes making the sacraments available and counselling for those who desire to have someone to listen to them on board or within the parish community. We provide the seafarers with religious items and publications to support them in their faith journey. Free sim cards are provided and woolly hats distributed as well, donated by volunteers in Milford Haven and beyond. Apart from this, our chaplaincy receives huge support from the ministry of Rev Paul Joseph and his parishioners every Christmas season for the past six years.

Our focus is on face to face meetings and ministry through regular ship visits. This remains one of the essential ways of providing much-needed support for seafarers. It is well known that loneliness, isolation and work stress are some of the greatest challenges confronting seafarers today.

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THE CHURCH YEAR AT SEA



7TH APRIL

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

In 1931, Jesus appeared to St Faustina, a Polish nun. He requested devotion to the Divine Mercy, recalling God's mercy, our own duty to show mercy and our trust in Jesus. Divine Mercy Sunday is the primary element of the devotion, celebrated on the Second Sunday of Easter.

"I desire that the Feast of Mercy be a refuge and shelter for all souls, and especially for poor sinners. On that day the very depths of my tender mercy are open. I pour out a whole ocean of graces upon those souls who approach the fount of my mercy.

"The soul that will go to Confession and receive Holy Communion shall obtain complete forgiveness of sins and punishment. On that day all the divine floodgates through which grace flow are opened. It is my desire that it be solemnly celebrated on the first Sunday after Easter. Mankind will not have peace until it turns to the Fount of my Mercy."

23RD APRIL

SAINT GEORGE, MARTYR, PATRON OF ENGLAND

St George (+ c.303) was martyred in Palestine during the persecution of Diocletian at Diospolis (Lydda, now Lod, near Tel Aviv, Israel), where his tomb can be found. Legend depicts him killing the dragon, a symbol of the triumph over evil. He is the patron saint of several countries and regions, including England.



25TH APRIL

**SAINT MARK, EVANGELIST**

St Mark (+ c.75), the author of the Gospel bearing his name, is often identified as the young man who ran away when the Lord was arrested. His Gospel gives the teaching and memoirs of St Peter. He joined St Paul and St Barnabas on their first missionary journey and later became St Paul's secretary in Rome. He is thought to have established the Church in Alexandria, and to have died a martyr there.

28TH APRIL

SAINT LOUIS GRIGNION DE MONTFORT, PRIEST

St Louis Grignion de Montfort (1673-1716) was a French diocesan priest with a great devotion to the Virgin Mary; he was noted for his fervent and enthusiastic preaching and apostolate. He founded an order of missionary priests, the Company of Mary, and a sister order of nuns, the daughters of Wisdom. He is best known, however, for his book *True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary*, which like most of his writings was not properly published until the nineteenth century. It proposes that the Christian make a "total consecration" of himself to Jesus through Mary; it has had an immense influence, not least on St John Paul II. St Louis was canonised in 1947.

29TH APRIL

SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA, VIRGIN AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH, PATRON OF EUROPE

St Catherine (1347-1380) was born at Siena, one of twenty-five children. At a young age she decided to dedicate herself to the Lord and resist the attempts of her family to find her a suitable husband. She became a Dominican Tertiary and both her writings and her stigmata reveal her intimate union with God. Despite her retired life, St Catherine was actively involved in public affairs and persuaded the pope, Gregory XI, to return to Rome from Avignon. She later tried to unite the Church during the Great Schism and moved to Rome, where she died aged thirty-three. She was proclaimed patroness of Italy in 1939, doctor of the Church in 1970 and a patron of Europe in 1999.

MAY



MAY IS THE MONTH DEDICATED TO MARY THE MOTHER OF OUR LORD AND OUR MOTHER.

Here is a beautiful prayer to Our Lady of Perpetual Help:

O Mother of Perpetual Succour, and my own best-beloved Mother, I thank you for all the blessings and graces you have obtained for me since my birth, and especially during all my temptations. And now, to so many former favours, vouchsafe, O Mary, add that of admitting me, though most unworthy, into the number of your special clients, that with them I may prove to you my devotion of veneration and love. You shall always be, next after God, my only hope, and the object most dear to my heart. In all my wants, in all my straits and temptations, I will always have recourse to you; you shall be my refuge and my consolation. I desire in all the combats, afflictions and weariness of life to have no other support but God and you. I would rather be one of your servants than have the whole world at my command; my ambition shall be to serve you, to bless you, to love you till my dying breath. Amen.

1ST MAY

SAINT JOSEPH THE WORKER

This feast was instituted in 1955 by Pope Pius XII on a day when labour was celebrated in many countries. Jesus was himself 'the son of the carpenter' and St Joseph presents a wonderful example of how even the most seemingly menial work can be sanctified.





2ND MAY

SAINT ATHANASIUS, BISHOP AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

St Athanasius (c.296-373) was Bishop of Alexandria (Egypt) for some forty-six years. He became the champion of the faith against Arianism and, as a result, was exiled for seventeen years. He wrote many theological works, and St John Henry Newman later wrote that he was 'a principal instrument after the Apostles by which the sacred truths of Christianity have been conveyed and secured to the world.'

3RD MAY

SAINTS PHILIP AND JAMES, APOSTLES

St Philip (first century) was from Bethsaida and, after being called by the Lord, introduced St Bartholomew to him. He may have been crucified at Hierapolis in Phrygia, where he had preached the Gospel. St James 'the Less' (+ c.62) was a cousin of the Lord. As Bishop of Jerusalem, he wrote an epistle preserved in the New Testament and, legend says, was eventually martyred by being stoned, and then clubbed to death.

13TH MAY

OUR LADY OF FATIMA

The Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to three shepherd children at Fatima (Portugal) on the thirteenth day for six consecutive months in 1917. She brought a message of peace and reparation for sin, encouraging devotion to her Immaculate Heart and the recitation of the Holy Rosary.

20TH MAY

SAINT BERNARDINE OF SIENA, PRIEST

St Bernardine of Siena (1380-1444) was born in the Republic of Siena (Italy) and entered the Franciscan Order. He became a popular and effective preacher, doing much to convert sinners and spread devotion to the Holy Name of Jesus. He died during a preaching tour at Aquila, where he was buried.

26TH MAY

SAINT PHILIP NERI, PRIEST

St Philip Neri (1515-1595) was born in Florence but



spent most of his life in Rome and is known as the city's 'apostle'. He had a mystical experience in the catacombs in 1544, when he 'felt himself divinely filled with the power of the Spirit', causing his heart to dilate. Ordained in 1551, he founded the Congregation of the Oratory. He was noted for his constant joy and the love he showed those who came to him for counsel or confession.

JUNE


THE MONTH OF JUNE IS DEDICATED TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS.

Here is a beautiful prayer by St Bonaventure

We too, pilgrims in the flesh, love as much as we can, and embrace the One who was wounded for us, whose hands, feet, side and Heart were pierced. Let us love and pray: 'O Jesus, deign to bind our hearts, still so hard and unrepentant, with the chain of your love and wound them with its dart.'

1ST JUNE

SAINT JUSTIN, MARTYR

St Justin (+ c.165) was born in Nablus, Samaria and, having studied Platonist philosophy, converted to Christianity at the age of about thirty-three. As a lay apologist he travelled around preaching the faith, defending it from attack and writing works such as the Apologies and Dialogue. He was beheaded in Rome during the reign of Marcus Aurelius.

11TH JUNE

SAINT BARNABAS, APOSTLE

St Barnabas (first century) is frequently mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles. He introduced St Paul to the Twelve and accompanied him on his first missionary journey. St Barnabas was present at the Council of Jerusalem and has long been honoured as an Apostle, although he was not one of the Twelve. Different traditions assert that he was martyred in his native Cyprus, or at Salamis in Greece; he has also, improbably, been claimed as the first Bishop of Milan. His name is included in the Roman Canon.

13TH JUNE

SAINT ANTHONY OF PADUA, PRIEST AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

St Anthony of Padua (1195-1231) was born in Lisbon (Portugal) and joined the Canons Regular of St Augustine and then the Franciscans at Coimbra. He became famous as a learned theologian, eloquent preacher and worker of miracles – he is still popularly invoked for finding lost objects. He is known as the 'Evangelical Doctor' and was canonised the year after his death.



24TH JUNE

THE NATIVITY OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST

Born six months before Our Lord, St John the Baptist was the son of St Zechariah and St Elizabeth. He was the last and greatest of the prophets and, as the forerunner of the Saviour, he prepared for the coming of Christ. The celebration of his earthly birthday marks the coming of the new dispensation.

29TH JUNE

SAINTS PETER AND PAUL, APOSTLES

St Peter (+ c.64) was the brother of St Andrew and a Galilean fisherman. He was called by the Lord and, despite his obvious human weaknesses, eventually chosen as the leader of the Twelve, the 'rock' on which the Church was built. After Pentecost, he became particularly associated with Antioch and then Rome. He was crucified under Nero and buried at the Vatican.

St Paul (+ c.64/67) was a tent-maker from Tarsus (then capital of the Roman province of Cilicia, now in Turkey), a Pharisee and a Roman citizen. He was initially a persecutor of Christians but was converted by the Lord on his way to Damascus. He became the Apostle of the Gentiles, preaching the Gospel to the uncircumcised, reaching Greece, Italy, Malta and possibly even Spain. He was beheaded along the Via Ostiense and buried nearby, on the site where the basilica bearing his name now stands.



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.

Pentecost Sunday – 19th May 2024



SCRIPTURE

The earliest Christian Community at Jerusalem

The disciples remained faithful to the teaching of the apostles, to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers. And everyone was filled with awe; many signs and miracles were done through the apostles. And all the believers were united and owned everything in common; they sold their goods and possessions and divided the proceeds to all according to what each one needed. Each day, with one heart, they went faithfully to the Temple but met in their houses for the breaking of bread; they ate their share of food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and approved by all the people. Day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved. Acts 2:42-47

REFLECTION

When the Spirit came down on the apostles at Jerusalem at Pentecost they were formed into the model Christian community. The Spirit gave them the courage and the understanding to proclaim Christ's message to any who wanted and to many who did not want to hear it. This needed courage, for many of them were imprisoned and martyred. They even shared the death of Jesus. Their strength came also from living as a community. They supported one another, sharing their possessions and looking out for the needs of others. They prayed together and praised God together for his love. They shared the Eucharist among themselves and were alert to the needs of every member of the new community. Every group of Christians must rely on the strength of the Holy Spirit, working together as brothers and sisters with a single aim and a single support. We are sent out all over the world to bring the message and the joy of the Risen Christ to one another and to everyone we meet.

The Month of Our Lady – May

SCRIPTURE

The Story of the Annunciation

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the House of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. He went in and said to her, 'Rejoice full of grace! The Lord is with you.' She was deeply disturbed by these words and pondered what this greeting could mean, but the angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. Look! You will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God. Luke 1: 26-35

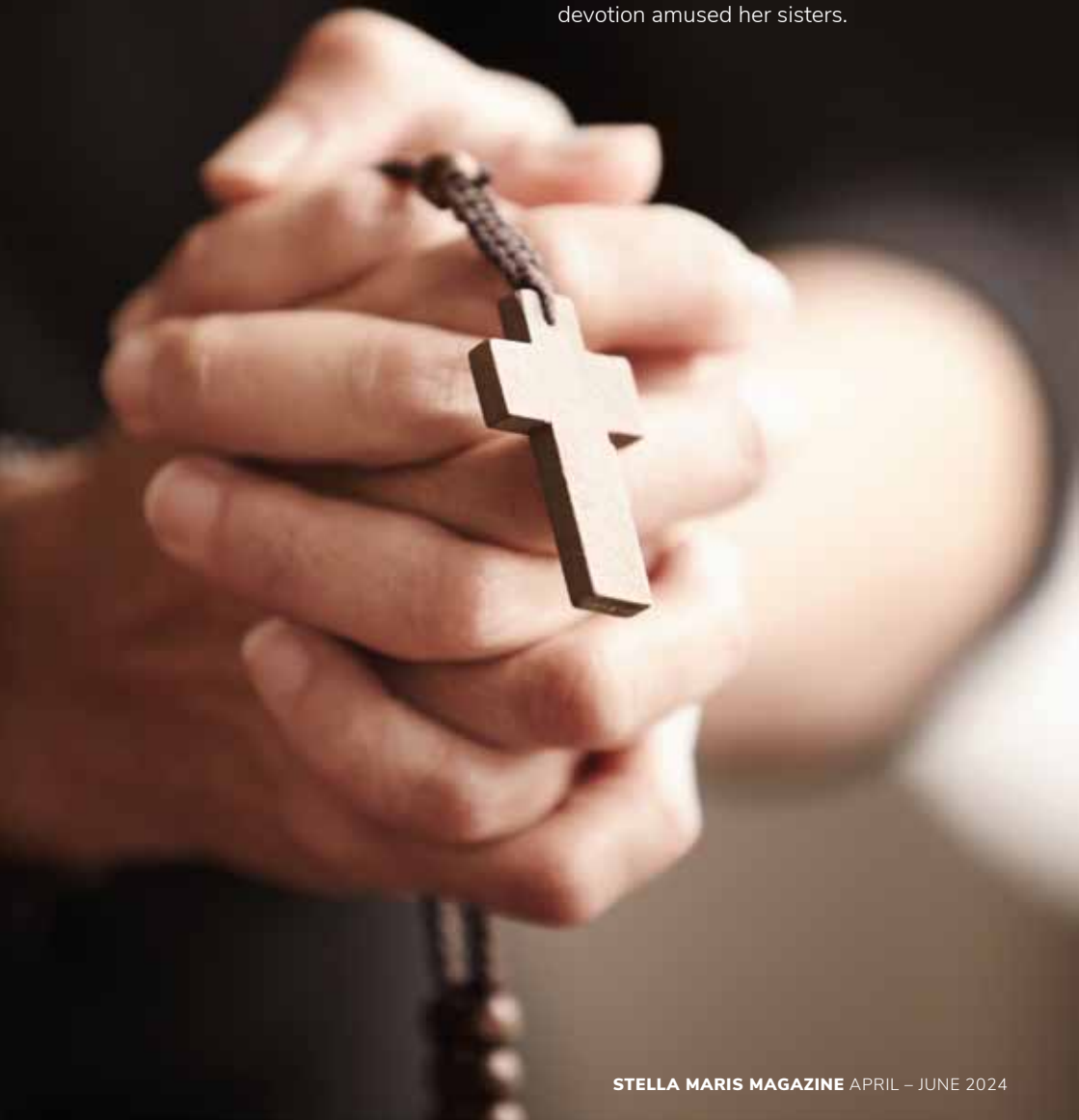
REFLECTION

For Catholics all over the world May is the month of Mary, when we pray with her. She is the mother of Jesus and the mother of the Church, our mother. And of course Stella Maris, "Star of the Sea" is Mary, our patron. She shines over us on all our voyages. To prepare her for her task the Spirit made her sinless. She was full of grace, full of God's special favour. No shadow of the sin of Adam, the original sin. As she grew to maturity she was of course tempted, but her love for God was so intense that she never fell; she always preferred God's will. Think of the bond there must have been between her and her Son. But as he died on the cross he gave her to us as our mother too, saying to the Beloved Disciple, 'This is your mother'. There is the same bond between Mary and each one of us: she cares for us like a mother.

Holy Heroes

> Four Saints Who Loved the Rosary

Many saints came to know Mary as a spiritual mother came to do so through prayer of the Rosary. Discover four saints in particular who loved the Rosary: St Dominic, who is traditionally said to have been given the rosary by Our Lady herself; St Louis de Montfort, who did much to spread devotion to the Rosary; St Bernadette who only got her own Rosary after Our Lady appeared to her in Lourdes; and St Thérèse of Lisieux, whose childlike devotion amused her sisters.



The Rosary provides a wonderful example of praise of Our Lady that leads straight to meditation. The Rosary entails a series of prayers that are said one after the other, including the Hail Mary, the Our Father and the Glory Be. In praying the Hail Mary many times over, Mary's praises sound out again and again.

Here are four saints who loved praying the Rosary:

1. ST DOMINIC

While the Rosary has been known in various forms since the ninth century, the form which it currently takes is the one that, according to tradition, was established by St Dominic in the thirteenth century, after Our Lady appeared to him. It became common to meditate on different incidents in the life of Christ (and his mother) as part of the prayer from the fifteenth century onwards.



2. ST LOUIS DE MONTFORT

Many saints grew attached to praying the Rosary as young children, taking Mary into the heart of their lives. St Louis-Marie de Montfort was born in France during the seventeenth century. Not content, as a young boy, with praying the Rosary, he taught his younger brothers and sisters, and his classmates at school, to do the same. After his ordination as a priest, he became a wandering missionary, spreading devotion to Our Lady as part of parish missions.



3. ST BERNADETTE SOUBIROUS

St Bernadette Soubirous learnt to pray the Rosary as a young girl, just like others around her in nineteenth-century France. It took her some time to master the prayer, and it seems that she only acquired a set of rosary beads of her own after Our Lady appeared to her at Massabielle, near to the village of Lourdes. Once she did acquire the beads, though, they never left her person.



4. ST THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX

St Thérèse also became attached to the Rosary as a young girl. She recounted in her autobiography, *The Story of a Soul*, that after making her first confession she asked the priest to bless her Rosary:

'It was evening, and as soon as I got to a street-lamp I stopped and took the newly blessed Rosary out of my pocket, turning it over and over. "What are you looking at, Thérèse, dear?" asked Pauline. "I am seeing what a blessed Rosary looks like." This childish answer amused my sisters very much.'



How to Develop Friendship with Jesus in Prayer



➤ **Jesus is calling each of us to enter into deep friendship with him in prayer. To establish this intimate friendship with Jesus, spend one hour a day with him and he will bless the other twenty-three hours of your day! Why do we do this? Because it is Jesus who is calling us to himself so that we can avoid sin and practise virtue and he can help us through the trials and sufferings of this life until we rejoice with him for ever in heaven!**

LET GOD SPEAK TO YOU

The first element of praying your holy hour is listening to the Word of God – Sacred Scripture. This is God himself speaking to you. Start by reading the Gospels, the life and teachings of Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Each Gospel has something special to offer. For example, the Gospel of Luke is generally known as ‘the mercy Gospel’. In addition, Luke starts with the infancy narratives, the births of John the Baptist and Jesus.

For one hour a day, read the Gospel narrative and think about how the words

and happenings in the life of Jesus speak to you. You may even try imagining that you are present in certain scenes of the Gospel. This is ‘Ignatian contemplation’. In the Gospel of Luke, you might imagine that you follow the shepherds going to see Jesus born in the stable of Bethlehem, and there you see Jesus in the arms of Mary. Imagine Mary handing you the baby Jesus to hold. What are you thinking, what are you feeling, holding the Saviour of the world in your arms?

After praying with the Gospels, you can read and pray with the Acts of the

Apostles, also known as the Gospel of the Holy Spirit, to see how the Church that Jesus established grew after Pentecost. Peter gave a sermon, and three thousand were converted. The witness and blood of the first martyr, St Stephen, led to the conversion of St Paul.

In the Old Testament, pray with the Psalms. They capture all the thoughts and emotions of the human person and can bring great comfort to us. There are great stories of faith and courage to be found in the Old Testament, too. The book of Genesis, chapters 37-50, tells the story of Joseph, son of Jacob, who is a Christ figure. The book of Tobit is a charming story of God's intervention through the Archangel Raphael in the lives of two suffering servants of the Lord, Sarah and Tobit. The book of Esther is the story of a queen willing to risk her life for the salvation of God's people. Isaiah speaks about the "suffering servant", a prophecy of the life and death of Jesus.

As often as we read and pray with the Scriptures, the Word of God speaks to us in a different way, because we are different. Delve into the richness of God's Word! Let it enter deep into your heart and help you ponder the story of your life, and how God is calling you to love and to serve others.

TALK TO THE LORD

The second element of praying your holy hour is talking with Jesus about what is happening in your daily life – your joys and sorrows, hopes and dreams, worries and sufferings. Place them in the Sacred Heart of Jesus, pierced for love of you. What is on your mind and heart right now? Talk with Jesus about this. He hears you, he sees you, he loves you, and he will help you by giving you what is the greatest good for you in your life right now. We do not always see it that way. However, if we are honest, looking back over our life, we can see that he was always working on our behalf, through the good things, as well as the hard things that helped us become the person

he created us to be. His plans are always better and greater. Lord, we praise you and we bless you! Help us to stay by your side always by means of our daily holy hour, our "Hour of Power" as Venerable Fulton J. Sheen called it.

If after reading these recommendations for improving your prayer life you still believe that you are too busy to spend one hour a day with Our Lord, or at least thirty minutes a day, then maybe you are too busy. Let us be honest: our work is never done. Consider this maybe another distraction of the devil so that we will miss the greater good: a deep and abiding friendship with Jesus through the time we spend with him in our daily holy hour. Let us resolve to defeat the enemy of our soul by being faithful to our daily conversation and growing friendship with Jesus. Fortified in his love and grace, we are able to turn our good-will and resources with greater love and charity to the needs of others, those whom God places in our lives, and he will bless our efforts with even more abundant fruits.



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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