

SUNDAY PLUS

Rest awhile

By Commander Ian Crabtree KSG RN (Rtd)

Today is Sea Sunday when we are asked to pray for and support all seafarers. One of the burdens of a life at sea, both for the sailor who is departing and for the family and friends being left behind, is separation.

Having served for many years in the Royal Navy, I have experienced the yoke of separation from family and friends. Saying farewell to loved ones elicits many emotions: anger, sadness, frustration, a sense of loss, to name a few. Birthdays and anniversaries are celebrated at a distance and communication, even with modern technology, can be frustrating and at times maddening. Poor connectivity, a badly worded message, a delayed response, can all lead to misunderstanding and a sense of grievance.

The sacrifice of separation is endured more easily in the knowledge that there

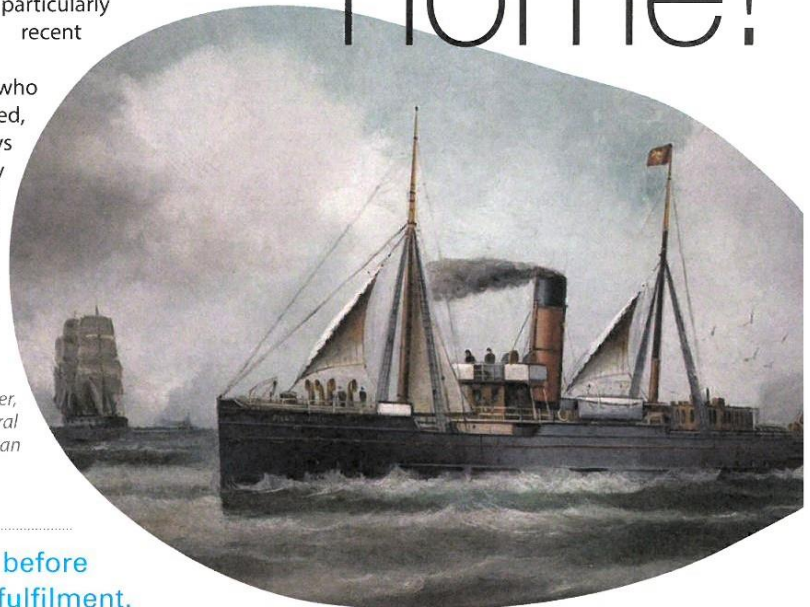
is a homecoming at the end. Without this certainty, there is no hope, in the same way that without the certainty of the resurrection after death, we would have little to hope for in this life.

Sadly, there are many seafarers who don't know when they will return home and who spend years separated from their families. This was particularly noticeable during the recent coronavirus pandemic.

"Come to me all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest", says the Lord. Let us pray today that those overburdened by separation will receive the rest they deserve in the arms of those they love, for there is nothing quite like coming home!

Commander Ian Crabtree is a retired Royal Navy Warfare Officer, currently employed as the Pastoral Assistant to the Royal Navy Roman Catholic Chaplaincy.

Welcome home!



Jesus teaches us a new way of thinking. He opens before us a horizon brimming with life, beauty, truth and fulfilment.

Pope Francis

For those in peril on the sea

By Sr Janet Fearn FMDM

"Less than a mile from the Bar lightship
By a mighty wave *Ellan Vannin* was hit
She sank in the waters of Liverpool Bay
There she lies until this day
Oh *Ellan Vannin*, of the Isle of Man Company
Oh *Ellan Vannin*, lost in the Irish Sea."
Hughie Jones, The Spinners

On 3 December 1909, *RMS Ellan Vannin* sailed from the Isle of Man towards Liverpool.

Without modern technology, nobody expected hurricane-force winds and heavy seas. Huge waves and hurricane-force winds caused the loss of the ship, all fifteen passengers, twenty-one crew, mail and sixty tonnes of cargo. The crew left eighteen widows and seventy-one children.

The subsequent Board of Trade Enquiry found that Captain James Teare, in unprecedented conditions, had tried to save the ship, which was "in good condition and fully seaworthy".

The sinking of the *Ellan Vannin*, remembered in song, also shows the dangers faced by seafarers. That's why we pray "for those in peril on the sea". May God be with them.

Sr Janet Fearn is a Franciscan Missionary of the Divine Motherhood.

Lord God, we depend on you for life itself. We depend on seafarers for many of our daily needs. Watch over them, keep them from danger, befriend them in loneliness and bring them safely home to those they love.  Amen.



Sea Sunday supports the work of the Apostleship of the Sea, the Catholic

Church's maritime agency that provides spiritual and welfare support to seafarers arriving in Great Britain and ports around the world. Its extensive network of port chaplains and ship visitors offer pastoral and practical assistance to seafarers who work far from home, separated from their families, sometimes in harsh working conditions.

Today:
Zechariah 9:9-10
Romans 8:9, 11-13
Matthew 11:25-30

Monday:
Genesis 28:10-22
Matthew 9:18-26

Tuesday:
Genesis 32:22-32
Matthew 9:32-38

Wednesday:
Genesis 41:55-57;
42:5-7, 17-24
Matthew 10:1-7

Thursday:
Genesis 44:18-21,
23-29; 45:1-5
Matthew 10:7-15

Friday:
Genesis 46:1-7, 28-30
Matthew 10:16-23

Saturday:
Genesis 49:29-33;
50:15-26
Matthew 10:24-33

Next Sunday:
Isaiah 55:10-11
Romans 8:18-23
Matthew 13:1-23