

SUNDAY PLUS

From sea to sea

For those in peril on the sea

By Sr Janet Fearn FMDM

"I'm sure that she must have travelled to America at least once in her lifetime and she just *had* to be one of the first settlers of Boston". Well, no. Christopher Columbus didn't create package tours from Leeds to America within two years of his setting foot on the continent. Neither did he facilitate multiple return journeys for female passengers, each lasting several years. My ancestor also died 200 years before the foundation of Boston – but my American correspondent remained unconvinced.

Seafarers have always taken risks once they leave port. In 2023, marine archaeologists discovered a 2000-year-old wrecked merchant vessel off the coast of Sicily, its cargo of clay storage jars virtually intact. The Mediterranean is littered with thousands of shipwrecks, most of them unknown and unexplored.

Many people laughed when, some years ago, a container filled with toy ducks became unfastened and slipped from the deck into the sea. It broke and thousands of little yellow ducks floated across the ocean. Some are still appearing on shores across the world. Yet how often have crews shouted, "Man overboard!" and risked their lives to try to save a colleague? How often have families stood on the shore, hoping to greet a loved one as a ship comes into port?

A fisherman remarked, "We know the sea in all its moods. We respect it and we fear it. That's why we survive."

Today is Sea Sunday, when we remember countless seafarers across the world. We pray for them and their families, remembering especially "those in peril on the sea".

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

Here in the city, right in the city, we need Jesus Christ's message. We thus ask the Holy Spirit for this grace of apostolic zeal: be Christians with apostolic zeal. And if we make others uncomfortable, blessed be the Lord. Let's go, and as the Lord says to Paul: "take courage!"

Pope Francis

Feast of the week

Sea Sunday

Stella Maris* is an International maritime charity supporting seafarers, fishers and their families in the UK and around the world.

Stella Maris is the largest ship-visiting network in the world, and the official maritime charity of the Catholic Church.

Seafarers often have to work

away from their families and local communities for nine to twelve months at a time. Across the world, we aim to provide a "friend in every port" and stand alongside seafarers and fishers to ensure their rights are upheld. For 100 years we've been extending the hand of friendship, and welcoming seafarers and fishers to our shores.

Our network of chaplains

and volunteers makes more than 70,000 ship visits each year and supports hundreds of thousands of seafarers and fishermen in times of need.

*The new name for The Apostleship of the Sea



STELLA MARIS

For seafarers

By Pope Francis


Around ninety per cent of the world's goods are transported by ships, which is made possible by the daily work of over one and a half million people, many of whom are far removed for months at a time from the support of their families

as well as their social and religious communities.

Here, I would repeat the words I addressed directly to all suffering seafarers: "Know that you are not alone and that you are not forgotten... Your work at sea often keeps you apart from others, but you are close to me in my thoughts and prayers, and in those of your chaplains and the volunteers of Stella

Maris" [The Apostleship of the Sea].

In this regard, we know all too well that, despite advances in technology, many maritime workers are subject not only to the aforementioned challenges associated with separation from their homelands, but also continue to suffer from a variety of unjust working conditions and other deprivations, aggravated not least by the effects of climate change.

Our Lady, Stella Maris, Star of the Sea, may you guide, always and everywhere, all people of the sea and those who care and minister to them.  Amen.

Today:
Amos 7:12-15
Ephesians 1:3-14
Mark 6:7-13

Monday:
Isaiah 1:10-17
Matthew 10:34 – 11:1

Tuesday:
Isaiah 7:1-9
Matthew 11:20-24

Wednesday:
Isaiah 10:5-7, 13-16
Matthew 11:25-27

Thursday:
Isaiah 26:7-9, 12, 16-19
Matthew 11:28-30

Friday:
Isaiah 38:1-6, 21-22, 7-8
Matthew 12:1-8

Saturday:
Micah 2:1-5
Matthew 12:14-21

Next Sunday:
Jeremiah 23:1-6
Ephesians 2:13-18
Mark 6:30-34