

# SUNDAY *Plus*

15th Sunday in Ordinary Time **Divine Office Week III** Year C**Sea Sunday**

## Titanic martyr

"The ship was sinking but the priests refused to go into the lifeboats. They stayed on the deck, hearing confessions, helping passengers to climb into the boats and offering whatever support they could until the *Titanic* finally sank..."

Of the very few passengers willing to brave the cold, Fr Byles had been reciting the Breviary, fully dressed in his priestly garb, while walking back and forth on the upper deck at the moment the *Titanic* struck the iceberg. He acted bravely in his capacity as a spiritual leader. Descending to the Third Class and calming the people, Fr Byles gave them his priestly blessing and began to hear confessions; after which, he began the recitation of the Rosary. He then led the Third Class passengers up to the boat deck and helped load the lifeboats. He gave words of consolation and encouragement to the women and children as they got into the boats. As the danger became even more




apparent, he went about hearing more confessions and giving absolution. By all accounts, Fr Byles was twice offered a seat in a lifeboat but refused. After the last lifeboat was gone, he went to the after end of the boat deck and led the recitation of the Rosary for a large group kneeling around him of those who were not able to find room in the boats. Fr Byles also exhorted the people to prepare to meet God. As 2:20 a.m. approached, and the stern rose higher and higher out of the sea, Father Byles led the more than one hundred people kneeling before him in the Act of Contrition and gave them general absolution."

Fr Scott Archer

Other reports add that Fr Byles stayed alive in the icy ocean until shortly before the arrival of the *Carpathia*, swimming between the people floating in the water and hanging on to wreckage, still offering support and the sacrament of reconciliation. Eventually, through sheer exhaustion, he died.

*The cause for canonisation of Fr Thomas Byles (1870-1912), from Headingley in Yorkshire, ordained to the priesthood from the Pontifical Bede College in Rome, is currently in process*

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.



### Jubilee 2025: Pilgrims of Hope

#### Remember seafarers

There is no Jubilee of Seafarers as such, but Sea Sunday reminds us to pray for them and for all those who don't draw attention to themselves but whose work helps to keep us alive. As Pope Francis said,

"Creation, our common home, is comprised of a vast expanse of water, which is essential for life and human commerce, not to mention tourism. It should not be surprising, therefore, that around ninety percent of the world's goods are transported by ships, which is made possible by the daily work of over 1,500,000 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..."

Despite advances in technology, many maritime workers... also continue to suffer from a variety of unjust working conditions and other deprivations, aggravated not least by the effects of climate change.

Moreover, damage to marine environments, as to others, disproportionately affects the poorest and most vulnerable of our brothers and sisters, whose very livelihoods are even threatened with extinction."



God will bless us, if on land and at sea we know how to take care of the weakest.

Pope Francis

### READINGS

**Today:**  
Deuteronomy 30:10-14  
Colossians 1:15-20  
Luke 10:25-37

**Monday:**  
Exodus 1:8-14, 22  
Matthew 10:34 - 11:1

**Tuesday:**  
Exodus 2:1-15a  
Matthew 11:20-24

**Wednesday:**  
Exodus 3:1-6, 9-12  
Matthew 11:25-27

**Thursday:**  
Exodus 3:13-20  
Matthew 11:28-30

**Friday:**  
Exodus 11:10 - 12:14  
Matthew 12:1-8

**Saturday:**  
Exodus 12:37-42  
Matthew 12:14-21

**Next Sunday:**  
Genesis 18:1-10  
Colossians 1:24-28  
Luke 10:38-42