



Catholic Church's National Appeal for SEA SUNDAY 11 July 2021

SUGGESTED APPEAL TALK A Time of Pandemic and Vaccinations

“Courage, I am with you!” (ref Matt 14:27) As the pandemic continues to disturb our world, humankind is faced with an uncertain future. We see fear and hopelessness rampant in many countries around the world.

News on television continue to surprise us with rising cases of the virus and even the variety of vaccines currently available do not give us enough confidence that the pandemic will soon be over.

Seafarers in ships around the world have been affected in several ways. Aside from the usual hardships of working at sea, they have had to face more hardships as they work aboard ships beyond the expiry of their initial contracts. They also face the possibility of being infected by the virus in the countries they dock in. With air travel disrupted, flights between traditional crew change hubs have been reduced.

Although some countries have offered to vaccinate seafarers, many more nations still do not recognise the seafarers as key workers, thus, they have not prioritised them to receive the vaccine.

Nevertheless, seafarers play an important role in the distribution of food and medical supplies to countries around the world, especially places

where these are most needed and especially during this time of pandemic.

There is a high risk of seafarers' physical and mental wellbeing being affected significantly.

During this difficult time of the pandemic, we are reminded of the scriptures in Matthew 14: 26-27:

"When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear. But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."

As the hands and feet of Jesus in the ports, our chaplains, managers, and volunteers are there to support seafarers in varied ways, despite the difficulties. They are there to assure our seafarers that help is still available.

Today, Sea Sunday, Stella Maris Australia (formerly called Apostleship of the Sea), would like you to remember these workers in the seas.

We encourage you to pray for them. We also welcome donations to support seafarers and for our centres to continue their services, albeit in different ways during this pandemic. For more information on the work of this ministry and to make a donation, please visit:

www.stellamarisaustralia.org

We thank you for listening to our Appeal today.
We also invoke Mary's assistance in this ministry:

Mary, Star of the Sea. Pray for us.