

GOODNEWS

From The Ministry to Seafarers

January 2010, No. 58

A Christmas to Remember!

by Michelle DePooter

Ahhhhh, finally! Its been a long, but great, month. The Christmas parcels are at last all delivered. This past year we were blessed to receive enough Christmas parcels to deliver to all the ships that arrived in the port of Montreal from the end of November through Christmas!

On Christmas Day, my husband and I had the pleasure of being on board the *M.V. Toronto Express*, attending the ship's Christmas party. The entire crew on this ship was from India, except for the Third Officer who was a young woman from the U.K.

When we arrived on board, all of the officers and crew had gathered together and were enjoying a delicious Christmas meal. After everyone had

eaten their fill, the Captain called us together to share the Christmas cake and sing some well-loved carols.

Afterwards, one of the crew members read the letter that we include with the parcels telling them why we give out the parcels and sharing the story of the birth of Christ. They then started handing out the Christmas presents which had been placed under the tree.

I was sitting next to the Third Officer when she received hers, and she was quite excited to open it! She wasn't expecting much, but she opened the box and kept pulling out one item after another, all individually wrapped in pink tissue paper. She was thrilled to find a warm scarf and hat along with some chocolates, and other small items!

- 1540** number of Christmas parcels distributed
- 84** number of ships that received Christmas parcels
- 3595** number of kilometers traveled by the parcel from furthest away (Edmonton, AB!)
- 44** number of churches that participated
- 52** number of pounds of turkey cooked for Christmas Eve dinner
- 759** number of Christmas cookies baked by Michelle in 6 hours (and we're talking fancy cookies)

One of the gifts she liked the most was a small devotional book that gave a short history of some of the most popular Christmas carols, and included the words to the carols, so she now could sing without forgetting the words. It was a great way to spend Christmas for Don and me!

Other ships also expressed their joy at receiving gifts. On one ship, as soon as I climbed aboard, several seafarers immediately thanked me for the gifts and asked if I could send thank you letters to the people who had prepared the gifts—they had their letters ready and handed them to me right away! Many seafarers told me time and again how much they appreciated receiving a gift, and were touched that someone remembered them while they were out at sea away from home.

We may never know the impact of the gifts on those who receive them, but we pray that God will use them for His honor and glory, and that some may find Him, the greatest gift of all, during the upcoming year.



Handmade
tuques warmed
many seafaring
heads (and
hearts) during
the holidays!



Dear Michelle,

On behalf of master and crew of our vessel Maersk Palermo, I want to thank you and all your colleagues for all your efforts to collect, make and bring the Christmas presents on board. This morning we were all together with coffee time, memorize the birth of Jesus 2000 years ago, and gave the presents away. We enjoyed it all very much and it is nice to realize that even when we are at sea, people are thinking to us!

Once again, a big THANK YOU to all of you and the best wishes for a prosperous new year,

Rob Dekker

o/b mv Maersk Palermo

A Litany of Intercession for Seafarers

O God the Father, Creator of the world, have mercy upon us.
O God the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy upon us.
O God the Holy Spirit, Lord and Giver of life, have mercy upon us.
For the wrong we have done and for the good we have failed to do, forgive us, Father.
From self-centeredness, lack of concern for seafarers and failure to understand their needs, deliver us, O Lord.

Thanksgiving

For the pioneers of shipbuilding and seafaring,
and for those who have spent their lives at sea, we thank you, O Lord.
For the skills of seamanship, and for modern aids to navigation, we thank you, O Lord.
For food, fuel, and raw materials for industry brought over the seas, we thank you, O Lord.
For the dedicated service among seafarers of men and women of God, and for the ever-increasing co-operation of Christian societies ministering and evangelizing seafarers, we thank you, O Lord.

Intercession for All Seafarers

Because of your concern for those who sailed with you, hear us, O Lord.
From forgetfulness of you and neglect of their inner life, preserve them, O Lord.
In dangers and temptations at sea and ashore, guard them, O Lord.
In loneliness and boredom, and anxiety about loved ones at home, comfort them, O Lord.
In times of unemployment, trouble and despair, strengthen them, O Lord.
In sickness and pain and in the hour of death, sustain them, O Lord.

Now unto him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we can ask of conceive of; by the power which is at work among us, to him be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus throughout all ages. Amen.

The Lord be with you, and also with you. Go now to love and serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Be an Example of the Believers

by George Couperus

While picking up sailors from ships, I came face to face with Parma. We had not seen each other for over ten years! He happily invited me onto the ship, and as we headed for his cabin he stopped at several doors to introduce me to his friends. We visited for a while, and he insisted I come back and share dinner with him the next day. The next day I headed out with Dave, one of our chaplains, to introduce him to Parma (Dave and Michelle visit these ships each time they come into port). Sitting down to eat, Dave explained how we generally ask a blessing before we eat our food, and he went on to pray a simple prayer over the meal we would share together. I was reminded then how glad I am that our church has a chaplain here in Montreal to represent us, the body of Christ, to men who come here time and again from far away—men like Parma.



The Ministry to Seafarers

Chaplain: Michelle DePooter
Asst. Chaplain: David Rozeboom
Administrator: Albertha Bosch

Place d'Armes Postal Station
Box 815
Montreal, Quebec
Canada H2Y 3J2

Tel.: (514) 844-1476 or (514) 849-3234
Fax: (514) 849-2874
min2seaf@colba.net
www.ministrytoseafarers.org