

GOODNEWS

From The Ministry to Seafarers

A Fair Future for Seafarers

by Patty Sarazen

June 25th is the *International Day of the Seafarer*, recognizing the contributions of seafarers to international trade and the world economy. This year the theme is **a fair future for seafarers (#FairFuture4Seafarers)**.

During the pandemic, global trade continued at great personal cost to seafarers and their families. Despite being denied shore leave and crew changes in many cases, the bright spot is that vaccinations for seafarers have begun! We're glad to be part of a sub-committee of the *Canada Seafarers' Welfare Board* studying the issue of vaccinations because we think a fair future gives seafarers options to be vaccinated **in any port**, regardless of where they're from.

In April, a strike in the Port of Montreal mostly brought things to a halt for a week. Many ships sat at anchor waiting it out. Seafarers always seem to get caught in the middle of everyone else's problems!

Only about 20% of ships docking in Montreal have shore leave and the mental strain on confined seafarers is unsustainable. As one seafarer said to Chaplain Michelle recently, *"I can see Tim Hortons from my ship but I cannot even get off to grab a cup of coffee and a donut."*

Many feel imprisoned and trapped. They are happy to see us when we visit to bring their requested supplies but it's not the same as being able to run their own errands or to simply wander around on land, away from the clanging and banging of ship life.

Crew changes are also still being delayed or postponed. Seafarers are often told that a crew change will happen "in the next port" only to be told of more delays upon arriving there. Referring to long, extended contracts, Chief Officer Alex said recently to our chaplain, *"If you see me next time, I will not be happy. If you don't see me, you'll know I'm happy."*

So, a fair future for seafarers really involves options to be vaccinated, to have shore leave and to have regular crew changes. Seafarers need to have a sense of control in their decision-making, not only for their sakes but for the sake of their families too. After all, the reason they do this challenging work is to provide for their loved ones.

Chaplain David recently commented that seafarers have about as much autonomy as a three-year old child. Seafarers think it's time to enforce the Maritime Labour Convention

that governs the maritime industry and we agree. **On June 25th, look for the #FairFuture4Seafarers hashtag and join the conversation.** We'll be present on social media and we'll also be making the day as special as possible for seafarers who are docked in our port.

In addition to running countless errands for seafarers, we continue to provide seafarers with tools to help them cope: linking to ISWAN's *SeafarerHelp* line and ICMA's *Chat to a Chaplain* on our social media and providing free resources such as Bibles, devotionals and other reading material.



Challenge '21

In March we launched *Challenge '21* for donors, supporters and seafarers. Each month we issue a different monthly seafarer-themed challenge aimed to keep seafarers top of mind. The goal is to have fun together while we're apart. It's also an opportunity for you to share parts of your life and family traditions with seafarers who largely remain isolated. The campaign is picking up momentum and we hope many more of you will participate in the months to come!

www.ministrytoseafarers.org/c21

#m2sChallenge21

#m2smtl



Participants in the March Challenge...Zumba!

June Challenge...Ship Shape!

Ship Shape reminds us that safety on board a ship is key. Some of the most difficult ship visits we make are to crews that have lost a co-worker to an accident. It's estimated that 75-96% of shipping accidents are due to human error¹. That does not include all the safety incidents on board vessels.

Did you know?

In Canada, accidents are the third leading cause of death². For seniors, everyday activities like household chores and walking account for over half their injuries, according to Statistics Canada. So perhaps it's time to apply some ship shape practices to our homes, yards, vehicles and work spaces!

We challenge every participant to take the month of June to declutter, repair, restore, improve, adjust, renovate, mend or rebuild something. Don't forget to take BEFORE and AFTER pictures and share them with us.

As you go about your work, remember the daily dangers seafarers face and pray for them.

¹ www.maritimejournal.com/news101/insurance,-legal-and-finance/human-error-accounts-for-75-of-marine-liability-losses

² www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1310039401

Giving Goals



Overall giving is up 3% over last year and individuals are making up the shortfall from the churches. Your generosity is especially appreciated

as our investment income continues to recover. **Thank you!** Please continue to pray for our fundraising efforts through granting organizations. We are committed to making up our annual budget shortfall but so far, we have not received any positive responses.

Join the **Great Canadian Giving Challenge** at *CanadaHelps* all month of June. Donations above \$3 made through *CanadaHelps* earn us the chance to win this national, public contest (\$20,000 prize).

We are also specifically looking for 3 more donors to become monthly givers (\$30) to cover the yearly cost of our app so that we can continue to offer seafarers Bible content, encouragement and hope. Speaking of Bibles, if you're interested in a **Konkani** language Bible, let us know. We received an extra shipment with more than we need.

Don't forget... you can visit our website to sign up for LIFEBOAT, our prayer guide or follow us on the ECHO prayer app with real-time updates.



Save the Date

Our 2nd annual **Seaway Bike Tour** will be held on Saturday, September 11, 2021. Sign up to receive updates on our website: www.ministrytoseafarers.org/bike-tour.



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