

Press Release

The Apostleship of the Sea



An early Christmas:- 'Just in Time for Tide and Seamen'

The Apostleship of the Sea reaches out to seafarers who are constantly on the move in their ships delivering the goods we often take for granted. Seafarers are often away from their loved ones for up to 9 months with no contact. At Christmas time this separation and isolation is felt all the more. The Chaplains and volunteers of Apostleship of the Sea work particularly hard in all UK ports at Christmas time to offer hospitality and pastoral care and small gifts donated by local parishes, to the visiting seafarers away from home and family at Christmas.

Yesterday was a perfect example of the work carried out by Apostleship of the Sea volunteers and supporters. Christmas gifts from a local parish were delivered to the seafarers centre in Bristol. A crew of Filipino seafarers had just completed the unloading of their car carrier ship from Japan and were about to sail on that afternoon tide for another port in Europe before spending Christmas at sea and returning to Japan in late January. One Seafarer told the volunteers that he left home and his young family 16 months ago and that he will have been away for two years by the time he gets home. The seafarers thanked the Apostleship of the Sea volunteers and port chaplain for their friendship and the local parishioners for their kind gifts...not to be opened, the seafarers said, until far away at sea and away from home on Christmas day!

Over 1200 ships call at Bristol docks each year; that means over 150,000 seafarers away from home and working hard so that we can maintain the lifestyles we are used to. The Apostleship of the Sea asks all help be a 'link in the chain' of their outreach of pastoral care at this Christmas time. Apostleship of the sea is a maritime welfare charity, providing vital practical and pastoral support to seafarers. The work of Apostleship of the Sea is funded wholly by voluntary contributions. For more information about Apostleship of the Sea call 07712864747.

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Further information for Editors

The Apostleship of the Sea, AOS, is a maritime welfare charity, providing practical and pastoral support to seafarers, regardless of race, colour or creed (if any).

Ninety percent of world trade is carried by ship, and some 100,000 seafarers visit British ports each year. They are commonly away from home for nine to 12 months at a time, suffering loneliness, depression and even exploitation. They also have to work in gruelling and often dangerous conditions. AOS chaplains and ship visitors welcome seafarers to our shores. They recognise them as brothers with an intrinsic human dignity which can be overlooked in the modern globalised maritime industry. For more information visit www.apostleshipofthesea.org.uk

For further information about the work and vision of AOS please contact Sheila Bailey Director of Fundraising and Communications Tel: 07712864747 or at sheilabailey@apostleshipofthesea.org.uk