

# Stella Maris

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May 2019

## Inside

**Sunday at Sea**

**The Good Life**  
Dental Care

**Port focus**  
Southampton,  
Great Britain

**Faith Stories**  
On Praying for  
Your Children



**Apostleship  
of the Sea**

Supporting Seafarers Worldwide

## Stella Maris (Apostleship of the Sea) is a Catholic charity supporting seafarers worldwide.

We provide practical and pastoral care to all seafarers, regardless of nationality, belief or race. Our port chaplains and volunteer ship visitors welcome seafarers, offer welfare services and advice, practical help, care and friendship.

Stella Maris is the largest ship visiting network in the world, working in 339 ports with 227 port chaplains around the world.

We are only able to continue our work through the generous donations of our supporters and volunteers.

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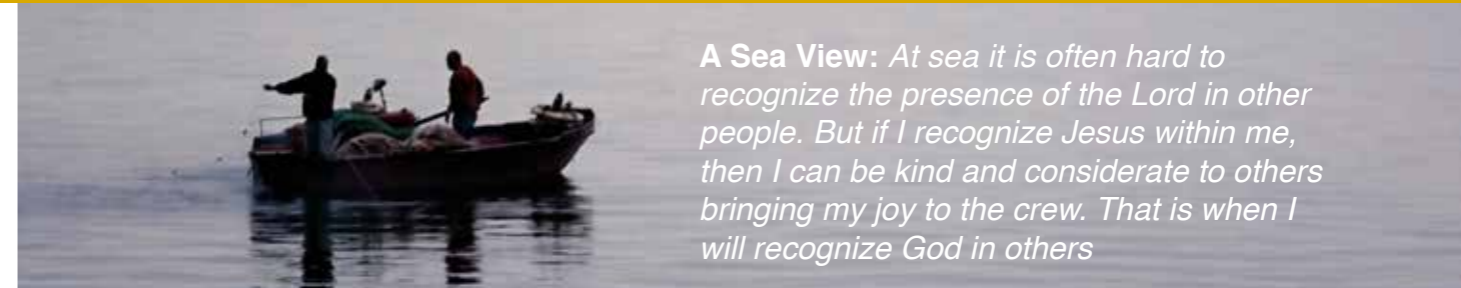
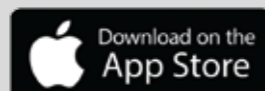


Stella Maris provides seafarers with **practical support, information and a listening ear**



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*A Sea View: At sea it is often hard to recognize the presence of the Lord in other people. But if I recognize Jesus within me, then I can be kind and considerate to others bringing my joy to the crew. That is when I will recognize God in others*

## Sunday at Sea

5th May 2019 – 3rd Sunday of Easter

Commentary by Fr John W Lavers with material from [www.dailyscripture.servantsoftheword.org](http://www.dailyscripture.servantsoftheword.org)

### Gospel John 21:1-14

Jesus showed himself again to the disciples. It was by the Sea of Tiberias, and it happened like this: Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee and two more of his disciples were together. Simon Peter said, 'I'm going fishing.' They replied, 'We'll come with you.' They went out and got into the boat but caught nothing that night.

It was light by now and there stood Jesus on the shore, though the disciples did not realise that it was Jesus. Jesus called out, 'Have you caught anything, friends?' And when they answered, 'No,' he said, 'Throw the net out to starboard and you'll find something.' So they dropped the net, and there were so many fish that they could not haul it in. The disciple Jesus loved said to Peter, 'It is the Lord.' At these words 'It is the Lord', Simon Peter, who had practically nothing on, wrapped his cloak round him and jumped into the water. The other disciples came on in the boat, towing the net and the fish; they were only about a hundred yards from land.

As soon as they came ashore they saw that there was some bread there, and a charcoal fire with fish cooking on it. Jesus said, 'Bring some of the fish you have just caught.' Simon Peter went aboard and dragged the net to the shore, full of big fish, one hundred and fifty-three of them; and in spite of there being so many the net was not broken. Jesus said to them, 'Come and have breakfast.' None of the disciples was bold enough to ask, 'Who are you?'; they knew quite well it was the Lord. Jesus then stepped forward, took the bread and gave it to them, and the same with the fish. This was the third time that Jesus showed himself to the disciples after rising from the dead.

### The Gospel and You

Why didn't the apostles immediately recognize the Lord when he greeted them at the Sea of Tiberias? The Gospel of St John gives us a clue. He states that Peter decided to return to his home district of Galilee, very likely so he could resume his fishing career. Peter was discouraged and didn't know what to do after the death of Jesus. The other apostles followed him back to Galilee. It was at the very beginning of Jesus' ministry in Galilee that the Lord dramatically approached Peter in his fishing boat after a futile night of fishing and commanded him to lower his nets (see Luke 5:4-11). After a miraculous catch, Jesus told Peter that he would be 'catching people' for the kingdom of God. Now Jesus repeats the same miracle. John, the beloved disciple, is the first to recognize the Lord. Peter impulsively leaps from the boat and runs to the Lord. Do you run to the Lord when you meet setbacks, disappointments, or trials? The Lord is ever ready to renew us in faith and to give us fresh hope in his promises.

In this third appearance to the apostles after his resurrection, Jesus performed another miraculous catch of fish, he prepared breakfast and ate with them. Peter's prompt recognition of the Master and exclamation, 'It is the Lord!' stands in sharp contrast to his previous denial of his Master during the night of Jesus' arrest.

St John tells us that God is love (1 John 4:16). His love is unconditional, unmerited, and without limit. It lasts forever. It's the beginning and the end – it's the reason God created us and why he wants us to be united with him. God's love heals and transforms our lives and frees us from fear, selfishness, and greed. It draws us to the very heart of God and it compels us to give to him the best we have and all we possess – our gifts, our time, our resources, our full allegiance, and our very lives. St Paul tells us that God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us (Romans 5:5).

## Fourth Sunday of Easter

### 12th May 2019

#### Gospel John 10:27-30

Jesus said:  
 'The sheep that belong to me listen to my voice;  
 I know them and they follow me.  
 I give them eternal life;  
 they will never be lost  
 and no one will ever steal them from me.  
 The Father who gave them to me is greater  
 than anyone,  
 and no one can steal from the Father.  
 The Father and I are one.'

**A Sea View: Standing watch in the middle of the night can be a very lonely time, or it can be the best time to listen to God speaking to us in our hearts. Remember, silence is the language of God, listen to Him.**



#### The Gospel and You

How secure is our faith and trust in God? Scripture describes God's word as a "lamp for our feet and a light for our steps" (Psalm 119:105). The Jewish Feast of the Dedication of the Temple is also called the Festival of Lights or Hanukkah. This feast was held in late December, near the time we celebrate Christmas. This is the time of year when the day is shortest and the night longest. Jesus used this occasion to declare that he is the true light of the world (John 8:12). In his light we can see who God truly is and we can find the true path to heaven. Jesus also speaks of the great trust he has in God his Father and the tremendous trust we ought to have in him, our Good Shepherd.

The security Jesus offers is an abiding relationship with the living God, and membership of his flock, the people of God. Jesus also promises the security of peace and protection from evil and the greatest harm that could befall us -- eternal punishment. The Lord does not spare us from all trouble. In this life we will experience pain, suffering, sickness, and death. But through these, the Lord will lead us to ultimate victory and safety in his everlasting home. Even in the midst of our sufferings we can find a peace and security which no one can give except God alone. We can confidently follow the Lord wherever he leads, trusting that nothing can keep us from God if we trust in him.

## Fifth Sunday of Easter

### 19th May 2019

#### Gospel John 13:31-35

When Judas had gone Jesus said:  
 'Now has the Son of Man been glorified,  
 and in him God has been glorified.  
 If God has been glorified in him,  
 God will in turn glorify him in himself,  
 and will glorify him very soon.  
 My little children,  
 I shall not be with you much longer.  
 I give you a new commandment:  
 love one another;  
 just as I have loved you,  
 you also must love one another.  
 By this love you have for one another,  
 everyone will know that you are my disciples.'

**A Sea View: The greatest commandment Jesus gave to us was to love God and love our neighbour. It is hard on a ship to express that holy love to everyone, but this is the greatest challenge Jesus is asking of the seafarer... love others without condition as God loves us without condition.**

#### The Gospel and You

How does God reveal his glory to us? In his Last Supper discourse, Jesus speaks of his glory and the glory of his Father. What is this glory? It is the cross which Jesus speaks of here. The cross of Jesus shows us that the greatest glory in life is the glory of willingly sacrificing one's life for the sake of another. In the cross God reveals the breadth of his great love for sinners and the power of redemption which cancels the debt of sin and reverses the curse of our condemnation. Jesus gave his Father supreme honour and glory through his obedience and willingness to sacrifice his life on the cross. The greatest trust one can give to their leader is the willingness to obey in the line of duty, even to the point of putting oneself in harm's way. In warfare the greatest honour belongs not to those who survive but to those who give the supreme sacrifice of their lives. Jesus also speaks of the Father bringing glory to the Son through the great mystery of the Incarnation and Cross of Christ. God the Father gave us his only begotten Son for our sake, to redeem us from slavery to sin and death. He freely offered his Son as the atoning sacrifice for our sins and the sins of the world.

There is no greater proof of God's love for us than the Cross of Jesus Christ. In the cross we see a new way of love – a love that is selfless, sacrificial, forgiving and compassionate beyond comprehension. Jesus commands us, his disciples, to love one another just as he has loved us. Through the victory of the cross and resurrection, we have access to God's grace and mercy. God gives us new life through the gift of the Holy Spirit and he fills our hearts with faith, hope, and love. St Paul reminds us that "God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us" (Romans 5:5). As we turn to God with trust and obedience, he transforms our hearts and frees us to love others with compassion and kindness.



## Sixth Sunday of Easter

### 26th May 2019

#### Gospel John 14:23-29

Jesus said to his disciples:  
 'If anyone loves me he will keep my word,  
 and my Father will love him,  
 and we shall come to him  
 and make our home with him.  
 Those who do not love me do not keep  
 my words.  
 And my word is not my own:  
 it is the word of the one who sent me.  
 I have said these things to you  
 while still with you;  
 but the Advocate, the Holy Spirit,  
 whom the Father will send in my name,  
 will teach you everything  
 and remind you of all I have said to you.  
 Peace I bequeath to you,  
 my own peace I give you,  
 a peace the world cannot give, this is my gift  
 to you.  
 Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid.  
 You heard me say:  
 I am going away, and shall return.  
 If you loved me you would have been glad to  
 know that I am going to the Father,  
 for the Father is greater than I.  
 I have told you this now before it happens,  
 so that when it does happen you may believe.'

**A Sea View: Life at sea can be very stressful for a seafarer, but trust in God alone through invoking the Holy Spirit.... Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of your love...**

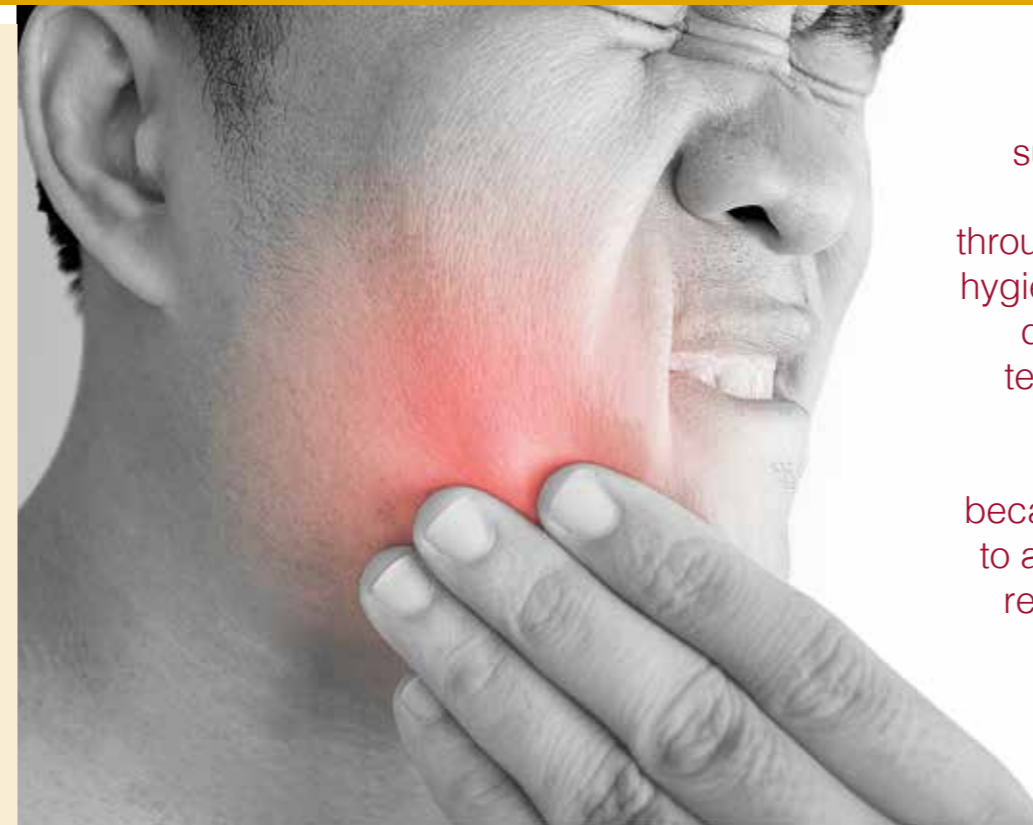
#### The Gospel and You

What makes us both truly human and truly like God? It is love that unites us in a bond of fellowship with others and with God. From the very beginning of creation God said: it is not good that man should be alone (Genesis 2:18). We were created in love for love - to be a community of loving persons, just as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are united in love. Blessed John Henry Newman said: "We love because it is our nature to love, and it is our nature because God the Holy Spirit has made it our nature." Jesus speaks to his disciples of the inseparable bond of love between himself and the Father, and of their love for mankind. In Jesus we see the fullness of God's love and how God's love is directed to our well-being. In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that "God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might have life through him" (1 John 4:9).

We may ask, how do we know that God loves us? In the cross we see the proof of God's love for us and the incredible price God was willing to pay for our redemption. Jesus gave up his life that we might have life - abundant, everlasting life with God - a life of love and unity with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit forever. Through the cross Jesus opened a new way of relationship for us as adopted sons and daughters of God - his beloved children (Romans 8:14-17).

Jesus calls his disciples to walk in his way of love through obedience to the will of the Father. True love is more than sentiment or good intentions. As important as these may be they are not the proof of sincere love. True love for God is expressed in obedience and obedience is expressed in love. Jesus promised to give his followers the best of gifts, the Holy Spirit as their Counsellor and Helper.

The Holy Spirit is our Advocate and Helper who brings us safely through the challenges and adversities we must face in this life. The Holy Spirit is also the Giver of life - the life of God - and the One who guides us in the way of truth. We can never stop learning because the Spirit leads us more and more into the knowledge of God's love and truth. Jesus also promised his followers the gift of peace. Peace is more than the absence of conflict or trouble. Peace includes everything which makes for our highest good. Trust in God, faith in his promises, and obedience to his word lead us to peace and safety in God's presence. That is why a Christian need not fear or be troubled by anything.



Modern dentistry has succeeded in reducing the incidence of tooth decay through water fluoridation, oral hygiene education, preventive dental care and advanced technology. However, there is a greater risk of dental problems for seafarers because of the limited access to advanced dental care and regular control while at sea.

## The Good Life Dental Care

Toothache may range from a distressing inconvenience to intense, miserable pain. Toothache is difficult to treat with only the medication and instruments in the ship's medical chest. Toothache might adversely affect your performance, upset your concentration and generally pose a real safety risk. It is therefore extremely important to take good care of your teeth and have regular checkups at the dentist, especially before embarkation. Remember that dental care systems and the quality of care you may get in foreign ports may vary a lot from what you are used to. Prevention of tooth decay can really prevent a lot of pain and suffering while onboard.

Some of the most frequent Dental Problems are:

**Tooth Decay:** this is damage to the tooth's structure, described as a "disease of civilization," since man has strayed from a diet rich in fruit and vegetables to one with a high intake of refined sugars.

**Gum Disease:** is an inflammation of the gums that can progress to affect the bone that surrounds and supports your teeth. This can cause teeth to become loose, fall out or have to be removed by a dentist.

**Root Canal Problems:** occur when the tooth's pulp, a small, thread-like tissue in the centre of the tooth is damaged or diseased. If left untreated, pus can build up at the root tip in the jawbone, forming an abscess. With the limited facilities for care onboard, prevention is vital!

#### Hygiene

Proper brushing should take two minutes!  
 But most seafarers (and other people) do not brush for nearly that long! To brush your teeth properly:

- use short, gentle strokes
- pay extra attention to the gumline, hard-to-reach back teeth, and areas around fillings, crowns or other restoration work
- concentrate on thoroughly cleaning each section as follows:
  - first the outer surfaces of your upper teeth, then your lower teeth
  - then the inner surfaces of your upper teeth, followed by your lower teeth
  - finally clean the chewing surfaces
- for fresher breath, be sure to brush your tongue, too

Toothache may range from a distressing inconvenience to intense, miserable pain.

**Toothbrushes**

A soft-bristled brush is best for removing plaque and debris from your teeth.

Small-headed brushes can reach all areas of the mouth better.

A powered toothbrush can do a better job of cleaning teeth. Replace your toothbrush when it begins to show wear, or at least every three months. It is also very important to change toothbrushes after you've had a cold, since the bristles can collect germs.

**Toothpaste**

Use a toothpaste that's right for you. There is a wide variety of toothpastes for many conditions: cavities, gingivitis, tartar, stained teeth and sensitivity. A small quantity of Fluoride in the saliva can prevent tooth decay so brush your teeth three times a day with a toothpaste containing Fluoride. Too much Fluoride can cause white spots and stripes on the teeth, so don't take Fluoride drops or tablets without consulting a dentist first!

**Losing a tooth**

After a blow to the face or jaw, emergency dental care may save teeth. Should a tooth be knocked out:

- handle it only by the crown
- rinse it with tap water
- do not scrub it
- attempt to place it back in its socket
- if unsuccessful, place it in milk or water
- seek medical advice and dental care!

**Emergency Toothache**

If you lose a filling or find a hole or crack in the enamel (surface of the tooth), apply oil of cloves to the tooth surface. If there is a large hole or crack in the tooth, put a temporary dressing into the cavity as follows:

- first isolate the tooth by putting a 5x5 cm piece of gauze on each side of it
- use a cotton bud or pellet to dry the cavity
- place a drop of oil of cloves on cotton wool, then gently press the cotton wool into the cavity and leave it in place
- Finally, remove the isolating gauze. Repeat this procedure two to three times a day as necessary. Take pain relievers such as paracetamol 1000 mg orally

Rinse out your mouth with warm salty water for five minutes every waking hour, until you can see a dentist. If you think you have an infection or abscess forming, antibiotics may be needed so consult your doctor or dentist as soon as possible. Seek medical advice urgently if you experience:

- difficulty opening the mouth
- difficulty swallowing
- drooling
- difficulty breathing
- swelling in the neck
- pain much beyond the area of the infected tooth

This information is provided courtesy of the International Seafarers' Welfare and Assistance Network, for more information and materials, go to [www.seafarershealth.org](http://www.seafarershealth.org)



Port Focus:  
Southampton, Great Britain



The Port of Southampton is situated on the South Coast of England around 16km inland where two rivers (The River Test and Itchen) meet. The mouth of the river is protected from the weather by the Isle of Wight. It is the UK's busiest cruise ship terminal and its second largest container port. The Port also specialises in the import and export of vehicles to and from the UK.

Southampton is close to London but also has excellent transport links to the rest of Great Britain.

The Port has been in use at least since Roman times and has a strong claim as the site of one of British History's most famous legends. One day King Canute (c.1016 AD) sat on his throne on the seashore dressed in his royal finery in front of all his royal court and ordered the tide to stop so that his clothes would not get wet. Needless to say the tides did not turn back even when ordered to by the King. Canute turned to his followers and said that since only God can turn back the tides God alone should be worshiped and not the King. Canute was crowned as King of England in the year 1016.

The Pilgrim Fathers set off from Southampton on the Mayflower to North America in the Summer of 1620. They arrived in North America in December and endured a harsh winter losing half their number. It was to celebrate their first successful harvest in 1621



that they celebrated the first Thanksgiving feast and began a tradition still celebrated today in the USA.

The Port today is one of the busiest in Britain and the following facilities are available to seafarers who dock in Southampton and the Southern ports:

The Stella Maris-AoS chaplains and volunteers carry a variety of materials for seafarers with them for ship visits. Transportation for seafarers is offered.

At the Fawley refinery terminal there is a small Seafarers' Centre open in the evenings 2 or 3 days a week and transport for seafarers is available if needed. At the main gate of the Fawley terminal there is a small Stella Maris centre for seafarers .



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Do you have a faith story to share? email [info@apostleshipofthesea.org.uk](mailto:info@apostleshipofthesea.org.uk)



## On Praying for Your Children

By Johann Christoph Blumhardt

### Faith Stories

The writings of Lutheran pastor Johann Christoph Blumhardt (1805–1880) spring from his personal experiences of the active power of God in spiritual warfare, revival, and miraculous healing. Here, he writes to a parent concerned about an errant young person.

Question: Why doesn't God answer the prayers of parents for their children to find faith?

Answer: First of all, the assumption that one's prayer is not answered is not always justified. Basically, it is never justified, even if everything

is in order on the part of the one praying. For the fact that an answer is not immediately seen is not yet proof that God has not answered. Thus, many a mother prays that her son may go to Church more regularly, take more part in devotions at home, and show an interest in Christian concerns. But she should not think that her longing will be granted at the very next opportunity. It can take a long time for her prayers to bear fruit. Yet the Lord is already working in secret toward it. Further, prayers for the salvation of one's children cannot find an immediate answer as easily as prayers for delivery from danger or from an illness. In the latter case the Lord can act independently of the person concerned, for it depends on him alone. But for a person to turn and to actively seek his salvation, God's will alone

does not suffice. Something on the part of that person is also needed.

The individual is not a machine which can be maneuvered this way and that at will; he has a free will and can say, "I do not want to." God does not wish to use force. The less inclined a person is, the more is needed on God's part to prepare that free will to become one with God's. Often a person is strongly bound by powerful inclinations and passions, as well as by dark influences. These bonds must be broken one by one before God's influences can take effect. This takes time. Such a person has picked up anti-Christian impulses bit by bit, and so become entangled in unbelief; to shed these impulses, to free one's spirit from everything that makes it unbelieving and profane, can require much time.

God has much work to do before the fruit of his work can be seen. But every mother or father who prays can believe confidently that the Lord becomes active as soon as the request comes to him in the right way. They must have patience until the fruits are shown. Years can go by before the groundwork is laid. Meantime, any afflictions their son may experience can only help the matter on. Even if the results are not fully shown in his lifetime, he can yet be put right on his deathbed. We must not regard anyone as lost so long as someone is praying for him in clear and constant concern.

However, it can also be that not everything is in order with the one praying. This may be the reason that the prayer bears so little fruit. Some people are satisfied so long as their loved ones conduct themselves decently to all appearances and do not neglect Christian conventions. If this is not the case, then they pray for them. But they do not have the highest in mind, often because they themselves are not spiritual enough, are not really in fellowship with the Lord. Then things may work out in a curious way: Here they are, praying for the spiritual well-being of their children, while they themselves do not stand rightly before God. However, even the prayers of such persons are not entirely in vain in God's eyes: he is glad whenever he is approached in prayer. Even unsuitable prayers and intercessions often make a great difference, so that redemption for eternal life takes place which perhaps would not have happened if nobody had prayed. But time must elapse, and circumstances change before the full answer can be given.

Finally, I would like to say that one's prayers accomplish more if one carries a situation quietly on one's heart rather than using many words every day. In the latter case, it often looks as if one were trying to force something from God, wishing to hasten the matter on, contrary to the orderly course it may otherwise take. Then nothing can come of one's strenuous efforts.

Here, then, is the most effective way to pray for one's loved ones: Be mindful at all times that you yourself walk constantly with the Lord, and be attentive to those for whom you pray.

Guard against thoughtlessness, against stupidity, harshness, and strictness, against an overbearing manner that is unfriendly and inconsiderate. Otherwise you will hinder more than you help. All these things must be kept in mind when one prays for one's relatives, and it must all take place before God. Then it may well be that the time will soon come for God's spirit to effect his cause more speedily and fully than has been apparent until now. For the Lord will one day take up his cause again in person. Until then, may he comfort all souls that are troubled about their loved ones, and fill them with patience and faith! In the end, the Lord will indeed lead everything in glory to the salvation of all souls that are commended to him.



Source: Johann Christoph Blumhardt, *Besprechung wichtiger Glaubensfragen aus der Seelsorge hervorgegangen* (Karlsruhe: Evangelischer Schriftenverein für Baden, 1888). Translated by Alan Stevenson. From *Plough Quarterly* No. 19. Copyright © 2019 Plough Publishing House. Reprinted with permission. [www.plough.com](http://www.plough.com)



## Apostleship of the Sea

Supporting Seafarers Worldwide



### **Psalm 40:1-3**

I waited patiently for the LORD;  
he inclined to me and heard my cry.  
He drew me up from the pit of destruction,  
out of the miry bog,  
and set my feet upon a rock,  
making my steps secure.  
He put a new song in my mouth,  
a song of praise to our God.  
Many will see and fear,  
and put their trust in the LORD.