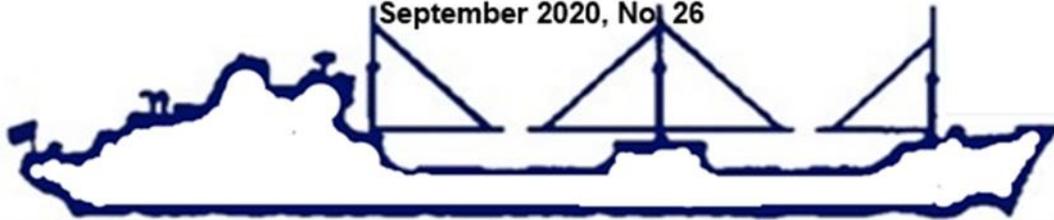




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## SEAMEN'S CHRISTIAN FRIEND SOCIETY

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### Being Poor in Spirit

**"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven,"** Matthew 5:3

Dear Friends,

Sometimes I think about a marginalized social class during the three years of Jesus' public ministry. According to some scholars poverty was widespread at that time. 90 % of the population was in severe poverty. When the poor people heard Jesus' first sermon in Matthew 4:17, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near," they were moved to come forward to Him, realizing that they were sinners and followed Him wherever He went. When Jesus saw such poor people, he said they are the poor in spirit. Sometimes I meet some seafarers who experience being poor in spirit which leads them to accept Jesus as their Lord and Saviour. Through such an experience they mourn in heart for God's forgiveness. Sometimes I feel woeful as I stumble and realize I am no better than the Pharisees. That's why I always desire to turn my eyes upon Jesus in repentance. In my ministry I have a desire to see more people become poor in spirit to know Jesus and His salvation and live a new life for God's Kingdom and His righteousness.

I praised the Lord for making a way for me to start to work in Dublin port from 11th June, when I met the harbour master. He very kindly helped me to visit ships and spent time talking about work in new situations. I also visited three port managers to confirm my work. The port authorities as well as many port security staff and dock workers were happy to see me again. That day a bulk carrier was the first ship, which Colin in Cork had visited the previous

week. When Colin shared the Gospel with Matthew, a chief cook, he was interested in Jesus. Colin encouraged me to visit him as he believed he was ready to accept to Jesus as his Lord and Saviour. When I met him, I spent several hours leading him to Jesus and His salvation. Finally he opened his heart and repented of his sins and accepted Jesus as his Lord and Saviour.

"I am an atheist but believe all religions have different ways to reach the same god," emphasized the Indian captain on a bulk ship. Over two days I had some opportunities to share with the captain and some crew about how important it is to realize that we are all sinners and to repent of our sins to believe only in Jesus who has power to cleanse our sins with His precious blood. Five crew including the captain took Bibles. Please pray they will be challenged to meet Jesus by repenting of their sins.

When I visited an oil tanker, its captain encouraged his crew members to join a worship service. I invited Colin, a port missionary in Cork to the service via zoom. Colin prayed as we started it. As I was their first visitor this year and this was their first worship service, they were very moved and encouraged to listen to the Gospel and some Bible messages. After that we had three hours to talk more about Jesus who is the Truth to set us free from sin. Especially Luke who became a born again Christian asked me many questions about the Bible and was mourning for his family and his wife who have refused to believe in Jesus. As we prayed together for his family, he was so encouraged to pray for them continuously.

"Can you pray for us?" asked Mark, a chief engineer who is a born again Christian and leads fellowship on

Sunday on board a bulk ship. Some of his crew members wanted to refresh their faith through repentance as they heard the Gospel. I was so encouraged to see them have a holy desire to become pure in heart to see God. I spent six hours teaching them about Jesus, His Word, the Bible and Christian life. Especially the captain who was 60 years old raised many questions to know the Truth about Jesus. When he spent two hours with me talking about it, he repented of his sins and told me that he will never go back to his past life, now believing in Jesus. The chief engineer and I prayed for him and other crew. I praised the Lord for this. Seven Bibles and some others presents were taken. Please pray for the captain and Juan.

When I prayed for John, a cadet, he appreciated my prayers and said, "it is a first time to pray in my life." He has never been to church. He received a Bible. Please pray for him.

When I visited a bulk ship, its Turkish crew welcomed me. Even though they are Muslim, they thanked me for my prayers. Andrew who is a cook told me he has 14 month old daughter. When he showed her some soft toys on a video call by using my Wi-Fi router, she shouted for excitement to receive the toys. The toys opened his heart to pray together in Jesus' name. He took a Bible to read it. I would like to thank everyone who gave us such lovely soft toys, woolly hats, Bibles, etc. for seafarers. Please pray he will be challenged to change his life when he reads the Bible.

James who is a Filipino captain encouraged his crew members to join a worship service when I visited them. 9 Bibles in English, 1 in Russian and 1 in Polish were taken. They told me it was the first time to have a visitor from seamen's mission this year. The captain told me he had seven months at home without a job. There are many seafarers who are suffering financially, mentally, emotionally and spiritually as they stay at home for a long time without jobs. Please pray that the Bible will be the Greatest Missionary as they read it.

On board a tanker, I had three opportunities to share the Gospel with three different groups of the crew. Peter who is a chief cook came to me thanked me for

the message and asked me about more the Christian life. When we spent an hour talking about it, he was encouraged to live as a Christian, a person belonging to Christ. Please pray for him that he will continue to work out his salvation with fear and trembling.

On a tanker I met some Filipino seafarers and a Lithuanian chief engineer as well as a Swedish officer and shared the Gospel with them. The Lithuanian chief officer learnt how to receive the gift of salvation through the paper illustration and took a Bible to challenge him to know Jesus. Five Bibles were taken by the crew. Please pray that they will be moved by the Holy Spirit.

At the moment I have three weekly Bible study groups. Because of the restrictions resulting from the Coronavirus, I lost three groups. When I visited one Bible study group, a new Lithuanian chief officer told me, "The new captain doesn't want any visitors to stay in the mess room. Sorry." However, he asked me if an office room where he was working with a 2nd officer from Moldova would be ok to have a meeting with two Filipino Christian crew. When I started a Bible study, the chief officer and the 2nd officer sat near our table listening to what the Bible taught us. It was very encouraging to happen to have the officers in a Bible study.

We praise the Lord for the port opening up again in June for visitors and help from port authority. We also praise the Lord for the continuous support from individuals and churches during lockdown. Please pray for Yena as she goes to secondary school and for good healthy for all of us. I am looking for accommodation near the port one night per week to reduce my driving time.

**Thank you!**



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