



# Seafarers' Christian Friend Society

# Helmsman

Serving Seafarers with Compassion since 1846

Spring 2026



Photo Credit: Harry Pottinger

## Ship to Shore!

SCFS Volunteer Port Chaplain, Harry Pottinger, shares his story

After 16 years as a deep-sea marine engineer, I found myself with a 16-month-old child – who everyone else seemed to know better than I did – and a wife who was expecting again. I saw many men watch their family grow up with a row of Polaroid photos on their cabin desk. 'Not for me!' I thought.

I decided to 'come ashore' to work on tugs at Sullom Voe, Shetland Islands. Each trip at sea diminished from over 4 months down to 4 days – 96 hours! It was a big decision with a huge drop in salary, but I have no regrets.

I worked for about 30 years on the tugs, as 2nd Engineer, Chief Engineer, and one year as Superintendent/Chief Engineer. I organised and supervised two dry docks. Also, whilst there I responded to six "Mayday"s.

While at sea I had become a Christian in my cabin by myself. As I was in the wild boy category, this stunned me and stunned the crew! My life was transformed.



*Discover more about Harry, and how he found Christ, on page 5*

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# News from the Chairman

## Steven Thompson, Chair of the Board of Trustees

The work of SCFS continues on a massive upward curve.

The last six months of 2025 have given us a number of incredible highs but unfortunately some lows.

We continue to increase our SCFS team of port visitors across the globe with more volunteers joining our swelling ranks. We added twenty-one in 2025.

**Harry Pottinger** was appointed as a new volunteer port chaplain, who will be working in the Shetland Islands. We are currently planning to train and support a local team who will visit ships in Ketchikan, Alaska.

Sadly, these highs were overshadowed by the sudden death of **Mark Buckle**. I, and all the SCFS family who had the privilege of knowing Mark during his training in Belfast and through our weekly prayer meetings, are still coming to terms with his passing. Please keep Mark's family in your prayers.



In October I was privileged to attend the ICMA (International Christian Maritime Association) World conference in Barcelona as SCFS Chairman. There were around 230 attendees from over 40 countries. It was a wonderful three days of

fellowship and a great opportunity to see what is happening across all the ICMA members.

One of many highlights was hearing the heartbreaking story of the Stella Maris port chaplain in Odessa, Ukraine and the conditions he has to work under in the port. He received a standing ovation from the room.

In November SCFS held another supporters celebration event at Stormont, Belfast. There were over 50 of our trustees, staff, volunteers and guests in attendance and we had a great evening of worship and prayer.

Over the Christmas period we also delivered thousands of presents to seafarers across the UK and Europe in dozens of ports, and for the great majority of them it was their only Christmas present.

I look forward to 2026 as we celebrate our 180th year. We already have a number of celebration events planned.

I thank you all for your continued prayers, support and gifting and ask that you support our vision and continue to help with our ministry with the seafarers.

*Steven*



John meeting St Lucian crew on a cruise ship in Cork



Going to church with Filipino, Romanian and Greek crew



"Merry Christmas! Thank you Belfast & Cork SCFS"

# An Evening of Prayer & Celebration

SCFS family and friends gathered together for **An Evening of Prayer and Celebration** on Wednesday 19th November. Our thanks go to *Joanne Bunting, MLA, who sponsored the event in the Long Gallery in Stormont Parliament buildings, and to James Hoy and Katie McMeekin who lead us in a time of worship.*

**Colin Dickenson**, SCFS Executive Director, presented on the pressures and challenges faced by seafarers at sea, sharing key findings from recent *ISWAN SeafarerHelp* and *MTS Seafarer Happiness Index* reports.

Data from *ISWAN's SeafarerHelp* helpline shows that:

- Workplace stress (32%) – most common concern, linked to conflict, isolation, and bullying, harassment, discrimination, or abuse onboard
- Worry (27%) – driven by anxiety about home life, relationships, family, or finances
- Low mood (23%) – often connected to personal and family concerns
- Suicidal thoughts (9%) – reported by a concerning proportion of callers

Findings from the *Mission to Seafarers (MTS) Seafarer Happiness Index* highlight:

- Worsening working conditions
- Crew shortages and reduced manning stretching crews beyond sustainable limits
- Cognitive impairment linked to chronic exhaustion
- Growing compensation concerns, including stagnant wages, increased demands, and nationality-based pay disparities



Colin emphasised that SCFS is a vital lifeline for seafarers, with chaplains and ship visitors continuing to support crews across eleven UK and Ireland ports following expansion into Shetland. SCFS now has four salaried Port Chaplains and over sixty volunteer ship visitors, including Team Leaders. In 2024, SCFS visited 1,652 ships, supported 25,800 crew, and distributed over 4,000 gifts and approximately 9,000 knitted items. SCFS also operates in seven European ports and St Lucia, supports SCFS Philippines, and is in early discussions to support seafarers in Ketchikan, Alaska. Training continues to develop, with induction training in place, annual refreshers being introduced, and external training delivered through the Merchant Navy Welfare Board.

**Steven Thompson**, SCFS Chairman, paid tribute to trustees, chaplains, staff, volunteers, and supporters, highlighting the collective effort required to minister to seafarers. He noted that France is currently the only government with legislation protecting seafarers' rights, despite global reliance on seafarers for trade. This underlined the vital role of SCFS, alongside Mission to Seafarers, Stella Maris, and other maritime charities, in supporting these often "forgotten" workers.

Steven reflected on God's faithfulness to SCFS over its 179-year history and encouraged others to share the importance of serving seafarers with compassion.





## SCFS Dublin, Ireland

Jaeguen Bae

Recently a carol kept ringing in my ears as I thought about those who faithfully support us in various ways:

*"What can I give him, poor as I am? Give my heart..."*

Not only the voluntary ship visitors but also church families who donated a lot of the Christmas presents made this past Christmas season so special as they gave their hearts to God through sharing Jesus' love and compassion.

On a very stormy day I was able to visit a container ship where a weekly Bible study is held before the port closed early. The captain and crew were happy to see me and wanted to talk to me about the bad weather and life at sea, especially Christmas celebrations without their families. They thanked me as they felt cared for. I was reminded of the highs and lows the seafarers are experiencing as Christmas approaches.

We offer practical support to seafarers both on board their ships and while they are ashore. I spent time with a captain, who will retire soon, over a cup of coffee and shopping in Dublin. He enjoyed a good relaxing time with me. During the conversation he said he started

his seafarer's life when he was 15 years old and always missed a normal life. John Jordan and I taxied two different groups to the city centre. When we took the two Filipino crew to the city we spent around two hours having more fellowship at a coffee shop and encouraged them to continue to grow in Jesus.

It is always good to work with other Christians in the port. Gregory, Kevin and Niall from Monaghan visited three ships with me. I was accompanied on Christmas ship visits by Jeff, the minister of Ballyalbany Presbyterian Church, along with Ronnie and Norman.

I was also joined by Tristan and Joe on Christmas ship visits. This was followed by a New Year's visit to Greenore port, where we visited a small bulk ship. Tristan and Joe were a blessing as the crew enjoyed their messages and prayers.

After a carol service on a container ship, a Filipino 2nd officer said he met me 5 years ago in Dublin port. At that time he wasn't a Christian and asked me about spiritual matters that he struggled with. Now he was so happy to tell me that both he and his wife are born-again Christians.





# SCFS Shetland, Scotland

Harry Pottinger

*Continued from front cover.*

Subsequently, I've been chaplain to seafarers and port workers all through my maritime career of forty plus years!

My good friend, Mike Burleigh (SCFS Montrose) has been a big influence on me through the years, and we once enjoyed participating together in an evangelical outreach in Montrose Tesco Cafe. He encouraged me to join SCFS, "Gonna have to reduce your international ministry trips Harry, to get you to share/visit with international seafarers!"

Between my maritime background and Mike's encouragement, it felt natural for me to join SCFS and to serve with like-minded people.



Ship Visitor training with Sam Cowan in Belfast



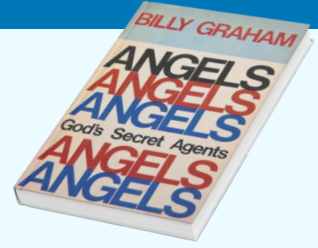
## The Humbling of Harry

On an old bulk carrier there was no library, just a small bookcase in the bar. One evening, as I left the officers' dining saloon, I noticed a book lying on the bar called *Angels: God's Secret Agents* by Billy Graham. I thought, *Who's reading that?* It was the only Christian book I'd ever seen while at sea.

The next evening it was there again. Then the third evening – still there. It felt like it was haunting me. I finally grabbed it, tucked it under my arm, and rushed to my cabin, hiding it in my desk. I didn't want anyone seeing me read a Christian book.

I loved it! It spoke about the supernatural reality of Christianity and angelic encounters around the world. *This*, I thought, *is what I'm looking for – not religious rubbish.* Graham also wrote about God sometimes having to humble a man or woman, to make them childlike and trusting.

That hit me. I thought about when I rolled my car and crawled out through the smashed windscreen; a rock-climbing fall when soloing a 25-foot overhang and falling the full distance with my right foot nearly torn off, bones through the leg and two bones broken in the left foot; failing my Chief Engineer's



exams after hundreds of hours and pounds spent.

I realised God was trying to get my attention. So I prayed, "Jesus Christ, I believe you exist. Take my life and use it. I don't deserve it – I deserve only hell." Then I started to cry. I wasn't a soft man as I was raised in a broken, violent home. The tears shocked me. What's going on?

The next day in the engine room men were shouting and swearing. I thought, "What's wrong with them, can't they just talk?" Then it hit me. My foul mouth was gone. I was stunned! For weeks I kept thinking, "Who are you? You're supposed to be me", and "I don't know who I am."

When I got home I thought, *I'm a Christian, I think – so I should go to church.* I told a man what had happened. He said, "You've been born again."

It rang completely true. **I was a new creation.**



# Commemorating the Delting Disaster

Harry led a memorial service on Sunday 21st December to commemorate 125 years since the **Delting Disaster**, a catastrophe where twenty-two men lost their lives at sea.

On the 21st December 1900, seven small boats from Firth, Mossbank and Toft set sail haddock fishing. A severe gale suddenly swept in around the Horse o' Burravoe and Da Snap scattering the small fleet of boats and only a few seafarers made it safely back to land.

Harry: "My connection is my late great uncle Harry. His dad, Henry Corkish, was one of these brave men that perished. The boats they were in were open boats, Sixareens, 6 men with oars and small sail. Rowing 20-40 miles out into the North Sea to catch fish to pay the rent! That day his mum climbed up on to the roof of the Croft to see if she could sight the men out at sea. She fell off and broke her leg!

I was involved a little over 26 years ago at the design stage of the memorial for the 100th year anniversary. Aubrey Jamieson of the Fisherman's Mission would have been the first choice to lead the service, but his workload prohibited him from coming.

The hymns at the service were *Will Your Anchor Hold* and

*Eternal Father, Strong to Save.*

You can see from the widow's quote on the memorial that these people never lost their faith: *'You see dey wirna mine. Da Loard gae dem tae me fir a time, and dan he took dem back ageen.'*

I found it to be an incredible honour to lead the service with my wife Jane."

Former councillor Alastair Cooper attended, and Harry was delighted to receive a whole carrier bag of knitted items for the seafarers he was visiting the next day.



Gifts for Shetland seafarers

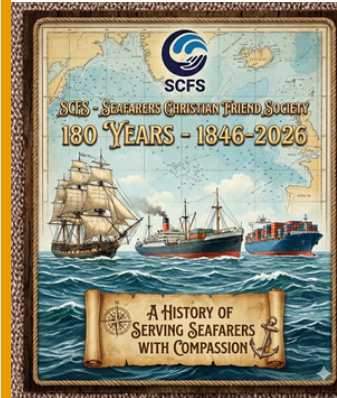
# SCFS is 180!

2026 marks 180 years since SCFS was founded, and we give thanks and glory to God for His faithfulness to us as an organisation over that time, and for His willingness to use us to reach seafarers for Christ.



We plan to hold an event in London in June for representatives of the maritime community, and then a conference in October in Belfast for the UK and Ireland SCFS family.

Find out more about our history at [scfs.org/about-us/#heritage](https://scfs.org/about-us/#heritage)



## GIFT AIDING YOUR DONATIONS TO SCFS

Last year we received £3,700 in Gift Aid – that's money the government added to your gifts! If you are a UK taxpayer please don't forget to complete and sign the enclosed Gift Aid form when donating to SCFS. We can then claim a further 20% from the UK Government towards bringing the Good News with practical, emotional and physical welfare support to seafarers.

*giftaid it*



# SCFS Limerick, Ireland

**Gordon Liston**

On 18th September 2025 we were informed that the Cook, **Odelon**, from the *Wilson Clyde* ship in Foynes, had been taken to University Hospital Limerick, UHL.



Odelon was diagnosed with cancer and began treatment in Limerick. He was well looked after by all the staff in the hospital and soon returned to the Philippines for further treatment in mid-November 2025. There are several Filipino staff in the UHL who were a great support and encouragement to Odelon.

Gordon visited Odelon in hospital where conversation turned very quickly to spiritual things.

Edwin, Camille, and Michael are UHL nurses who have been a witness to how Odelon has been saved when Gordon talked about God's Word to him. Michael had come into the room at the right time to translate a verse from James 2 into Tagalog using a Bible app. This verse was instrumental as it pointed out if we have broken the law in one detail, we've broken the whole law.

Odelon had heard the Gospel before. On being reminded that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23),

Odelon prayed and accepted Jesus. The smile on his face showed the joy he had. Odelon also enjoyed fellowship with Edwin and Eileen who were a great encouragement to him.

Odelon's father who died a few years back had been a believer in Jesus. The first thing Odelon did was to contact his brother, also a believer whom he had fallen out with. Their reconciliation was immediate and joyous as they shared recent events. Soon after Odelon traveled home and was reunited with his family and continued his treatment in Manila.

Odelon wrote, *"I am grateful and happy to know that you will include me in your prayers. My heart is filled with joy knowing that there are people who love and care for me. Thank you very much."*

**Bayani**, from SCFS Philippines, was able to visit and support Odelon and his wife.

Odelon's wife messaged on 29th December 2025, *"With heavy hearts, we share that my husband Odelon died today. We are grateful for your thoughts and support during this time."*

Gordon and friends in Limerick share, *"It was a privilege to share the gospel with Odelon when he was here in Limerick. It was a joy beyond measure to see him put his confidence in Jesus our Saviour."*



Odelon with UHL staff



Gordon & Odelon



Bayani with Odelon & his wife

*"Just so, I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents."*  
Luke 15:10





# SCFS Cork, Ireland

Colin Jenkins

Usually in Cork we distribute over 1000 Christmas gifts to the seafarers between November and February. So, we are still in the midst of this time of bringing extra happiness on board! The crew are of course thrilled to know someone has been thinking of them. Thank you so much to all our wonderful supporters! A small gift, or a woolly hat can make a big difference to a lonely seafarer who is far from home.

A *Christmas Wrap* took place in the Cobh Crew Lounge. It was sponsored by **Serve the City** charity in Cork. They bought many treats for the crew. It was great to have some young people involved in making up gift packages for the seafarers.

We are still able to minister to the crew on *MV Matthew*, the indicted "drug ship", currently docked in Cobh. Recently we held a carol service and took Christmas gifts to the "caretaker crew".

The cargo ships keep coming on a daily basis, and some have passed through big storms recently with up to 10 metre waves.

The cruise ship season runs from April – October, and there are already 103 scheduled visits listed on the Port of Cork website. It will be great to welcome them back again. Our team of volunteers is eagerly anticipating what the Lord is going to do this year in our Crew Lounge in Cobh. We're also really excited that the Port has given the go-ahead for us to have a similar crew lounge close to the cargo and container ship terminals in Ringaskiddy. We value your prayers for this.

I'm currently ministering to a Sri Lankan fisherman who has recently gone to hospital after sustaining a serious hand injury. It is very difficult for seafarers being alone in hospital in an unknown country.

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1: Cobh Crew Lounge. 2: Free supplies for seafarers from Dealz. 3: Bringing crew to play basketball in Cobh from a Cunard ship. 4: With John Honore 50 years after he came to faith in Cork in 1975. 5: An Indian Christian from NE India receiving a Bible from Sunhwa. 6: Cobh Christmas Wrap. 7: Friends from N. Ireland on Christmas ship visits. 8: "Christmas at sea! 40 days voyage from Indonesia! Welcome to Ireland and Merry Christmas to all!"

# “Loving Your Neighbour...”

*Belfast SCFS Ship Visitor Lorraine reflected on Mark 12:31 as she experienced her first merchant ship visit while distributing Christmas gifts...*

“I recently had the privilege of joining with our Belfast chaplain, Sam Cowan, on my first merchant ship visit. It was very different from the cruise ship visits.

However from luxury liners cruising for relaxation to working merchant ships that take essential supplies to ports worldwide, they both have one thing in common. The crews on both ships are often away from home for many months, and Christmas time can be a real challenge to those far from their families.

At Christmas, we remember the ultimate gift of giving. The SCFS gift bags, filled with practical items such as hats, gloves, and other essentials, along with delightful sweets – and most importantly, God’s Word shared through a beautiful SCFS 2026 calendar – brought joy to those we met and who serve so faithfully on the many ships we visited that day. It was wonderful to share conversations and witness the appreciation for the gift bags, which offered comfort, warmth, and a prayerful reminder of the importance of God’s love for all.

I look forward to many more visits on both cruise and merchant ships.”



## Thank you! to all the SCFS Knitters



We have been so encouraged at how our knitters have embraced **Project Woolly Hat**. There is now a new supply of the logo badges available in the office. Drop us a message if you would like to receive more.

Some special “knitter milestones”...

- Congratulations to Doreen Gamble, who celebrated her 100th birthday during the autumn and continues to faithfully knit for the seafarers.
- Sandra Mayo has knit an amazing 1000 hats over 2025 and presented them to Colin in November.



It’s also great to hear about new knitting groups, such as the “Cullen Ladies”.





# SCFS Belfast, Northern Ireland

**Sam Cowan**

Belfast welcomed 147 cruise ships during 2025 and I was able to visit 40 ships and give out over 400 Bibles.

During the autumn I was involved in ship visitation training with **Harry Pottinger** and **Mark Buckle**. Harry was amazed at the different types of literature that I was able to access and the support I received from individuals and other groups.

Christmas has once again been a busy time and we want to thank you for making the packs and giving the items for the seafarers.

It was great to share with the youth in our home church at a *Harbour Hope* evening. One of the young ladies chose the name and a number of folks designed a bag which the seafarers could keep and use again. The next morning, young and old met to put the gift packs into the bags ready for Christmas distribution. Over

400 of these Christmas gift bags have been handed out. Andy Burns, our volunteer in Warrenpoint, also took some bags to give out.

The *Spitsbergen* cruise ship was in the Port of Larne for essential technical upgrades. Pauline and I had the honour of being asked to lead a Carol Service on the 14th December followed by a Christmas Communion Service on the 22nd. It was great to have over 30 crew at these services. Before they sailed again in January, I was asked to conduct Prayers of Blessing for the ship, Captain and crew.



On Christmas Day, Pauline and I were delighted to deliver Christmas gifts to two ships.



# SCFS Warrenpoint, Northern Ireland

**Andy Burns**

*Andy delivered Christmas gifts to delighted seafarers in Warrenpoint. He shares:*

“I’m thankful to the folks at Kilkeel Baptist church and the children of Kilhorne Parish in Annalong for supplying gifts and making Christmas cards for the Seafarers at Warrenpoint Port. **Thank you one and all!**”

There were two ships in. I got to speak to all the crew on both. They were from Indonesia and the Philippines. One was a lady so I went and bought her some items for her blue bag.”





# SCFS Montrose, Scotland

Mike Burleigh

The Seahaven building will bring back many happy memories for readers in Montrose, North East Scotland, who will recall working there with Christians from various denominations welcoming, meeting and ministering sometimes like surrogate “Mums and Dads” to seafarers who were communicating with home, playing table tennis and snooker with other crews. These meetings were indeed for them a door into the world.

The old Seahaven building was like “a door into the world” for the many Montrose Christians who will be recollecting, as they read this magazine in their churches, the many evenings spent ministering to visiting ships crews.

**The work continues.** Nowadays a small team of three volunteers works from a Seafarer’s Cabin on the dockside but they are

always looking for others interested in the work to join them in some capacity, if not in actual ship visiting.

Many of this small group of ladies live in houses overlooking the harbour and remember the “Seahaven” days when they were able to personally meet with the ship crews. Now they and others make sure the ship visiting team is well resourced throughout the year but especially at Christmas.

Last year this team prepared 25 gift bags and tubs of chocolates which the Port Chaplain gifted to ship crews. This year they, and we, were much encouraged at receiving a significant increase in contributions for their 25 Christmas gift bags and chocolates, and 150 handwritten Christmas cards from individual Christians of different denominations.

*Praise the Lord!*

See these Christmas stories at <https://scfs.org/port/montrose/news>



“A door into the world”



Seahaven



Michael, Elie & Mike





# SCFS Aberdeen, Scotland

Iain Sanders

Last year during the week before Christmas I held two nights of "Carols around the Berths". I began organising these sessions way back in August, asking permission from the port CEO and speaking to the head of the SHEQ team. He asked me for the general aim of the carol singing. He is a saved man and was encouraged that someone was introducing a spiritual element around the berths. In the days before the events I spent time distributing flyers inviting seafarers.

On the first night the port staff chained off an area on Jamieson Quay for us to use. Rosie (my wife) and some guys from our church came. A friend from Johnshaven Baptists travelled up for the purpose of singing and two colleagues from the Norwegian Seamen's Church also came.

Not as many seafarers attended as I would have liked but those that came sang along with us. It was a cold night, so we sang several carols, had three readings: Luke 2:8-20, Matthew 2:1-12, and John 1:1-14, and finished with a prayer.

One chief officer came purely because I had invited the crew. He made apologies for one of his crew who would have liked to attend but

had a previous appointment. The attendees thanked me for arranging the evening. Later that night I heard from my Norwegian colleagues thanking me and they shared how a captain, who would have liked to attend but events precluded him, had encouraged his crew to go along.

The second night a different group visited the South Harbour. We had been allotted the visitor centre and we set up the PA and commenced but no one came. I wandered over to visit the on-site DCO and asked his permission to visit some of the berths. We were given permission. On the open berth it was blowing a "hooly" but we set up between the two cars.

Seafarers came to the gangplank to listen. One even videoed us. Then a group of the crew came down the gangplank and listened to the carols and joined in. One was the Captain, who was a saved man and I had given him a JESUS sign a few days before. We had one reading, because of the wind, John 1:1-14 and a friend from church closed in prayer. Then our group spoke to the seafarers before returning home for mince pies and coffee.

I also distributed 300 gift packs in the weeks before Christmas and a large boxful of knitted teddies to a ship with a crew of 100+.

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# The Gospel in a Hat!

A Message of Peace for Seafarers







*Last year, Kirstin began ship visiting in Cork port with Colin Jenkins. It has become a family effort, with his daughters Nika and Alisa also volunteering. His wife, Serita, had the wonderful idea of embroidering the Gospel colours onto woolly hats. Here's her story!*

One morning I had a random thought about how we used to use the Wordless Bible many years back to explain the Gospel, and how easy it was to do so. After explaining the Gospel and leading someone to Christ, you then also leave the person with a constant reminder and a "tool" to also share the Gospel with others. To share the Wordless Bible I know that many people use bracelets. I used to use beads, but I felt that Seafarers perhaps need something different, something special. While I was chatting to God about it, I thought: what practical gift can I give a ship crew member that will always be at hand and not a hazard in their work? **Then the idea of knitting the Gospel colours of the Wordless Bible into woolly hats came to mind.**

That same morning, I bumped into Colin and I shared my idea with him. He thought it was brilliant, and said that he had just received a donation of a 1000 hats! What a confirmation! Not only did I get the idea that morning but God already provided the woolly hats. Colin promptly sent me some of the donated hats and I started to embroider or crochet the Gospel colours into the hats.

For those not familiar with the meaning of the six Gospel colours, here is a short summary:

## The "Gospel Colours"

-  **Gold or Yellow:** Represents Heaven and God who loves us and wants us to be with Him in Heaven.
-  **Black or Dark:** We are born in a sinful world with a sinful nature, separated from God.
-  **Red:** Because He loved us so much, Jesus the Son of God, came and died in our place, His blood paying for our sin, sickness, and wellbeing.
-  **White (Clean):** We are cleansed from our sin and unrighteousness through Jesus and by the grace of God, washed as white as snow.
-  **Blue:** Through baptism of water, we publicly declare our faith in Jesus, our Lord and Saviour.
-  **Green:** Now as Christians and children of God, we grow in the knowledge of His love and in relationship with Him.

Since I started, these woolly hats have been used many times as a tool to start conversations about Jesus and to share the Gospel of Truth on ships.

*You can see the explanation of the colours by scanning the code or using this handy link:*

**<https://bit.ly/gospelcolours>**

*(Interestingly, they are also the colours in the S. African flag!)*





## SCFS St Lucia

John Honore

This year we have got off to a “Grand” start in St Lucia! I boarded a tender to reach the *Grand Princess*. It was great to make contact again with three crew members whom I had met in Ketchikan, Alaska last year, and they were very happy to see me.

My colleague Floyd and I had a good visit onboard the *Queen Elizabeth*. All our literature was set up on tables in the mess room. Many scripture texts, calendars, and other literature were taken by the appreciative crew members. We had very good conversations with some of the crew members and were also able to encourage two ladies from Africa, and a Kenyan who were all believers.



## THE GIFT OF LEGACY

We are very grateful to those who entrust SCFS with a legacy – each one helps us to continue this vital ministry.

Would you prayerfully consider including us in your will?

Here is a form of words you could use...

- “I bequeath xxxxx to the Seafarers’ Christian Friend Society, CH18, Colvin House, Inspire Business Park, 16 Carrowreagh Road, Dundonald, BT16 1QT, Northern Ireland. Registered Charity Number 209133”.

To discuss further, call Claire Kyle between 10am and 5pm, Monday and Wednesday, on +44 (0) 2895 217 770.

If you decide to take this step, please let us know by writing to Claire at our headquarters address or emailing her at [hq@scfs.org](mailto:hq@scfs.org) with the details.

There are three types of legacy:

1. A **Residuary Legacy** is the giving of the remainder of your estate, or a percentage of the remainder of your estate, as a gift.
2. A **Specific Legacy** is the giving of a specific item that you have left in your Will, for example, an item of property or possessions, shares, bonds or a life insurance policy.
3. A **Pecuniary Legacy** is a specific sum of money left in your Will.



# SCFS Philippines

Jessica Segundo

We are grateful to share that SCFSP was invited to participate in the *West Bay College Maritime Week*, where we had the privilege of distributing one thousand *Martin Otto* books to maritime students. We were also able to meet with the daughter of the school owner, who expressed their heartfelt appreciation for the books provided. Through this opportunity, relationships were strengthened, and we are thankful that the school has opened its doors to SCFSP. After meeting with the Dean, we were granted permission to conduct Bible studies with the students, an initiative that will begin this January. We praise God for this open door to minister to future seafarers.

SCFSP also joined pastors and ministry leaders from various denominations in celebrating the anniversary of *Pastors Connect*, a fellowship we are thankful to be part of. This gathering allowed us to strengthen relationships and build partnerships in reaching out to seafarers and their families, with the shared goal of nurturing their Christian growth. During the event Bayani and Felino were given the opportunity to introduce SCFSP and share the heart of the ministry in reaching seafarers.

From October to December, a total of 2,307 *Martin Otto* books were distributed to maritime schools, at Luneta Park, and to seafarers who visited the SCFSP Center. We are currently awaiting the arrival of Bibles and other Christian literature for further distribution, and we continue to pray for the provision of more Bibles to place in the hands of seafarers.

The *Luneta Park Ministry* remains a vital and ongoing outreach of SCFSP. It is a meaningful space where seafarers gather and are ministered to through prayer, the sharing of the Gospel, the distribution of books and literature, and invitations to visit the SCFSP Center. This ministry is faithfully led by Brother Jaffe, who has been serving in this outreach for over 30 years. We are truly blessed by the dedication of our volunteers, many of whom are retired seafarers, including brothers Buddy and Thor, and at times are joined by seafarers who are on vacation.

At the *SCFS Philippines Centre*, we continue to welcome seafarers who come for prayer, counselling, and support with personal concerns. We thank God for His faithfulness in opening doors for us to continue serving our seafarers. This work is made possible through partnerships and the prayers of those who journey with us in ministry.





## SCFS Malta

### Brent & Renea Liebe

Thank you to all who have been praying for the port in Malta. It has been an up and down process this past year as we've tried to get into a regular routine of ship visiting. As we shared in the last update, we were able to obtain permission to visit ships at one of our smaller ports, but the need isn't as great for our visits. The captains appreciate when we come on, but most of those ships are on a route where they head home every week. Also, most of them speak Italian which many of our volunteers can't speak. So our ship visits had slowed down for us.

Our goal has been to begin visiting ships at the main port on the island which is one of the busiest ports in the Mediterranean. We had the security clearance, and we just needed permission from the captains to board the ships. We had all the contacts for the agents, but no

one was willing to give us the information we needed.

We began to reach out to other port chaplains to see how we could get creative in getting in touch with captains another way. As we began to explore other options, a ship actually contacted the SCFS Headquarters and asked if they could get in contact with someone in Malta when they arrived. They were requesting a ship visit from us! At the same time, some of our creative investigating came through and we had a few other invites to visit ships at the main port as well. Praise the Lord, a few weeks ago we started visiting the main port! It was as if the invisible obstacle that had kept us out finally lifted!

We are just so excited for 2026, and to see the ships that God will bring in that we can minister at!



Brent & Brian  
ship visiting

## SCFS Hamburg, Germany

### Micha & Lydia Lamaack

Lydia and I are grateful as we look back on the past year, 2025, the year we began our ministry among seafarers. We have already experienced the joy of discovering and learning so much together, and we are thankful that God has called us to this work.

One story has stayed with me, Micha, in particular. In February 2025, after the SCFS conference

in Manila, I met a man named Rosalio at a church service. He came up to me and said, word for word, "I know your father." I could hardly believe it when he told me that he is a seafarer himself and had met my father 32 years ago, back in 1994. Their meeting was brief, but it had a lasting impact. God used that encounter to lead Rosalio to a living faith in Jesus.


I am delighted to share his testimony with you, written personally by him.



Rosalio's story is on the next page

# Rosalio's Story

A Filipino sailor's journey to faith

 *This is my testimony, which I would like to share for the glory of Christ.*

I come from a very poor family. Growing up, I cleaned and guarded cars for a few coins to buy rice and vegetables for my family. From the time I started elementary school at age seven until I was twelve I used solvents, smoked, and drank alcohol.

By the time I was in high school, I was addicted. I used and sold drugs, such as marijuana and solvents. To earn money I became a male prostitute and became involved in gang wars. During one of these wars, I was the victim of a gang rape.

When Rodrigo Duterte was elected mayor of Davao City, he ruled with an iron fist. Many drug addicts were killed including friends, classmates, and neighbours. At one point I had to flee my hometown because the mayor had become increasingly harsh. If I had stayed I would have ended up in prison or dead.

My father's older sister was a teacher at a maritime school in Cebu. To finance my marine engineering studies I stayed with her and worked as a domestic helper. During that time I continued using drugs. I finished the program in 1992.

My first ship was a container vessel. Our ship had come from South America, stopping at several Brazilian ports along the way. While on board I smoked marijuana, drank a lot of alcohol, and had contact with prostitutes. I almost got left behind in Brazil once. At the time I was an engineering cadet who had spent the night with a woman. I was so drunk that I vomited and lost

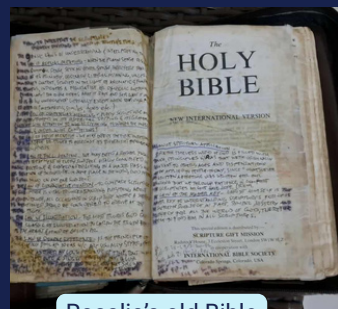
consciousness. By God's grace alone the ship's departure was delayed and I made it back just in time.

In 1994, when I was 21 years old, I met a seafarers' mission worker. He gave me a Bible study booklet called "What the Bible Teaches" and a Bible. From that moment I began reading both the Bible and the booklet. I came to the section with a checkbox that said: "I will accept the Lord Jesus Christ as my Lord, God, and personal Saviour."

I cannot remember the exact date when I was truly born again but I was saved by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

My colleagues, especially those from the Philippines, noticed the change in me. After dinner at 5 p.m. I would lock myself in my cabin and read the Bible. I was mocked and insulted for it but I had stopped drinking alcohol, and I was no longer in a sexual relationship. Many crew members left their Bibles on board but I took mine home.

To this day I still use the Bible I received in Hamburg in 1994. The port chaplain in Hamburg continued to support my spiritual growth. From 2000 to 2003 I stopped sailing and became involved with the Missionary Baptist Church. There, I became an assistant pastor and was later ordained as a deacon. I am grateful to God for using the chaplains from SCFS to strengthen me, and I praise Him for it. I also volunteer at SCFS Manila, participating in ship visits and ministering to seafarers who gather in the park. Whenever I am aboard I try to start a Bible study group to share the good news.



Rosalio's old Bible  
from 1994

The story of Rosalio, along with many others, can be found in the booklet **True Stories of Hope**, which SCFS Hamburg recently put together. In it, nine seafarers share what God has done in their lives.

You can download the booklet at the top of the Inspirational Books section on our Resources for Seafarers website:

<https://resources4seafarers.com/inspirational-books/>



# SCFS Amsterdam, The Netherlands

## Theo & Yvonne van Zuliekom



This is a special thank you note from a Ukrainian Captain:

*"Dear brother in Christ! I want to thank you again from the bottom of my heart for your visit today, for the prayer together, and for your love, care, and dedication. May the Lord bless you, your wife, and all your loved ones! May He provide for all your needs and reward you a hundredfold for your efforts and your wonderful work!"*

*"We are deeply touched by your gifts, especially the painted breakfast dishes, the cross, and the bookmarks, all made with love by your hands. And this love is incomprehensibly visible when you look at such sweet expressions! My wife is simply thrilled! Thank*

*the Lord for you! Today He visited us through you!"*

On almost every ship we visited, we handed out Yvonne's handmade toys, crosses, ships-in-a-bottle, Sailor Bibles, hats etc. All were gratefully received. With many seafarers we opened our Bibles and prayed together.

*"May I have one more, to give to my mother?" someone asked. "I know you from 2010, because you were on board then too," someone said.*

An Iraqi captain said, *"You are a man of God, you must eat first."* So, I went back to eat. He was thrilled with the ship in a bottle and the painted breakfast dish.

God is at work! We are grateful for the warmest welcome everywhere on board.

Thank you so much for your faithful prayers and support.



## 'A Selfless Act'



One of our Trustees, Charles, shares about a teenager's act of kindness...

I was delighted to receive a huge shopping bag full of toiletries in zip bags from a young person at the Carrigaline Baptist Church near Cork. I was told that Calum had saved his money up and purchased the contents by

himself and bagged them up into the zip bags. Pretty good for an 18-year-old who is registered as being blind!

**Thank you Calum on behalf of the happy and grateful seafarers who received your gifts.**



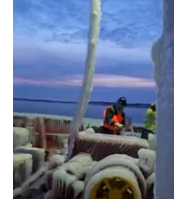
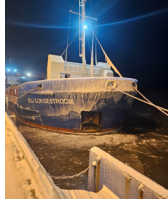


# LIFE AT SEA



## ...ISN'T ALWAYS A CRUISE

- The images to the right show a ship covered in ice in Finland at -20°C. Seafarers are at risk of accidents and frostbite as they manually chip away the ice in subzero temperatures. *Scan the QR Code to see a video.*
- A Filipino cook shared that his food budget from his company is just \$6 per person per day! He said it's so hard to make good meals for all the crew, and that he dare not complain, or even speak up – because of the danger of losing his job, and not being re-employed.
- Declining food quality is negatively affecting physical health and ability to exercise.



- A seafarer said he missed Christian worship as he cannot go to church or have fellowship on board. He has 8 months more on his contract.
- Seafarers at sea miss precious family moments, even the birth of their children.
- There has been a sharp decline in shore leave due to shortened port stays, limiting access to welfare support.



I met a Filipino seafarer who said he would turn 38 that day. We had a Bible study and after that we celebrated his birthday. He told me he last celebrated his birthday with his family five years ago. He was thankful for his gifts and a Children's Bible for his son.



In 2010, this Turkish cook's ship was taken hostage by pirates. Piracy remains a very real and dangerous threat. They steal merchandise being transported on cargo ships, or attempt to take over the ship and charge a ransom for it.



*"Since my father gave me a present when I was 17, I haven't received any other presents except from you. Thanks for giving me such a special memory in Dublin and for spiritual care."*

Helmman SNAPS ◉ Helmman SNAPS ◉ Helmman SNAPS ◉ Helmman SNAPS ◉ Helmman SNAPS ◉ He



1: Keeping dry in rainy weather! 2: "It's my first time ashore in 6 months." 3: Happy seafarer with a present for his 15-day-old daughter. 4: In Cobh, one of the crew asked me for 4 takeaway coffees for the crew who were on duty outside because they were feeling cold.



# Quotes from the Boats!

*You've got a friend in me...*

## What seafarers say about SCFS ...

*Our chaplains and volunteers count it a privilege to spend time with seafarers, and are often enriched by their time on board and the friendships they build. Most of all, they are thankful for opportunities to share about the greatest Friend of all.*



The Ukrainian cook thanked me for the Bible and woolly hat as well as helping her to shop in the city. She even gave me this hat as a "Thank you"!

"Friend, Jesus says if you are cold – please give me a jacket..."



When I visited the ship, one of the Bible study who is the cook said, "Jae, I've kept lunch for you." I was so blessed by him.

We spent Christmas and New Year at sea. This is the first time someone brought us Christmas presents. Thank you very much SCFS in Cork, Ireland! Even though the holidays are over, you gave us great happiness.



Even though the Filipino cook was very busy working in the kitchen, he said, "Joshua, praying is what I need now."

"The clothes you gave me were a lifesaver!"



When he saw the Russian Bible, he was so happy to have it, saying, "What I need now is the Bible. I want to read the Bible."

*"What a friend we have in Jesus..."*

"It's my first time ashore in 6 months! You always go the extra mile to help us in Cork."



Scan me with your phone.



## Want to know more?

Enter ["linktr.ee/scfs.org"](http://linktr.ee/scfs.org) into your browser. There you'll find links to our website, as well options to join the SCFS supporter group on the Mobilize platform or the private Facebook group for SCFS knitters! Alternatively, contact us using the details below.

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