



Christmas-at-Sea

There is some irony that the Christmas gifts we will share with family and friends in the warmth of our homes will most likely have arrived from overseas, aboard merchant ships whose seafarers will spend Christmas in the middle of some ocean far away from their own families and friends. Just another day alone at sea.

But all of us ashore have the opportunity to return the favor to these seafarers and unselfishly share the spirit of Christmas.

This year, we're going to put a little more green in Christmas-at-Sea and ask you not to wrap the Christmas gifts for seafarers. Instead, we'll supply you with specially decorated satchels in which to place your gifts. We'll save some trees, and our port chaplains will find it much easier to climb the ship gangway holding satchel draw strings than loose gifts. There will be one satchel for each seafarer. Each satchel will contain:

- One sweatshirt – hooded or unhooded (size L-XL),
- One pair of socks – thermal or white gym,
- One casual pullover T-shirt (size M-L),
- One winter cap,
- One can of nuts or bar of chocolate, and
- A Christmas card from you.

(Please keep in mind that most of the seafarers are men.)

Additionally, we'll plan to add a piece of devotional material and an international phone card. If you are a member of Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, please send the receipts for your purchased gifts to your local Thrivent Chapter and ask them to fund these international phone cards.

This December, our port chaplains will visit almost 150 merchant ships in numerous ports in the northeastern United State and leave satchels for approximately 1,500 seafarers. Please brighten Christmas for these seafarers by filling several Christmas-at-Sea satchels or more. You can call or email us to indicate the number of Christmas satchels you want to fill and any questions you may have.

Deadline: Monday, December 14, 2009

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