

**MISSION TO SEAFARERS IN THE DIOCESE OF WAIAPU
PORT CHAPLAINS REPORT TO 2012 SYNOD**

There are 3 Ports in our Diocese, Tauranga, Napier and Gisborne. Currently only Tauranga and Napier have designated Port Chaplains, Rev'd Marie Gilpin –Tauranga and Rev'd Richard Spence – Napier.

Mission to Seafarers- Mission Statement

"We believe that we are to be co-workers with the God who calls us in the mission and evangelism among seafarers around the world. Our ministry shall be holistic and clear in its integrity in:

1. Proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ through witness and service without resorting to proselytising.
2. Praying and offering appropriate ministries of worship, word and sacrament for the nurture and support of all seafarers.
3. Promoting justice and welfare within the maritime industry.
4. Promoting a spiritual vision of the shared dignity of being human without being exclusive.
5. Speaking prophetically without being triumphalist."

Our mission Statement lived out through Ship Visiting, Hospitality, Prayer and Chapel services, Currency exchange, transport, and internet communication opportunities for the Seafarers in our Centres. All ministries (including the Chaplaincies) are offered by volunteers.

- **Visitors to the Centre 2011 -2012**
Napier 3860 (includes 290 ex Cruise ships) increase of 600 **Tauranga** 10,800
- **Ship Visits**
Napier 226 **Tauranga** 554

Both Centres have Skype and WiFi facilities (Tauranga has 7 computers and 24 USB ports) which are in high demand and represent a major benefit to visiting seafarers. The availability of phone and Sim Cards also enables seafarers to contact their families at a reasonable rate.

The use of internet is a great comfort to the Seafarers, many of whom spend up to 4 hours talking with their families and friends. A real poverty in the lives of Seafarers is loneliness, and the hospitality of the Missions is significant in the lives of seafarers who often spend period of 9+ months away from home. It is 'holy ground' in a busy workplace. Most ships are only in Port for up to 2 days, so the seafarers very little time to 'catch up' with family, shopping for provisions, and breathing life on 'terra firma'.

An innovation in **Napier** the last year was the Christmas dinner delivered on board the log ship U-Sea Tradition. On Christmas day this vessel was parked outside the port, which would not open to work the ship. Undeterred, your chaplain enlisted the help of a local Rotary club and the Volunteer Coastguard who boxed up local goodies and delivered them to the ship side, whence they were craned on board and gratefully received by captain and crew.

Tauranga's -United Seafarer's Mission has a monthly ecumenical service for volunteers and seafarers when 2 of 3 Chaplains lead the service. Ship visiting is done by 6 volunteers. Your Chaplain (Marie) attends the Mission 2x per week, visits up to 6 ships, taking with her a stack of magazines and books for the mess, information about the Mission, and most importantly a listening ear and Christ's love. Each Christmas we deliver Christmas parcels to seafarers on ships that won't be home for Christmas. Last year 380 parcels were given out. Another job for the chaplain!

The RENA incident last year brought to the fore the value of Chaplaincy and Mission. Our RC Chaplain provided important ministry to the 2 men charged, and Marie spent a good chunk of time reassuring and supporting the Filipino crews re rumours of retribution! The Mission also provided 'days out' for the 'clean up' crews who were here for many months, to relieve boredom and depression

Marie -Ship visiting is an absolute delight with many and varied conversations and experiences, from scrambling up a vertical gangway in a howling gale to be greeted with “Vot is your business!?” “How old are you?” I was once told I was very beautiful! I responded by asking the seafarer how long he’d been at sea!

Other roles Chaplains are engaged in are

- Speaking engagements to promote the work of the Mission, and to encourage people to volunteer or contribute financially.
- Hospital and home Visiting for both volunteers and seafarers
- Both Chaplains are members of the executive of the Oceania Council and attend their Bi Annual meeting, and the NZ Seafarers Welfare Board AGM

All of New Zealand are affected by the activity and work of the Seafarers and the Port, but few recognise this reality. To continue our Missional Ministry we depend on the goodwill of local communities to ‘furnish’ our missions and support this important work.

Last year Napier and Tauranga Missions hosted 14,660 visitors (seafarers) to our Cities, and visited 780 ships on behalf of our communities. We would appreciate the support of the our Diocese (Parishes) in providing volunteers and funding.

Most people we speak with are unaware of the great work that happens in the Mission Please invite your Chaplains to come to your parish and tell you about this profound Missional ministry, of ‘knowing Jesus and making Jesus known’.

We appreciate the support of Bishop David and the opportunity and support that the Mission offers us, as we take our place of sharing in ministry to Seafarers, and the volunteers who are part of the Seafarers Mission.

Rev’d Dr. Richard Spence
Chaplain – Port of Napier

Rev’d Marie Gilpin
Chaplain – Port of Tauranga