

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION FOR A SEAFARERS' SERVICE

Most holy and eternal God, whose mercy reaches unto the highest heavens, and Thy faithfulness unto the farthest clouds:

We pray for Thy Church in this and every land; that her ministers may be blessed with vision and wisdom, and her servants inspired by Thy grace; and so inflame the hearts of all who confess that Jesus Christ is Lord with a burning bush of love which will never be consumed, that all the ends of the earth may come to stand in Thy holy place.

O Thou, who hast crowned with honour the princes and rulers of nations: we pray Thee to bless Thy most gracious servant Elizabeth our Queen, and all her family; that she may unite us in a common bond of loyalty both to the world and to Thee. Strengthen and inspire the hearts of all who bear authority in her name; and give to all leaders a desire for peace and love of concord, that we may live together in perfect harmony, and as the obedient children of one heavenly Father.

O most merciful God, on whose hands alone are the roaring waves and the mighty waters: we pray Thee to guard with Thy Spirit the voyages of sailors and merchantmen, and to hold fast in Thy ceaseless embrace our fishermen, our lifeboat crews, our coastguards and the keepers of lighthouses, especially those who toil upon the rocky promontory of isolation and danger. Protect in Thine everlasting arms, O Lord, all who go down to the sea in ships; and as they see Thy great and mighty wonders in the deep, so give them grace to put their trust in Thee, who alone art the Anchor of their souls, and the Rock of their salvation.

O Lord our God, who hast spread out the heavens as a curtain before us, who rulest the raging tempest till night and day come to an end: send down Thy Holy Spirit upon all who minister before Thee in the Missions to Seamen in Scotland; that Thou wilt duly prosper the work in which they are currently engaged; and so help them faithfully to preach Thy Word with vigour and clarity, thus fulfilling their duties with integrity and honesty.

Bless, O God, the forces of the Crown, especially the officers, men and women of the Royal Navy, the Royal Naval Reserve, the Merchant Navy and allied services that Thou wilt save them from the perils of the deep. Give them courage to protect our native shores, and by Thy power enable them to create a world where no sword is

drawn but the sword of righteousness, and no strength known but the strength of love.

O Hear us when we cry to Thee

For those in peril of the sea.

O eternal Father strong to save, whose arm hath bound the restless wave: we pray
Thee to calm the trembling hearts of those tormented on the ocean of distress -
the sick, the sorrowing and the dying - the widows and orphans of men of the deep
- those who are disturbed and of anxious mind - and all whose feeble vessel
plighs upon troubled waters, but yearns for peaceful shores. May that tempest
which rages within them cease; and above the roaring billows and the stormy blast
of life's tempestuous sea may they hear the still small voice of Jesus commanding:
'Peace, be still. It is I. Be not afraid'.

O Thou, who art from everlasting to everlasting: be with those for whom we have
prayed, and all for whom we have not prayed. Shine brightly, O God, as a burning
beacon in our earthly lives; and when the voyage of life is over, when the cold
waters chill our latest breath, so let our eyes behold through the morning light,
the city of gold and the harbour bright; and grant that we may anchor safe by the
heavenly shore, in the harbour of eternal peace, and in the glory of Thy triumphant
haven; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee, O Father,
and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end.

AMEN.

These intercessions were specially prepared for the Annual Seafarers' Service,
held in Glasgow Cathedral on 21st October, 1984 (Trafalgar Day), with representatives
from the Missions to Seamen in Scotland, the Royal Navy, the Royal Naval Reserve, the
Merchant Navy, the Wrens, the Sea Cadets and other allied associations in attendance,
together with delegates from the King George Fund for Sailors, the Seafarers'
Fellowship and Glasgow District Council. As befitted the nature of this maritime
occasion, these intercessions focus largely on the understanding of life as a voyage,
while at the same time incorporating a variety of imagery borrowed from themes
pertaining to the sea. Though specifically primed for a particular service, these
prayers might conveniently illustrate a possible approach in the preparation of
similar intercessory petitions in more general circumstances.

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