

Stella Maris

apostleshipofthesea.org.uk

January 2020

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with Fr Colum Kelly

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**Apostleship
of the Sea**

Supporting Seafarers Worldwide

Stella Maris is a Catholic charity supporting seafarers worldwide.

We provide practical and pastoral care to all seafarers, regardless of nationality, belief or race. Our port chaplains and volunteer ship visitors welcome seafarers, offer welfare services and advice, practical help, care and friendship.

Stella Maris is the largest ship visiting network in the world, working in 339 ports with 227 port chaplains around the world. We also run 53 seafarers' centres around the world

We are only able to continue our work through the generous donations of our supporters and volunteers.

To support Stella Maris with a donation visit www.apostleshipofthesea.org.uk/ways-donate

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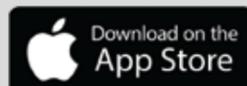
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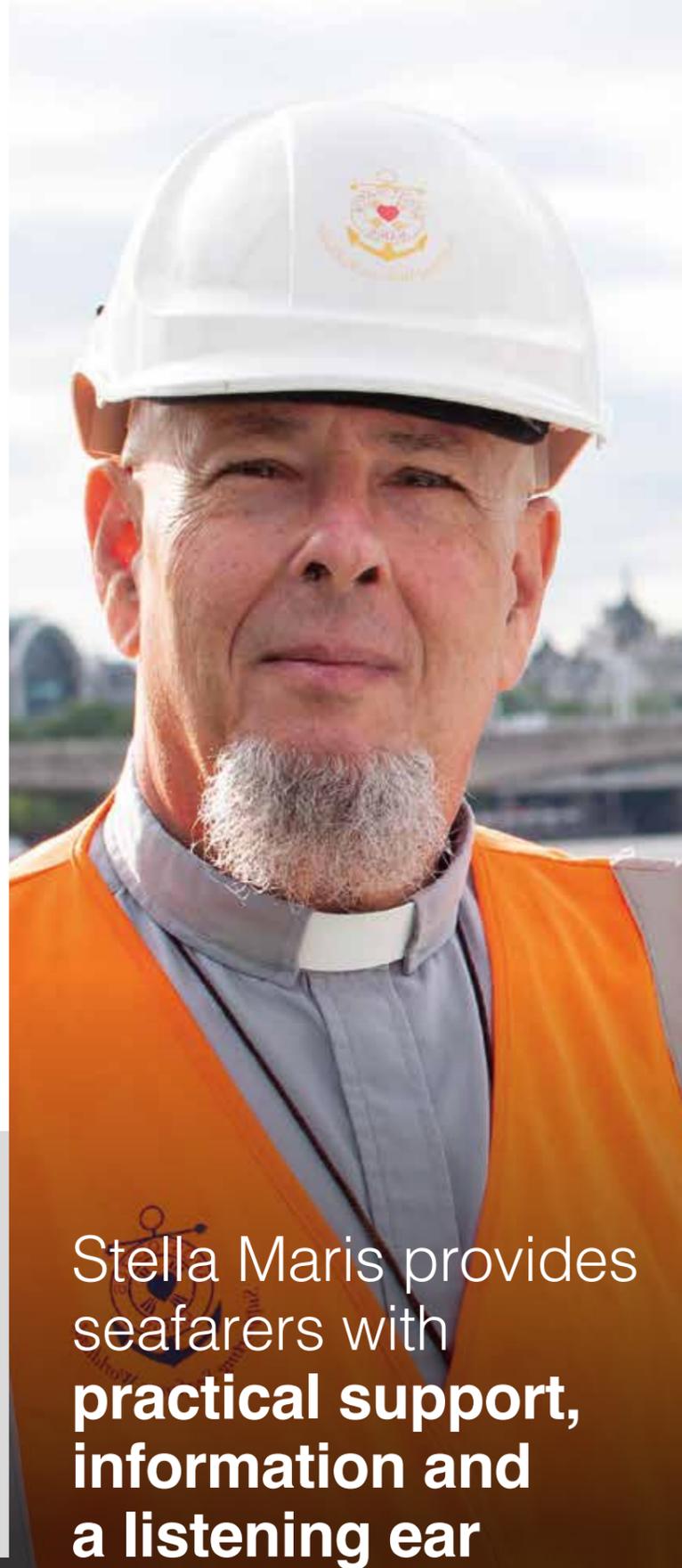


Download our free App

Search for 'StellaMaris' in the App store'



Stella Maris provides seafarers with **practical support, information and a listening ear**



Port Focus Dublin, Ireland



The earliest written account of the Port of Dublin was 1649 and the port archive includes a 30,000 strong collection of engineering drawings, charts and maps dating back to the 1700's.

Two hundred and sixty years later we have evidence of seafarers being cared for under the present name of "Stella Maris".

In 1909 - 1944 meals were served and beds provided mostly for Irish Seafarers returning from overseas, who because of infrequent transport services to the provinces had often to wait nearly a week. Numbers mentioned for 1943 indicate 6,000 meals were served and 4,000 beds provided.

This was financed mainly by regular supporters of the work, companies and a lot of religious congregations showing a great respect for the seafarers who brought most of our needs to our Island Nation. Ship visitation took place, concerts and films were provided. Mass was offered on board ships along with evening rosaries/devotions for those interested. Seafarers from different counties continually celebrated their home-country's Feast Day - the Feast of St Joseph, the holy seamen, Sts Peter, Andrew, James, St Vincent de Paul, apostle of Galley Slaves, St Francis Xavier and St Francis of Assisi. Throughout this period seafarers spent longer time in ports and in many cities businesses closed for a half day on Saturday and a full day on Sunday.

Since then, and particularly since the 1980's our port, like many other ports have witnessed a huge change due to the advanced technology available on board but none the less we still provide the same facilities, in our premises at 3, Beresford Place, Dublin 1 - Chapel, free transport, bar, FX exchange. Free WiFi - small shop with souvenirs and not-so-new clothing free of charge, TV lounges, Snooker and Table Tennis which are all deeply appreciated by the seafarers, particularly those from the developing countries. Normal operating hours are 1830-2230 hours. Seafarers are also taken shopping outside normal working hours on request.

In 2016, Dublin Port Company provided a new "state of the art" centre in the port which is jointly operated by SM and MtS.

It provides the same services for seafarers as Stella Maris for ships crew who are nearby with only a short



time to spare, and is very popular during the "outside normal working 24-hours facility. The Chief Executive of the Port, Mr Eamonn O'Reilly was very committed during its construction, to making sure their building, Dublin Port Seafarers' Centre, was a place of welcome and as comfortable as possible for all who visit.

Dublin Port is always very busy with Bulk (Dry & Break/Liquid Bulk, vessels, Containers, Ro-Ro, Lo-Lo, Ferries, Car Carriers, and Cruise Ships (this year 150).

Many try to forecast the future developments in the world of shipping, with consequences that may badly affect seafarers who are classified as ratings, and we hope that whatever may arise, those who wish to work at sea may be able to do so without additional anxiety and stress. We look forward to our centenary celebrations in Glasgow, Scotland, in 2020.

Dublin Seafarers' Centre

No.3 Branch Road South
Alexandra Basin
Dublin Port
Dublin 1

Opening times:

10:30 -12:30 daily and from 19:00-22:30 hours, minibusservice19:00 to 21:00

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Sunday at Sea Feast of the Epiphany 5th January 2020

Commentary by Fr Colum Kelly

Gospel Matthew 2:1-12

After Jesus had been born at Bethlehem in Judaea during the reign of King Herod, some wise men came to Jerusalem from the east. 'Where is the infant king of the Jews?' they asked. 'We saw his star as it rose and have come to do him homage.' When King Herod heard this he was perturbed, and so was the whole of Jerusalem. He called together all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, and enquired of them where the Christ was to be born. 'At Bethlehem in Judaea,' they told him 'for this is what the prophet wrote:

And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah you are by no means least among the leaders of Judah, for out of you will come a leader who will shepherd my people Israel.'

Then Herod summoned the wise men to see him privately. He asked them the exact date on which the star had appeared, and sent them on to Bethlehem. 'Go and find out all about the child,' he said 'and when you have found him, let me know, so that I too may go and do him homage.' Having listened to what the king had to say, they set out. And there in front of them was the star they had seen rising; it went forward and halted over the place where the child was. The sight of the star filled them with delight, and going into the house they saw the child with his mother Mary, and falling to their knees they did him homage. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. But they were warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, and returned to their own country by a different way.

“... going into the house they saw the child with his mother Mary, and falling to their knees they did him homage..”



The Gospel and You

Today we see a major change in our church or cabin crib. The figures are now joined by three men in glittering velvet robes and extravagant beards. Sometimes they may even have a camel in tow. Bearing gifts, they traveled afar, following the star. I mean, of course, the Magi. Or is it wise men? Or even kings?

During Christmas time we give presents to different people and others give presents to us. It all goes back to the story of the wise men going to Bethlehem, falling down on their knees, and offering the best gifts they could bring to the Baby King. As our memories of the recent Christmas begin to fade maybe we hang on to the message that Christmas is not just about giving presents. It is about being present, alive to the needs of others, sharing our warmth, affection and blessedness.

The quality of our personal presence is everything, on land or sea. The wise men were completely single-minded and sincere in their gift-giving. Their gifts were expressions of their respect, reverence, gratitude and love for the child. Their gifts were given with no strings attached, no conditions, and no mixed motives.

In today's gospel the phrase "Do him homage" appears three times, once even from Herod who aimed to kill the child. Perhaps that is the message of the Epiphany for us. True homage is the presence we mentioned earlier being present with our warmth, affection and blessedness to those who have little.

There are no specific liturgical seasons in the crossings of oceans and time zones. Christmas and Epiphany are celebrated when time is available, but the call to "do him homage" is ever a cry to seafarers who share equally in the Divine Love. The days of following stars are long gone in the sophistication of today's satellite systems but the homage of the Magi should always inspire us that there is no distance too far to travel, to bring the love of God into the lives of those we are called to help.

The Baptism of the Lord 12th January 2020

Gospel Matthew 3:13-17

As soon as Jesus was baptised he saw the Spirit of God coming down on him.

Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptised by John. John tried to dissuade him. 'It is I who need baptism from you' he said 'and yet you come to me!' But Jesus replied, 'Leave it like this for the time being; it is fitting that we should, in this way, do all that righteousness demands.' At this, John gave in to him.

As soon as Jesus was baptised he came up from the water, and suddenly the heavens opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming down on him. And a voice spoke from heaven, 'This is my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on him.'



The Gospel and You

I'm sure we are all very familiar with the story of the Baptism of the Lord. In today's Gospel, Matthew highlights the strangeness of the occasion. John's Baptism is one for the forgiveness of sin, so why does Jesus come for such an encounter, much to the embarrassment of John. Why would the sinless one need to receive a Baptism of repentance?

"I need to be baptised by you, and yet you come to me."

The baptism of Jesus is an especially significant moment in our story of salvation. Jesus joined us in our human condition which seeks moral and spiritual renewal, by the banks of the Jordan. He took upon himself all our weaknesses becoming one with us, as he was one with the Father.

The gospel uses the simple phrase "the heavens were opened."

Today's gospel is the beginning of a journey, which, through our own baptism, each of us is asked to travel. It is a journey full of purpose where all possibilities are opened.

We need a sense of purpose and pattern to our Christian living. Setting out on a journey demands a definite idea of where we intend going, and how to make that journey, none more so than those undertaken at sea. A journey needs to be carefully planned, taking enough for the voyage but no more. Direction, distance, weight, all have to be considered to determine the fuel required.

We too need direction and we need a sense of purpose. Perhaps we are carrying too much to make this a good voyage – things that hold us back and slow us down or cause our purpose to go off course. I'm thinking of the old hurts we carry, the anger the broken promises. You can list your own excesses that should have been left behind a long time ago. Peter summarised the purpose and pattern of Christ's life when he said: "He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed, for God was with him." We are invited to make his purpose our own.

Our Baptism is our starting point on the journey – Travel light.

‘...he came up from the water, and suddenly the heavens opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove...’

2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time 19th January 2020

Gospel John 1:29-34

Seeing Jesus coming towards him, John said, 'Look, there is the lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. This is the one I spoke of when I said: A man is coming after me who ranks before me because he existed before me. I did not know him myself, and yet it was to reveal him to Israel that I came baptising with water.' John also declared, 'I saw the Spirit coming down on him from heaven like a dove and resting on him. I did not know him myself, but he who sent me to baptise with water had said to me, "The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and rest is the one who is going to baptise with the Holy Spirit." Yes, I have seen and I am the witness that he is the Chosen One of God.'



The Gospel and You

John the evangelist poses two thoughts for our attention today: first, his dramatic call to behold the Lamb of God; second, that we do some personal stock-taking during this first month of the new year: Where are we going? and what resolutions might raise the quality of our life at least for the year ahead?

Behold the Lamb of God.

How very comforting to hear familiar words, whether they are from scripture or the text of the Mass. And the phrase is so often recited that chances are we know them by heart. A prayer in themselves.

But the depth of their meaning calls us to a new way of looking at those with whom we come into contact, whether on land or at sea. The call to each of us is that we see the person of Christ in the person in front of us, the one we behold.

It is so easy to see the person of Christ in the ones we love, but what about those we do not like and find difficult. That's the challenge.

John calls us to ask what we truly want and then seek to redirect our lives, almost like resetting the ship's compass to follow a better course.

An honest stock-taking may bring us great blessings and uncover the selfish motives that often direct our lives. But many times we find an excuse or two to put off that honest assessment: too busy now; so angry with someone, we cannot possibly get round to the business of forgiveness. Or maybe we cannot unravel the tissue of lives that we have created to keep our world intact.

To really behold the Lamb of God, we need to see ourselves as God sees us, the broken and the beautiful that is in all of us.

May this new year bring joy and a peace that comes from knowing ourselves and all that has been gifted to us by the Lord who reminds us that we can always be better.

'Look, there is the lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world.'

3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time 29 January 2020

Gospel Matthew 4:12-23

Hearing that John had been arrested Jesus went back to Galilee, and leaving Nazareth he went and settled in Capernaum, a lakeside town on the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali. In this way the prophecy of Isaiah was to be fulfilled:

Land of Zebulun! Land of Naphtali!
Way of the sea on the far side of Jordan,
Galilee of the nations!
The people that lived in darkness
has seen a great light;
on those who dwell in the land and shadow
of death
a light has dawned.

From that moment Jesus began his preaching with the message, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.'

The Gospel and You

In today's gospel we find Jesus travelling from Judea to Galilee to begin his public ministry and as we find so often in Matthew, this is linked to a prophecy from the Old Testament. You will find this a regular feature of Matthew's writing in the year ahead. The prophecy brings in those lovely place names "Land of Zebulun" "Land of Naphtali" What poetic names!

These people who lived in darkness have seen a great light. Aren't they powerful words used by the prophet to describe what happens when Jesus appears among them?

Jesus would later refer to himself as the light of the world; and, in commissioning his disciples, he would tell them that they, now, were to be a light to the world.

That commission has passed on to us.

Here too in a small passage of scripture Jesus lays down a primary condition to all who would hear. "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand".

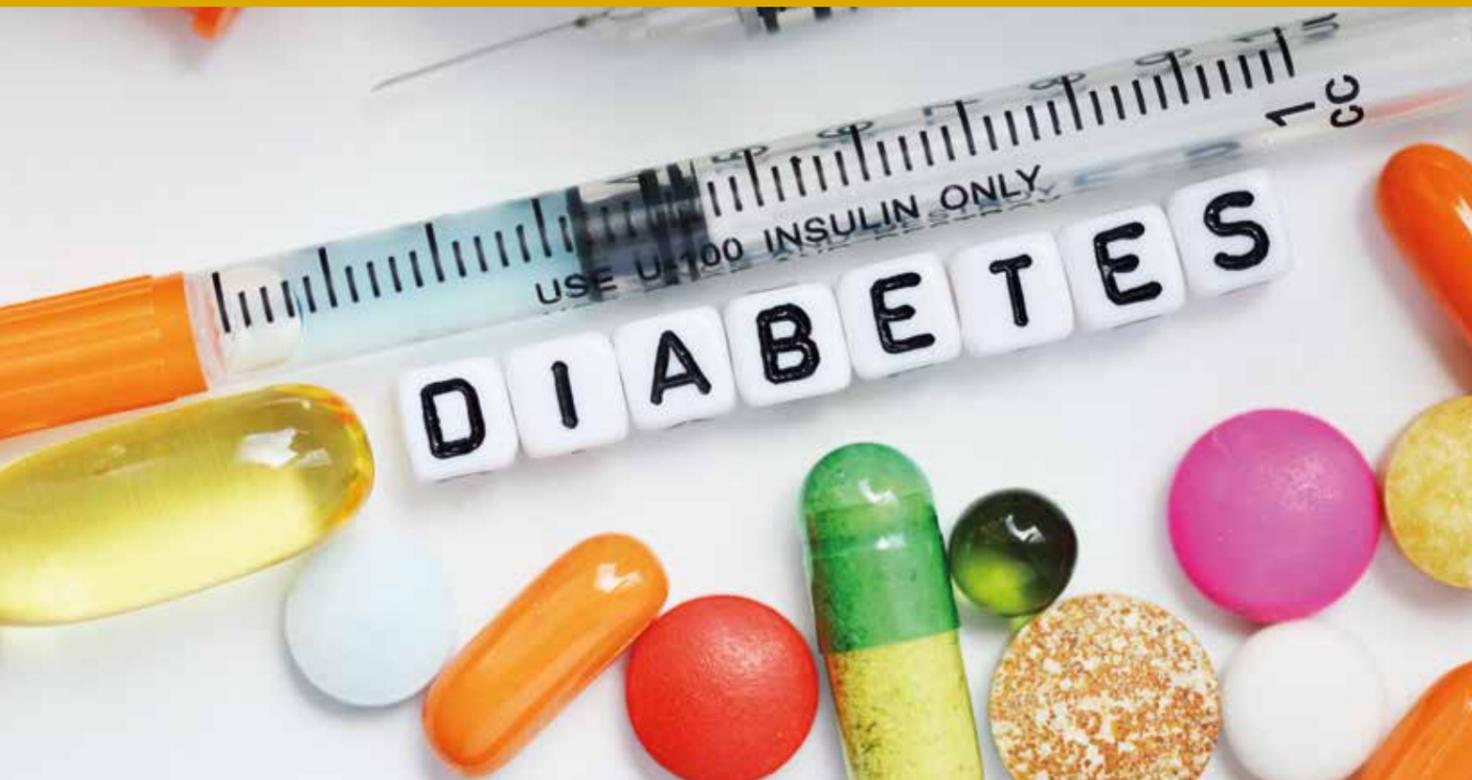
A lot to take in for all of us, such powerful statements. Here is a challenge from a loving God who frequently asks what I am doing for my brothers and sisters. If indeed a great light has shone upon the world by his coming, what part are we to play in helping radiate that light into the dark situations we find around us? What promise of hope can we offer?

It seems pretty obvious, but if we are to do anything to lighten the darkness, we need to learn to listen again – to one another, including to our tales of woe, and also to the encouraging words of the Lord, to sustain us. Over many years those words have generated hope and conviction in difficult and barren times.

But before we can experience anything of this great light we need to turn away from our own obsessions that control so much of our thinking.

Listening to others and doing something beautiful for God is a positive way to refocus away from our own self-absorption.





The Good Life:

Type 2 diabetes – a growing global health threat that puts seafarers at risk

Diabetes is a chronic disease that occurs when the pancreas is no longer able to make insulin, or when the body cannot make good use of the insulin it produces. Insulin is a hormone, that acts like a key to let glucose from the food we eat pass from the blood stream into the cells in the body to produce energy. All carbohydrate foods are broken down into glucose in the blood. Insulin helps glucose get into the body's cells.

Not being able to produce insulin or use it effectively leads to raised glucose levels in the blood, known as hyperglycaemia. Over time high glucose levels are associated with damage to the body and failure of various organs and tissues. There are three types of diabetes, Type 1, Type 2 and Gestational, or diabetes during pregnancy.

People with Type 1 diabetes produce very little or no insulin. The disease usually develops in children or young adults. People with this form of diabetes need injections of insulin every day in order to control the levels of glucose in their blood. There is no cure for Type 1 diabetes and for those without access to insulin, the disease is fatal.

Type 2 diabetes accounts for 90% of all cases of diabetes worldwide. It is characterised by insulin



Diabetes in seafarers

Research shows that seafarers have a higher risk of developing Type 2 diabetes compared with the general population. Early recognition of seafarers at risk followed by careful monitoring and treatment is important. Treatment is aimed at correcting lifestyle issues:

- Changes in diet to reduce the intake of high sugar foods and beverages and other carbohydrates and increase servings of fruit and vegetables. Guidelines for Healthy Food Onboard Merchant Ships provides tips for healthy food plans.
- Exercising at least three times a week for 30 minutes each time, aiming to achieve an exercise heart rate of 75% of maximum. This can be easily calculated as follows: $(220 - \text{age}) \times 0.75 = \text{recommended heart rate during exercise}$ to derive cardiovascular benefit. For an average 45-year-old, this would mean an exercise heart rate of 131 beats per minute.
- Monitoring the blood sugar levels with tests such as urine glucose tests, blood sugar tests and a diabetes control measuring test, an HBA1C, which provides a measure of diabetes control over the last six weeks. The seafarer must also keep a logbook of their diabetes control to enable them to understand their health condition, and to take responsibility for its management.
- Using prescribed medication regularly and notifying their doctor of any change in their diabetes control, so that appropriate adjustments to their treatment regime can be made.

Type 2 diabetes is a growing health threat to seafarers as well as the general population. The risk of developing the disease can be greatly reduced by adopting a healthy lifestyle including adjustments to diet and increase in exercise. The International Diabetes Federation (IDF) recommends these dietary guidelines for the general population:

- Choosing water, coffee or tea instead of fruit juice, soda, or other sugar sweetened beverages
- Eating at least three servings of vegetable every day, including leafy green vegetables
- Eating up to three servings of fresh fruit every day
- Choosing nuts, a piece of fresh fruit, or unsweetened yoghurt for a snack
- Limiting alcohol intake to a maximum of two standard drinks per day
- Choosing lean cuts of white meat, poultry or seafood instead of red or processed meat
- Choosing peanut butter instead of chocolate spread or jam
- Choosing wholegrain bread, rice, or pasta instead of white bread, rice, or pasta
- Choosing unsaturated fats (olive oil, canola oil, corn oil, or sunflower oil) instead of saturated fats (butter, ghee, animal fat, coconut oil or palm oil).

resistance and relative insulin deficiency, either or both of which may be present at the time diabetes is diagnosed. The diagnosis of Type 2 diabetes can occur at any age. Type 2 diabetes may remain undetected for many years and the diagnosis is often made when a complication arises or a routine blood or urine glucose test is done. It is often, but not always, associated with obesity, which itself can cause insulin resistance and lead to high blood glucose levels. People with Type 2 diabetes can often initially manage their condition through exercise and diet. However, over time most people will require oral drugs and/or insulin.

There is an increasing prevalence of Type 2 diabetes, which is associated with more sedentary lifestyles and a higher consumption of unhealthy foods, which lead to obesity.

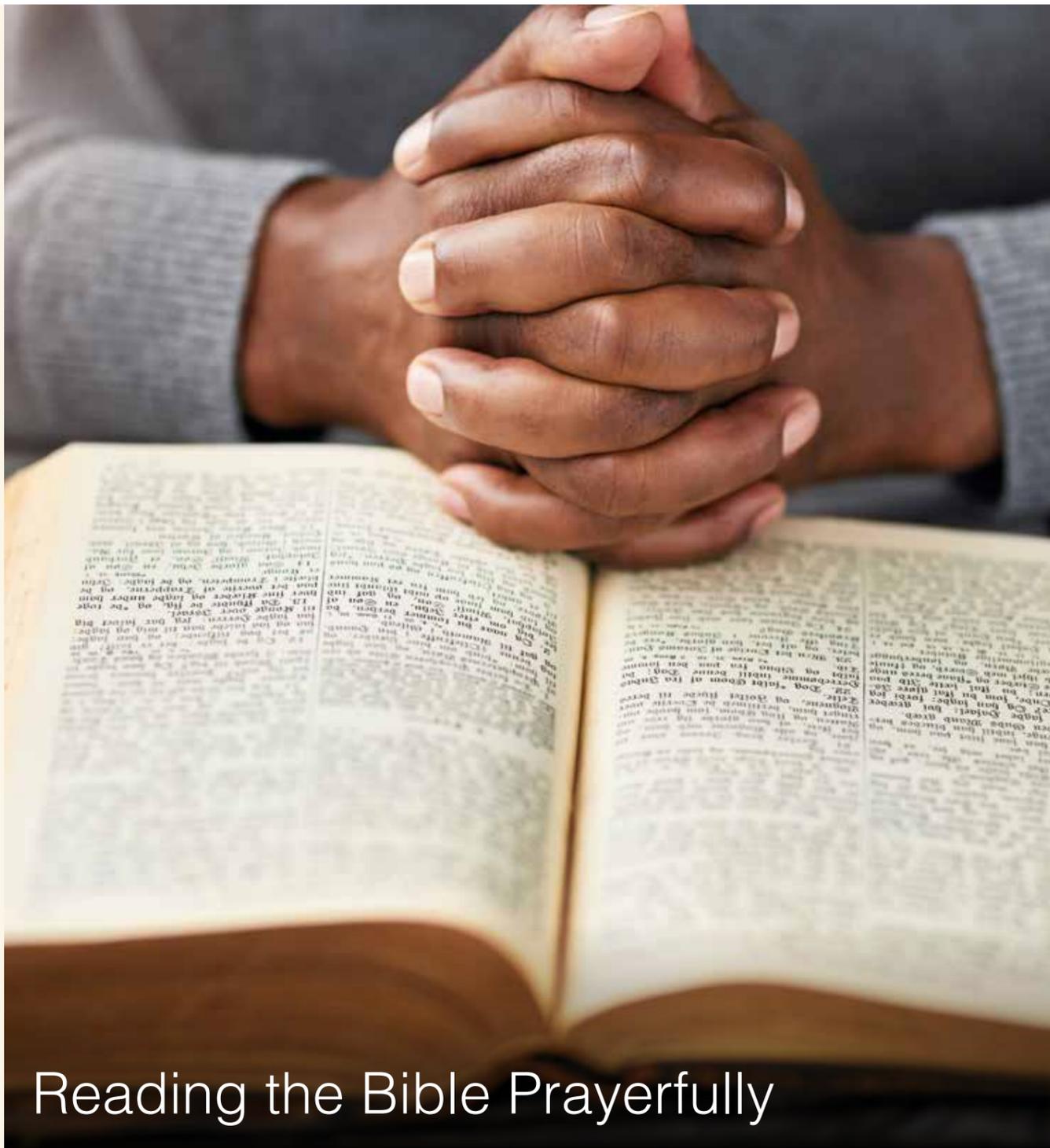
Diabetes affects at least 425 million people worldwide, that is one in eleven adults.

By 2045, it is estimated that this number will increase to 629 million, one in ten adults; and diabetes-related health expenditure will exceed USD 776 billion.

Type 2 diabetes is a leading cause of blindness, amputation, heart disease, kidney failure and early death. Every 8 seconds someone dies from diabetes. The good news is that over 50% of Type 2 diabetes is preventable and complications for those with the condition can be avoided with good management and care. The International Diabetes Federation which is an umbrella organization of over 230 national diabetes associations, has produced an interactive test for individuals to gauge their own risk of developing type 2 diabetes within the next ten years based on their individual risk factors.

According to the IDF, there is "overwhelming evidence from studies in the USA, Finland, China, India and Japan that lifestyle changes – achieving a healthy body weight and moderate physical activity – can help prevent the development of Type 2 diabetes in those at high risk."

Surely prevention is better than cure.



Reading the Bible Prayerfully

The Catholic Church in her teaching tells us: "And let them (the faithful) remember that prayer should accompany the reading of Sacred Scripture, so that God and people may talk together; for "we speak to Him when we pray; we hear Him when we read the Sacred Scripture." (Dei Verbum 25)

Pope Francis says: "There is one particular way of listening to what the Lord wishes to tell us in his word and of letting ourselves be transformed by the Spirit. It is what we call *Lectio Divina*. It consists of reading God's word in a moment of prayer and

allowing it to enlighten and renew us. This prayerful reading of the Bible is not something separate from the study undertaken by the preacher to ascertain the central message of the text; on the contrary, it should begin with that study and then go on to discern how that same message speaks to his own life. (Evangelii Gaudium 152)

To pray with the Sacred Scripture is to chat with God, as a friend speaks to a friend, where **HIS WORDS WRITTEN IN THE BIBLE** nurture the conversation.

So, how to pray then?

Simple steps to pray with the WORD OF GOD:

1. Take a couple of minutes to slow down, to wind down, to breath in and breath out... and **to acknowledge God's presence.**

Remember words like:

- **"The Master (Jesus) is here and wants to see you"** (Jn 11: 28)
- **"Look, I am standing at the door, knocking. If one of you hears me calling and opens the door, I will come in to share his meal, side by side with him."** (Rev 3:20)

Give everything to God, tell him all that you are carrying in your heart and mind... he knows what you are in need of.

Entrust everything to Him.

2. Read a passage from the Scripture:

- One of the Gospel readings in this *Stella Maris* magazine
- A passage that has just been mentioned to you in the preaching
- A reading from the daily Mass
- Any passage that you would like to pray

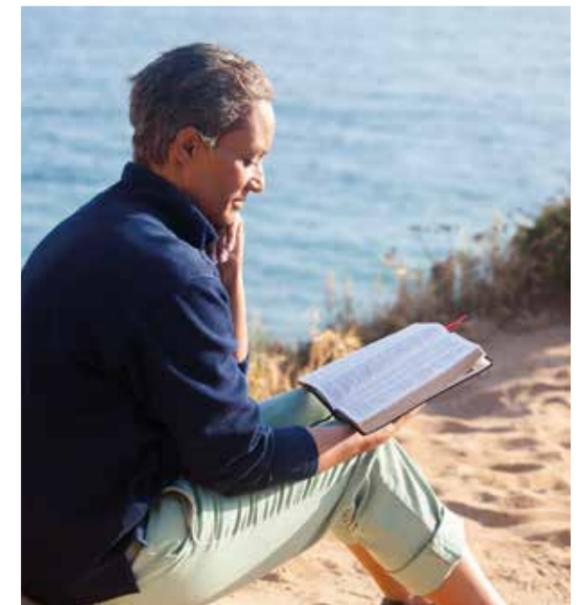
Read it slowly so that it makes sense!

Try to picture the scene and perceive its details. Here are some questions that can help:

- What is the context?
- What is happening?
- Who is speaking to whom?
- What are they saying?
- What is the theme?
- Which words are repeated?

3. Allow the message you read to be relevant to your daily life.

- Chat with God about it: Can you, please, explain it to me?
- Ask the Lord: What are you saying to me with this bit of the Bible I am pondering?
- As you are trying to listen... God is speaking to you through the profound understanding of the Word of God you are praying with.
- Become also aware of the inner motions happening in you: thoughts, memories, feelings, desires, reactions... Be in touch with them, formulate them and give them to the Lord.



4. Hold God's words in your heart...

Treasure them... Savour them... Rest on them... Give thanks for them... Let them find a home in you... Repeat them slowly in your mind and heart... These words are leading you to be in God's presence... Stay there! Be with Him! Be still! Don't rush! Silently remain in HIM!

5. How can you put what you prayed into practice?

- Aim to formulate what God is inviting you to carry out.
- Try to live out the insights you had in prayer. The Spirit will give you the strength and light you need.
- Life follows prayer and prayer leads back to life. Next time you place yourself before God and His word, bring in your "attempts to live the Word" and continue weaving life with God's wisdom and love.

6. Try to express your prayer to others.

Sharing our prayer and our faith enriches us mutually and enables us to be united in communion:

- **'I tell you solemnly once again, if two of you on earth agree to ask anything at all, it will be granted to you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three meet in my name, I shall be there with them.'** (Mt 18:19-20)

Jesus tells us: 'If you make my word your home you will indeed be my disciples, you will learn the truth and the truth will make you free'. (Jn 8:31-32)



January is the month
dedicated to the
Holy Name of Jesus

Jesu Dulcis Memoria

Jesus, the very thought of Thee
With sweetness fills the breast!
Yet sweeter far Thy face to see
And in Thy Presence rest.

No voice can sing, no heart can frame,
Nor can the memory find,
A sweeter sound than Jesus' Name,
The Saviour of mankind.

O hope of every contrite heart!
O joy of all the meek!
To those who fall, how kind Thou art!
How good to those who seek!

But what to those who find? Ah! this
Nor tongue nor pen can show
The love of Jesus, what it is,
None but His loved ones know.

Jesus! our only hope be Thou,
As Thou our prize shalt be;
In Thee be all our glory now,
And through eternity.

Amen.



**Apostleship
of the Sea**

Supporting Seafarers Worldwide

