

# THE SEAMEN'S POST

AUGUST 2013

## EVANGELISM ENCOURAGES DEPRESSED SEAMAN REV. LEE

If your wife suffers from depression, then what can you do? If your husband goes through a middle age crisis, how can you help him out? These are not big problems for us because we can easily access people or facilities which can professionally help us and our loved ones. But if you live far from such help, then what can you do? This is the seafarer's reality when he faces a serious mental health problem while living onboard a commercial vessel far from the help he so desperately needs.

One windy and cold January day, I visited the ship "PAC ALTAIR" which was berthed at the first Broadway terminal in Southern New Jersey. She had a mixed crew of six Filipinos, 16 Chinese, one Polish national and one Singaporean. It was lunch time when I arrived so I was invited to share their meal.

Through the table discussion, I had an opportunity to introduce myself and begin to get to know them.

After lunch, I moved to the crew's smoking room and we continued our discussions. By 1:00 p.m., most of the crew had gone back to

work and the room had emptied. I was about to leave the ship when one of the Filipinos, Rogelio, arrived and began talking with me. He was in his mid forties I gathered and he had worked onboard ships for more than 20 years but was still an Able Seaman (A/B). At first the discussion concerned the ordinary challenges of life at sea but soon he became serious and shared his personal struggles with sudden mood changes, limited endurance, short temper and anxiety about the future.

When I heard Rogelio, I could sense that he was going through depression or a middle age crisis. I cautiously suggested that he might be suffering a kind of job related

life crisis and that it was a common experience for a man his age who had worked the same job for more than 20 years. I also told him not to be too concerned if his struggles continued for one or two more years. Finally, I asked him to rely on God more by reading the Bible and praying. He told me that he was Roman Catholic but I surmised that he had never had a personal relationship with God through Jesus. He was a "nominal Christian." So I preached the gospel to Rogelio and told him that "it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes." Ro. 1:16. I also shared Paul's personal testimony, which is described in 2 Corinthians 1:8-10, con-

"On Him we have set our hope that He will deliver us again."  
2Cor. 1:10b

cerning his experience of affliction during his and Timothy's missionary journey in Asia. I thought Rogelio might identify with Paul who described this time when "we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself." I focused on verse 10 where Paul claims God's salvation as his comfort: "He delivered us from a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again."

After my preaching and prayer for Rogelio, he said to me "You are God's messenger sent to me for my salvation. I really appreciate your kind help through counseling. I will put my trust more on God everyday and I want to experience God's power working in my life."



## BANGLADESHI PASTOR INVITED TO U.S.

Pastor Palash Roy, one of the 25 Master of Divinity students who attended Rev. Lee's maritime missions training seminar at Kosin University in June has been invited to visit the U.S. to learn about MCS' vision for ministry. He is a 5th generation Bangladeshi Christian who serves as Youth Pastor for a Church in the capital, Dhaka. He has a passion for evangelism and a vision to reach out to the 50,000 seafarers who pass through local ports annually.

Having attended Rev. Lee's training seminars for the past three years, Pastor Roy began praying about opening a seamen's ministry

center at one of Bangladesh's busy ports. Since the country is predominantly Muslim, He believes that a ministry to seafarers would play an important role in spreading the gospel in an otherwise closed country. He feels led to use his evangelism gift with international seafarers as he share's the love of Christ through pastoral care.

While in Philadelphia, Pastor Roy will spend time with Rev. Lee at SCI's Seamen's Center to gain practical experience as well as inspiration for the ministry God may be leading him to establish. Since childhood, Pastor Roy

exclaimed in his application cover letter, 'I have loved God and tried my best to serve my Lord.' In his 10 years of church ministry, he has shared the gospel in a wide variety of settings. "My dream is to restore His kingdom among all nations and all people for His glory."



## NOTEWORTHY MARITIME MISSIONS NEWS

### Day of the Seafarer

Without the contributions of the world's 1.5 million seafarers, international trade would "simply grind to halt," according to United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in a message delivered on June 25th to mark a worldwide celebration of the International Day of the Seafarer. Mr. Ban, a South Korean, urged people everywhere to think about the courageous men and women who handle as much as 90% of the cargo transported worldwide. Seafarers face many emotional, physical and spiritual dangers at sea as they go about their daily routines and MCS seeks to share the love of Christ with them when God delivers them safely to the Philadelphia area ports. Rev. Lee effectively and compassionately shares the gospel with men arriving with a wide variety of practical needs. His words of encouragement based in scriptural truth uplifts them as they return to the often lonely and dangerous life at sea.

### Port Missions Conference

Rev. Lee shared his vision for maritime missions with a local congregation celebrating a Sea Sunday Festival during his visit to South Korea early in June. Pastor Roy Palish, who is interning with Rev. Lee this summer, also shared his testimony and vision for reaching seafarers for Christ in his home country of Bangladesh, a predominantly Muslim country. The festival coincides with an annual conference held at the World Mission Center of Kosin University. Rev. Lee taught a class of 25 English speaking pastors from ten countries the importance of communicating Christ in a culturally relevant manner. Several of the students expressed their commitment to port ministry and were delighted to hear Rev. Lee's practical insights for ship visitation.

### New SCI Director

The Rev. Canon Dr. Peter B. Stube, a veteran Episcopal priest whose parents, grandparents and brothers were overseas mission-

aries, has been named Executive Director and Port Chaplain of the Seamen's Church Institute of Philadelphia and South Jersey (SCI). Rev. Lee is excited about working with Rev. Stube who has a heart for missions and is enthusiastic for ministry to seafarers. SCI recently sold its building at 475 North 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Philadelphia and has consolidated its operating space there as a tenant of the new owner. Consequently, MCS has closed its tiny office in the SCI space but Rev. Lee continues to minister alongside his Episcopalian brothers and sisters in Christ in their comfortable facilities on 5th Street.

### Preparing for Christmas

During those hot and humid days of July, did any of you yearn for a snowy winter day? Put that yearning to use for the Lord as we think and plan ahead for the 2013 Christmas Ditty Bag Project. It's a great opportunity to share the good news of

salvation through Christ with seafarers along with a very practical and much needed gift. Along with some personal hygiene items, the MCS ditty bag given to seafarers passing through the ports of Philadelphia during December includes a warm knit hat and gloves. Last year, God blessed this project mightily and enabled Rev. Lee to deliver 1,500 gift bags, which was more than double the amount for the previous year. As discouragement set in last November when we realized we had raised enough funds to fill only 800 ditty bags, God encouraged us with 1 Thessalonians 5:24: "The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it." If God is leading you to care for seafarers, please send MCS a financial gift today and begin praying that the 2013 Christmas Ditty Bag Project will reach the men whom God in his sovereignty brings to Philadelphia this December.

## SHATTERED PEACE REV. LEE

One morning early in the summer, I visited a tanker ship berthed at Eagle Point in South Jersey. The weather was so good that visiting the ship was like a picnic. In fact, the view of a still, mirror like Delaware River from the deck of the ship seemed so peaceful that I took a photo of it. But when I entered the crew's lounge this seemingly perfect peace

was shattered. The ship's crew was so angry and upset about their situation that I could not believe my eyes and ears. They had been detained onboard because some did not have visas to enter the United States and even those who did have visas were told that the port terminal would charge them a fee if they left the ship. In the midst of this turmoil,

however, God gave me a brief chance to talk with the chief officer who was Russian. I emphasized God's goodness, that even though we are sinners He sends His son Jesus to save us. I urged this officer to remember that God is always good and, therefore, we should trust Him in the midst of difficult circumstances.

### CARE FREE GIVING

Please remember Rev. Lee's effective ministry at the ports of Philadelphia and South Jersey and set up automatic giving through your bank. Simply decide on a monthly contribution amount and ask your bank to send your check to MCS every month, c/o Janice Hill, White Horse Village, G-163, 535 Gradyville Road, Newtown Square, PA 19073. Your contribution is tax deductible!



Mission to Chinese Seamen

中華海員佈道會

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Rev. Dr. Byeong Eun Lee earned Doctor and Master of Divinity degrees from Westminster Theological Seminary, and is active in port ministry along the Delaware River.

www.seamistry.org

## PRAYER & PRAISE LOG

- Praise for Rev. Lee's safe and inspiring trip to South Korea to train future international port chaplains.
- Pray that the Holy Spirit would prepare the hearts of seafarers so that they may exercise faith in Jesus Christ.
- Pray for comfort for seafarers experiencing loneliness at sea.

### 2013 NAMMA

During August, Rev. Lee and MCS Board member Larry Chang traveled to Fort Lauderdale, Florida to attend the 2013 conference, "Safety of Souls at Sea," hosted by the North American Maritime Ministry Association for training and fellowship with port chaplains. Both came away feeling encouraged that more evangelicals are involved in port ministry.

*"Let the sea roar, and all that fills it; the world and those who dwell in it! Let the rivers clap their hands; let the hills sing for joy together before the Lord; for He comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness, and the people with equity."*

(Psalm 98:7-9)