



Current Issues in Prayer

August 2020

Welcome! The Pope invites people of good will to come together and pray **that those who work and live from the sea, among them sailors, fishermen and their families.**

Getting started:

I sit down comfortably and calm down. I breathe in and out gently. In silence, I recognise that God is with me and that He loves me. I recognise God as my creator who has given me the intelligence to use for the benefit of others. I thank him for all the gifts with which he has endowed humankind.

Short story:

It is just after the break of dawn when Fr. Luke Seguna steps onto a boat with a group of fishermen. He carries an aspergillum and a can of holy water. Among the small crowd gathered to see the blessing of the fishermen, are a few photographers. They have come to capture the moment of the ideal setting - the rising sun on the fishing village of Marsaxlokk; the colourful luzzi (boats), each with a pair of eyes on the bow and gently rocking on a calm sea; and the families of the fishermen who came to wave goodbye.



Fr. Luke blesses the fishermen who bow their heads as they stand on the luzzi. They are lined up and ready to go. It is the annual ritual at the start of the *lampuki* (dolphin fish) season. "Look after yourselves boys... your families will be waiting for you!", says Fr. Luke in a paternal tone to remind them not to be rash.

Fr. Luke knows that the reality of these fishermen is not as picturesque and romantic as the image on the photo, taken from the safety of the quay. He knows his community well. He is aware of the hardship out at sea. When the clouds thicken, the waves rumble and a *luzzu* is delayed, he's the first to receive the phone call from the worried wife and heart-broken mother.

"It is time to go!" someone yells. Fr. Luke steps off, turns around and shouts, "God bless you all!"

Time to reflect:

Our seafood comes from the people who work and live from the sea. They work in harsh conditions and face constant danger to make a living. Do I think about fishermen and all those who contribute in bringing food on our plates?

Let us pray:

Dear Lord, look after the fishermen, sailors and their families. Give them the strength to endure the hardship of the sea, and help them stay united with their families despite the long distances and time away from home.

Inspiration:

At sea, I learned how little a person needs, not how much.

Robin Lee Graham

Hands on:

I find out about the life of fishermen, sailors and their families. I get to know more about the dangers faced by those who spend most of their lives at sea.