

# The Master's Mariner

Winter, 2006.



## *A Message From The Principal Chaplain*



From the earliest days, our need to know that we are secure has always been a vital concern for people. Whether it is physical security (i.e. our need to feel protected against loss, attack or harm), or emotional security (defined by psychologist Dr. Larry Crabb as 'A convinced

*awareness of being unconditionally and totally loved without needing to change in order to win love, loved by a love that is freely given, that cannot be earned and therefore cannot be lost.'*), security has always been a very real and valid human concern.

Even before the recent escalations of terrorist activity, we had become used to measures designed to detect threats to our physical security. Now, of necessity, those measures have become far more stringent and widespread.

In many ways, maritime security has often been more relaxed than, say, airline security (remember the ease with which we used to go on board cruise ships to farewell family or

friends?) but those days are now long gone, and maritime security for seafarers, as well as for our Chaplains, is now as stringent as it is for airline workers.

The most recent measure involves the issue of a Maritime Security Identification Card (MSIC). This involves personal identification and background checks by the Australian Federal Police, and incorporates other measures designed to ensure that our Ports are better safeguarded against those with ill intent.

Suffice to say that the Mission is very glad to comply with these new security requirements and measures, knowing that our ministry to the seafarers arriving in Sydney is as necessary (and welcome) as ever it was!

Yet the provision of physical security cannot guarantee our emotional security. Even within 'peaceful' communities, people are vulnerable to the anguish of personal insecurities. The longing we all have to know the security of the love described by Dr Crabb is at the heart of our beings, but where can such security possibly be found? Certainly not in material possessions!

Because God made us for relationships, it is natural for us to seek security in other people – especially our spouse and family – but to fully invest in others our sense of being loved is to set ourselves up for a fall. Our innate self-interest and our other human frailties render us incapable of providing constantly such unconditional, total love.

The Psalmist rejoiced, "*Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!*" (Psalm 133:1), and who would disagree? But we know all too well that many people are 'unsafe' and that we will do best to be very selective in what we share with them.

Can we let another know the worst about us in the certainty that they will not reject us or love us less? How we wish we could say, 'Yes!' However, we know all too well the truth of the saying: 'the eye that sees is the eye that rejects.'

Who would know the very worst about us, and yet still love us totally and unconditionally? Where can we find true security?

In the 1st Century, Saul of Tarsus devoted his life to wiping Christianity off the face of the earth. Many Christians were persecuted, imprisoned and killed because of his labours.

He was determined to become Christianity's worst nightmare.

Yet, in the mercy of God, this terrorist was confronted by the risen Jesus Christ and was transformed by Him into a new man whose life was dedicated to promote that which he had previously been committed to destroy!

He later wrote to Timothy, his young understudy: *"The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost."* (1 Timothy 1:15).

Jesus fully knew the enormity of the hatreds that had ruled Saul's life. He knew the actions that had brought so much evil upon Him via His people's sufferings (*"Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?"* – Acts 9:4).

And yet, despite Jesus' full knowledge of Saul's genocidal hatreds, Jesus had sacrificed His own, perfect life for him so that Saul might be graced with God's full forgiveness and reconciliation. Saul was transformed by Jesus' total, unconditional love. Consequently, he (now named 'Paul') was able to write to the Christians in what is now central Turkey, *"And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."* (Galatians 2:20).

What God did for Saul, He has done for millions of people since that time. He has done it for me. Together we testify that only in Jesus Christ can we enjoy, *'A convinced awareness of being unconditionally and totally loved without needing to change in order to win*

*love, loved by a love that is freely given, that cannot be earned and therefore cannot be lost.'*

Augustine of Hippo said, *'God has made us for Himself, and our hearts are restless until we find our rest in Him.'*

In Him can we rest secure.

## *Meet Minerva Argente*



### *How did you come to work at the Mission?*

By a rather complicated process! Mr Graham Hardy, who was the Manager of the Mission at that time, asked Arnold Mercado (who was working as the shop assistant) if he knew anybody who was available to work as a receptionist on a Wednesday night. Arnold asked his best friend's sister if she was able to help, but she already had a full-time job. As my friend, she suggested that I might like to apply for the position. I started with the Mission in June 1993 and a couple of years later, the Rev Tom Hill asked me to work full time. So here I am!

### *What does your current work involve?*



On weekdays, The Mission opens at 10 am and I help the seafarers change different currencies into Australian dollars, assist them with telephone calls, answer their queries regarding the location of particular shops and tourist sites here in Sydney and serve them in the shop. I do the currency exchange banking and the regular banking, as well as everyday receptionist duties.

### *What is the most frustrating aspect of your work?*

It can be frustrating trying to communicate with seafarers who have little or no English. Some seafarers come from cultures where women are treated as 2<sup>nd</sup> class citizens and I find it difficult when I am treated in this way.

### *...and the most enjoyable aspect?*

I like doing the banking, especially when it relieves me of the difficulties of dealing with some seafarers. Because it is a totally different aspect of my face-to-face work with the seafarers, it is sort of therapeutic for me.

### *Please tell us about your family?*

I'm the third in the family of four children and grew up in the Philippines. My parents have both passed away. My eldest sister, Rory, is a personnel manager. She has one daughter named Rizza, who graduated in high school with four medals. My other older sister, Liza, is a Senior Manager at the Development Bank of the Philippines and is married to Ernie, who is a Senior Vice-President of The Bank of the Philippine Islands. They have two daughters, Rachel and Kristine, and a son named Paolo. Rachel graduated in medicine with honours, and Kristine graduated in BS Math with honours. Paolo has a small catering business.

Along with me, my younger brother Aris, his wife Didi and their two children Carlo and Dominic have become Australian citizens and now call Australia home - I'm very happy about that. Aris works with a Telecommunications Company and his wife Didi manages 'Vinnies' at Springwood. Carlo, who is my godson, is studying Electrical Engineering at The University of Western

Sydney and Dominic is in Year 12 at Penrith Selective High School.



### *What led you to come to Australia?*

When Aris and his family migrated to Australia in 1988, I came with them as a tourist. I had a close friend who had migrated to the USA and she gave me the idea of moving to another country. At that time I was having some relationship problems, so I decided to quit my job at the Metropolitan Bank of the Philippines. My dad asked me if I wanted to join my brother and his family. I agreed and I stayed for a couple of years here in Australia. After that I returned to the Philippines, but I missed Australia so much so that I vowed to return. After a couple of years, I came back to Australia on a tourist visa. While I was here I applied for and was granted permanent residency. After a couple of years I became an Australian citizen.

### *How do you like to relax?*

I love talking with people whom I can trust completely. It relaxes me considerably. I also like horse-riding at Centennial Park. Right now I am having driving lessons, which keeps me busy during the weekends. (ed. Minerva is perhaps the only person in the world who finds learning to drive relaxing!)

### *Where is your perfect holiday destination? Why there?*

I always look forward to going to the Philippines and catching up with my sisters and their families. I have been to some

countries in Asia and I would like to go to Europe one day.



'Kaiyo Maru 35' enters Sydney Harbour for emergency engine repairs. The Japanese and Indonesian crew were ministered to by Mission Chaplains.

## *When You Wish Upon A Star ...*

A Naval Captain said to the Chief Officer, "Early tomorrow morning there will be a total solar eclipse at 0900 hours. This is something that cannot be seen every day, so let the crew line up on deck in their best clothes, so they might see it. To mark this rare phenomenon, I myself will explain it to them. If it is raining, we will not be able to see it clearly. In that case, the crew should gather in the mess room."

The Chief Officer said to the First Officer, "On Captain's orders, there will be a total solar eclipse early tomorrow morning at 0900 hours. If it is raining, we will not be able to see it clearly from the deck in our best clothes. In that case, the sun's disappearance will be fully observed in the mess room. This is something that does not happen every day."

The First Officer said to the Second Officer, "On Captain's orders we shall fully observe, in our best clothes, that the sun disappears in the mess room at 0900 hours. The Captain will tell us if it is going to rain. This is something that does not happen every day."

The Second Officer said to the Bosun, "If it is raining in the mess room early tomorrow, which is something that does not happen every day, the Captain - in his best clothes - will disappear at 0900 hours."

The Bosun said to the Crew, "Early tomorrow morning at 0900, the Captain will disappear. It is a pity that this does not happen every day."

(Reprinted from The Merchant Mariners' 'The Red Ensign'.)

## *Mission Events for 2006*

**\* The Harbour Lights Guild meets in the Chapel at 10:45am on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed. of the month.**

### **July**

2<sup>nd</sup> 1400 Sea Sunday Service in The Mission's Mariners' Chapel.

### **August**

1<sup>st</sup> 1300 Deputation to Westmead Uniting Church

8<sup>th</sup> 1330 Deputation to South Carlton Anglican Church

23<sup>rd</sup> 1230 Board Meeting

### **September**

6<sup>th</sup> 1230 Port Committee

24<sup>th</sup> 1000 Annual Seafarers' Service in St Andrew's Cathedral, followed by lunch at The Mission.

### **October**

23<sup>rd</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup> MtS World Conference in Swanwick, Derbyshire UK.

### **November**

1<sup>st</sup> 1230 Port Committee

22<sup>nd</sup> 1230 Board Meeting



'Tasman Chief' unloading cargo at PATRICK's Darling Harbour Terminal. We welcomed the crew at Flying Angel House.

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