



# News & Prayer

*'serving those who serve since 1779'*

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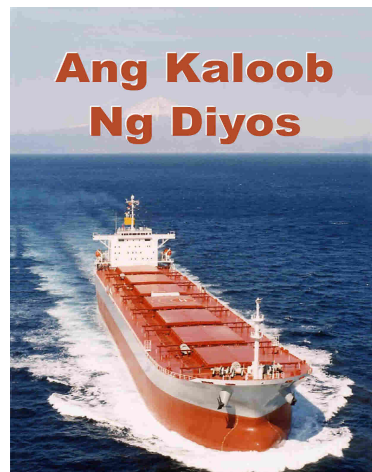
The Ven Ron Hesketh CB, NMAFBS Chairman (right), presenting a copy of *Combat the Stress* to The Ven Stephen Robbins QHC, Army Chaplain-General, with Richard Prendergast (centre).

Dear Christian Friends,

**The Gift of God**

## **Combat the Stress**

Since its publication in January over five thousand copies of *Combat the Stress* have now been distributed to some 30 military units. Organizations including RCDM Hospital Selly Oak, Headley Court Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre and the Australian Army's welfare service, Everyman's, have also placed orders for it.



**Ang Kaloob  
Ng Diyos**

A new booklet about the need to

know God through Jesus Christ, entitled *The Gift of God* or *Ang Kaloob Ng Diyos* is now available for distribution to merchant seafarers in English and Tagalog languages. The booklets were printed with the permission of Evangelism Explosion Oceania to replace English and Tagalog versions of *Away from home* which are out of stock. Versions of *Away from home* in Romanian, Portuguese, Greek, Danish and Chinese are still available. We are grateful to SCFS Australia for redesigning the covers.

### **Street Pastors in Portsmouth**

Portsmouth is one of over a hundred cities and towns in the UK which have introduced street pastors to patrol in city centres usually on Friday and Saturday nights. Street Pastors are volunteers trained to give comfort, assistance, prayer and a Christian witness.

A street pastor told me recently of meeting a soldier coming out of a night club who detached himself from a rowdy group of friends and approached her. He

said words to the effect that, before he was deployed to Afghanistan last year, she and some other street pastors prayed for him that he would come to no harm. He said he wanted to thank her because the prayer must have worked as he got caught in an ambush and two of his mates were killed but he himself escaped unhurt.

### **Pitcairn testimony**

Retired merchant sailor, Neil MacDonald, read the article (News & Prayer No 89) on the effect the Bounty Bible had on the lives of the Pitcairn Islanders and, in turn, told us about the effect they had on him.

Back in 1955, Neil was a crew member onboard the Blue Star Line ship, MV English Star. They called at Pitcairn Island to offload supplies on the way to New Zealand. The Islanders were very friendly and well known for their trustworthiness unlike in so many ports where the portholes have to be closed and the deadlights screwed down against pilfering.

The islanders sang Psalms as they unloaded the stores into a whaleboat alongside. Neil says that he was not a Christian at the time but had been challenged by hearing the Gospel. Listening to God's word sung by the Pitcairn islanders was just the catalyst needed to help bring about his conversion later that year.

This is another testimony to the power of God's word. If the Bounty Bible had not come into the hands of the Pitcairn people 160 years previously, would the islanders have been singing Psalms unloading ship? Would the crew of the English Star have left their portholes open, and would Neil have become a Christian at the end of 1955? Only God knows. The witness of Christ in us, the hope of glory, is our greatest gift. (Colossians 1:27)

### **The 'Irish' Lord's Prayer**

NMAFBS supplies prayer cards for both the Army Cadet Force and the Sea Cadet Corps. Each card has the respective Corps prayer on one side and the Lord's Prayer on the other.

Many people still recite the Lord's Prayer from the Book of Common Prayer, using words: "Forgive us our trespasses". Yet AV, NIV and NRSV Bible versions and every true Scot use 'debts' for 'trespasses' (Matthew 6:12). 'Debts' might be more appropriate today in these times of recession! So our prayer cards are printed in both 'debt' and 'trespass' versions, to satisfy theologians either side of the Scotland/England divide. Personally I prefer the CEV wording: "Forgive us for doing wrong." Cadets and us simple sailors know just what is meant. When a lady rang up asking if we did Army Cadet Force prayer cards with the Lord's Prayer in the Irish version, was she having me on? Perhaps an Irish reader knows the answer to this one. To be sure there will be different versions North and South of the Irish border also!

In the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,



Richard Prendergast

**For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you.**

Jeremiah 29:11-12 (NRSV)

## **Items for Praise and Prayer**

- **Praise** God for his continued provision of prayer and financial support despite the recession and for the 5,000 copies of *Combat the Stress* already distributed and that every copy would give help where needed.
- **Pray** that the English and Tagalog versions of *The Gift of God* would be made available by the seafarers' missions and placed in the hands of merchant sailors seeking to know God through Jesus Christ and that His word would not return empty.
- **Pray** for God's inspiration and guidance as we consider themes and ideas for a new booklet for the three cadet corps.
- **Pray** for the work of the Padres and staff in the **Army, Air and Sea Cadet Corps** for opportunities to bring the Gospel to cadets especially at forthcoming Easter Camps.
- **Pray** for the work of armed forces chaplains and the safety of all service personnel facing daily danger in Afghanistan and Iraq or deployed elsewhere. **Pray** that those who are injured and suffering stress & trauma would know God's healing power.
- **Pray** for all **SASRA** Scripture Readers particularly new recruits Lee McDade and Derek McKenzie as they complete their training.
- **Pray** for Marc Wheway, formerly SASRA, now Chief Commissioner of Everyman's, that he would know God's clear direction and guidance in his leadership of the Australian Army's Welfare Service.
- **Pray** for greater attendance at fellowship meetings at Sandes and Mission to Military Garrison centres.

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