

## 2021: Building on Our 2020 Miracle!

In 2020, the Baltimore International Seafarers' Center changed our Christmas at Sea gift instructions, to make gifts easier to handle while the pandemic limited available personnel.

And every single one of you followed our new guidelines! On top of all the other challenges of 2020, this careful attention to lonely seafarers was a true Christmas miracle. Thank you!

We're using the same guidelines this year because they worked so well. If you're new to Christmas at Sea, or need a refresher:

Please put items in one-gallon sealed plastic bags\* (not boxes). Seal tightly, without over-stuffing. 25 moderately full bags are better than 20 bursting open.



NO FOOD, not even gum, because the smell is overpowering in warm storage rooms.

Please include a paperback New Testament in modern English if possible. (Hardbacks weigh too much. King James is difficult for many foreign seafarers.) Groups whose workplaces don't allow Bibles to be purchased could include an uplifting calendar.

A WARM HAT is the other most popular item.

Then add some of the following, depending on budget and space: warm gloves or warm socks, hand warmers, pad and pen, post cards or magnets of Baltimore or D.C., flash drive, small sealed gender-neutral toiletries. Large bottles weigh too much! Combs, toothbrushes, etc. should be individually sealed in original packaging, for the reassurance of seafarers.

Options to make your gift more festive: you could sign a Christmas card and insert so the picture shows through the bag, or line the bag with colored tissue, or put Christmas stickers on the outside. Please, no bulky bows, as they'll be crushed.

\*Those filling bags distributed by Pastor Bob Schmitt should follow his guidelines instead.

