



## “LEAVE THE HOUSE AND SIT DOWN BY THE SEA”

We read in Saint Matthew’s Gospel that “Jesus went out of the house and sat down by the sea. Such large crowds gathered around Him that He got into a boat and sat down, and the whole crowd stood along the shore. And He spoke to them at length ...” (Saint Matthew XIII:1-3a). Well in 1981, the Church in Freeport, New York (Our Holy Redeemer) did as Jesus and got into a boat (donated by the Scalandre family) to offer Holy Mass on Woodcleft Canal in South Freeport. And while the changing tide would eventually make it necessary to bring that offering ashore (thank you Grover family), the change didn’t dim the spirits of crewmen like Jack Impellizeri, or helmsmen like Monsignor Saverio Mattei (RIP 10 April 2000) who upon request was granted permission by the Most Reverend John R. McGann (RIP 31 January 2002) to *leave 37 South Ocean Avenue and sit down by the sea* ....



Year after year “Jesus went out of the house ...”, and with a variety of crewmen and helmsmen, faithfully offered this (in the words of Monsignor Mattei as quoted in a 1983 New York Times article) “outreach to the parish”. I cannot say what the feeling on board was as the Year 2000 (Y2K) approached, but *I can only imagine* (inspirational song and film) that there must have been some level of excitement stirring as a new millenium began to appear on the horizon. “Who would offer the first “Boat Mass” of the third Christian millenium?” “Do you think we should invite the Bishop to take us across the threshold?” “How many doughnuts do you think we should provide for the passengers?” And while our current shipboard-staff and crew might have surfaced those questions, the approach of Y2K does not appear to

have had a major impact on our predecessors, for after eighteen consecutive years (including the year 1985 when Al Grover at the age of 58 made the historic 33 day Transatlantic Voyage that put him and Freeport into the Guinness Book of World Records (<https://algroversmarine.com/our-story/transatlantic-journey/>)), the “Boat Mass” in 1999, one year shy of the Year 2000, ran out of breath and was dead in the water until 2011 when *a mighty wind swept over the waters*, and new Life was breathed into our sails!

Seven years have passed since Our Holy Redeemer’s return to the waterfront. The Spirit of Generosity that brought Our Holy Redeemer to the water in 1981, continues to move members of the Grover family (the stewards of God’s property at 175 Woodcleft Avenue) to provide the sanctuary in which amazing things are happening! Within that waterfront sanctuary this past Summer, Sunday crewmembers such as Cynthia Gillen, Dianne Ryan, Braulio Cacao, Joann Flaherty, and Al Grover Jr. helped make sure everything was “ship shape” for passengers and other crewmembers (such as Cathy and Larry Vodopivec, Phil Brendl, Michael Crouse, children’s choir members, Lectors, and Altar Servers) to set sail at 10:00 A.M. sharp. For eight consecutive weeks, that crew helped provide smooth sailing for a variety of helmsmen (including our old friend Monsignor Sommer (Father Ralph) and our newest friend Bishop Henning) who like Jesus two thousand years ago, like Monsignor Mattei in 1981, *left the house, sat down by the sea, ...*

The time may have come now for *Mass on the Waterfront* to be put into dry dock until next July (please call Father Arcoleo and join the crew), but let us make sure that the time never comes when we put Jesus into dry dock. Enlivened by His Spirit let us take what He has taught us this summer and put it into practice, and so prepare for 2019 when Our Holy Redeemer *leaves the house, sits down by the sea, and speaks to us once again on the waterfront.*

