

# Maintain good standards and nurture right relationships

INSPECTIONS are the norm for seafarers: being examined by officials is a frequent occurrence for anyone at sea. It may be the customs official boarding the vessel on arrival at port or immigration, port health, post state control, classification, or any number of other inspectors. The list of those wanting information is seemingly endless.

For the majority of crew and ships this is routine and something to be expected. More often than not the outcome of the inspection is a ratification that it is in order, the ship complies with the applicable standards, the crew is properly trained and qualified and the ship can continue on the voyage. If something is found to be not up to standard, the crew are tasked with putting right the deficiency.

In between inspections standards are maintained because there is a discipline about work routines, attention is paid to the job and seafarers have pride in operating a safe and seaworthy ship. It is normal to have a 'good ship' because seafarers are familiar with 'good' practices. When there is a problem it is rectified efficiently and the ship can continue on course to its destination.

That said, ensuring that the voyage continues safely does not depend just upon inspections and the examination of systems. There also need to be the right relationships on board. Respect for one another, appreciation of each other's

contribution to the wellbeing of all on board and caring for each other is the mark of a crew that is truly in harmony. "Do to others as you would have them do to you" is one of the more often quoted texts from the *Holy Bible*. This should appeal to you as a standard of behaviour that should be expected and examined.

We should have inspections from time to time, but we should not be maintaining standards just because we may be inspected. We need to maintain good standards of behaviour, nurture the right relationships with others and remain in harmony with God for no other reason than this is what God wants.

The reason for our 'good behaviour' should not be that we are afraid of failing an inspection; rather it should be because God has shown us the standards that we should match up to and what it is just and right to do. We should continually seek to put this into practice: "Do to others as you would have them do to you" and in so doing know that we uphold the very best standards God expects of us.

When you reflect on your own voyage through life can you say that you care for those around you? Would you behave differently if you were being inspected? Do you maintain God's standards? If the answer to any of these questions is no then it is time to seek God's help.