

Dear 6th grade students and teachers of 1st Primary School of Vari,

We are very delighted to have received your 2nd email and fascinated to your interest in our food especially the TAPSILOG for it is our usual full breakfast meal.

First of all, we would like to inform you that our vessel M/V Abyssinian is now under the command of new master, Capt. Alex Independencio R. Julba since Capt. Herdoni A. Garrido has already disembarked last December 05, 2022.

We would like also to express our heartfelt appreciation to all the students and teachers for the comic that you sent for it truly visualize the reality onboard. The message is so on point and very appropriate since Capt. Garrido and some other crew went home to spend Christmas with their families in the Philippines.

And as for us remaining crew onboard, we actually came from Sorel Canada, which is near to Montreal, where did the crew change and discharged of coal in bulk. After the operation, we stayed at anchor until December 15 and proceeded in Quebec to load cargo - wheat in bulk. The vessel berthed for only 24 hours of operations so we weren't able to take some photos at port but we can share to you the condition during our transit in St. Lawrence River to Quebec. The river has started to have ice formation due to -12 temperature. Please see photos below:



During our stay in port, through the kindness and generosity of the Seamen's Club Quebec Branch, we received 20 boxes of presents, one for each crew members. It is the mission of this organization to support all seafarers around the world and let us feel the spirit of the holiday. And since the vessel is our 2nd home, we are also in preparation for the Christmas. We have decorated Christmas tree and underneath we placed the gifts we received. Spending Christmas onboard is kind bitter sweet because for us Filipinos, it is the biggest event of the year since we are majority Christians. Bitter that we are away from our families but sweet because we know that our job provides sustainability.

Nowadays, celebrating Christmas is much easier thanks to the internet. We can communicate with our families via Messenger or WhatsApp and one good thing is that Philippine time is 13 hours ahead from our current local time, therefore we can celebrate with our families via videocall and then here onboard after. We have already planned to have a Christmas Party Program which will be filled with games, dance and caroling contest and gift giving and of course delicious foods. It will be a fun-filled and entertaining celebration for sure. Every vessel has its own way to celebrate Christmas for crew to enjoy. Please see photos below for our Christmas decorations.





The most difficult challenge that a master might encounter is navigating the ship during bad weather because it is an act of nature. It is the main responsibility of a captain to keep the crew, ship, cargo, and environment safe. Therefore, we have checklists onboard to assess the risk of every job and how to eradicate it. We also conduct drills monthly to keep the crew ready for every emergencies and situation that may arise. Cooperation and camaraderie are always the key for a good voyage and safe operations.

Lastly, our ship is currently at berth in Baie Comeau, Canada, loading the same cargo - wheat in bulk. We are scheduled to discharge the cargo in Mafredonia, Italy and will be arriving on the 1st week of January 2023. After the voyage, MAYBE we will be visiting Piraeus port to pick-up some spares, but it is not fixed yet. We hope that if that may happen you could all come and visit our vessel. Thank you very much.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!!!!

Best Regards,

Master, Officers and Crew of M/V Abyssinian