

Kodiak, AK Ocean Tribe's 1st Blessing of the Fleet

Branch Gaarder
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"This was a wonderful family friendly event! The boats were sparkling and the weather was perfect. The Blessing of the Fleet was meaningful, spiritual, and brought our young families together in God's beautiful creation." -- Michelle Odlin



On May 24, 2019 the Kodiak Ocean Tribe (KOT) community hosted its first Blessing of the Fleet ceremony. Eight families, ages 1 to 70, gathered aboard three One Hope boats side tied to the dock.

For the KOT coordinator, Lukas Bercy, this was an opportunity to "express gratitude as a community for Father and Mother Moon's legacy of love for the ocean and humanity. They loved Kodiak deeply, and we're grateful to be trusted to carry on their legacy with the care and use of these One Hope boats. We're excited for the summer season ahead and wanted to bring blessing and good fortune to all those who'll come aboard the boats to fish, learn, and experience God on the sea with us."

History of Blessing of the Fleet

Lukas opened the ceremony with a brief history of this ancient maritime tradition where fishing and boating communities pray for a bountiful harvest and for the safety of the men and women at sea. Originally a Catholic tradition brought to the United States by immigrants, it has since been embraced by many other religions and cultures.



Blessing Our Boats

Using Holy Salt Father Moon left onboard One Hope 310, three young representatives were invited to holy salt each boat.

Lukas read from Father Moon's words expressing both his love for the ocean and his vision for [Ocean Challenge](#) and all that could be learned from the sea.

"Even when the waves have risen and a fearful wind is blowing, the fish in the water have no

trouble sleeping. They give themselves over to the waves and don't resist them. This is what I learned from the fish. I decided not to be afraid, no matter how strong the waves were. I let the waves carry me. I made myself one with the boat, and we rose with the waves. Once I started doing that, my heart was never shaken, no matter what kind of waves I came up against. The ocean has been such a wonderful teacher for me in my life that I created the Ocean Challenge program to give young people the leadership training the ocean provides." - As a Peace Loving Global Citizen

The Blessing concluded with a beautiful prayer by George Pasley of Ketchikan, AK (posted below).

Donna Avey, a visiting pastor from the Anchorage Family Church, attended with her husband, James. Both were grateful to have been a part of the afternoon.

"It was powerful. I felt Lukas' heart. It felt like he was taking ownership and was concerned about really bringing a blessing. They're older boats but he made them so beautiful. I could feel he claimed them for God. The sun hasn't been shining for days, but it came out today. So it felt like the whole event was blessed and it had depth of tradition."

Cruising the Harbor

The three boats then took off for a cruise around the harbor, captained by three veteran Ocean Challenge captains, Minoru Kageyama, Jordi Odlin, and Lukas Bercy. Passengers spotted sea lions bathing on the rocks, puffins, and sea otters.

Robin Kiely came with her husband and three children; "In spite of my hesitation to get on a boat (I'm not seaworthy at all) the sight of the three squeaky clean, ready to-go, Good Gos captained by three of the most invested Ocean Challenge captains at the wheel, volunteering to take nine little kids, their parents and friends on a quick celebratory cruise... I couldn't say no. Plus my three kids ages 8, 4 and 3 were totally stoked to be there and thoroughly enjoyed every minute on the water!" For Mrs. Avey "It was so cool having all those generations there. And Mr. Kageyama, who is like the grandpa of Ocean Providence. The children felt at home and were so happy to be there."

The youngest participant, Waverly Odlin, happily ran laps around the One Hope for the entire trip!

This was a beautiful way to kick off summer events in Kodiak!

"The sun hasn't been shining for days, but it came out today. So it felt like the whole event was blessed and it had depth of tradition." -- Donna Avey

**Prayer by George R. Pasley
Ketchikan, AK - 2015**

Dear Merciful God,
The sea will delight us
And surprise us
And even terrify us-
And then again, will fill us with wonder.
She will disappoint us
And confound us,
Tickle our muse,
Present us with mysteries,
And harbor lifetimes of secrets.

It is no wonder we love her,
Depend on her,
Cherish her and battle her
And always yield to her.

And the wind-
Its countenance is fickle,
Its power undaunted,
Its gifts obliging and mean,
Its mercy discreet.
So we watch her,
Wary, hopeful, nervous, impatient.

And what lies beneath-
Herring and salmon,
Halibut and cod,
Spotted prawn and Dungeness-
Oh my how they whet our appetite
And put gleam in our eyes.

So Lord, we look at our own limitations-
We see the fragility of life,
We acknowledge the inevitability of error,
The long shadow of sin,
The consequences of folly,

The conclusion of greed,
The outcome of desperation.
So we turn to you.
We turn to you in humility
In wonder, boldness, and hope.
We trust your faithfulness
Without belittling your sovereignty.

Teach us to nurture our sense of wonder
Remind us to practice respect, to discipline our
grasp,
To watch out for each other.
Discipline our lesser natures,
Bring forth our good judgment
Our charity, our faithfulness to love.

Lord, sail with those who go forth.
Taste the salt of their tears
And the richness of their joy.
Be merciful to them,
That they might cherish your compassion
And delight in your pleasure.

And when they return,
Make fast their lines
Make honest their rewards
Make light their feet
Make sumptuous their tables
Make tender their bonds
Until the clouds part,
The rainbow reaches from east to west,
And we are reunited with you.

In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.
Amen.