

Come and join us to begin a great boating season with the

# Blessing of the Fleet

**May 14<sup>th</sup> 2005 10:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.**

**Bring your boat and crew for this special time-honored seafaring tradition...**

- ➡ **dedicated to boating safety**
- ➡ **celebrating the new boating season**

Plan now to “parade dress” your boat with festive flags and colors. Invite family and friends to witness a chaplain’s invocation of blessing for safe cruising for the year ahead **for your boat and crew.**

This simple ceremony harkens back to ancient times when fishermen and other seafarers yearned for good fortune and safety at sea—with priests invoking a blessing upon each vessel as it departed for sea. Years ago, the Occoquan community sponsored an annual Blessing of the Fleet, and in 1999 the tradition was re-instituted by the yacht clubs of the Occoquan and the [Occoquan River Maritime Association](#).



## ***How does it work?***

The Fairfax County fire boats will lead a procession of boats outbound from Prince William Marina and passing the chaplain’s station vessel moored at the Belmont Bay Harbor Marina fuel dock. Boats will continue outbound for a day of cruising as desired or, upon safely clearing the area, may return to their respective marinas. The procession will include a host vessel with local dignitaries and media representatives embarked.

A detailed float plan and Notice to Mariners will be posted at local marinas and will be distributed through yacht club newsletters and Internet websites.

## ***Plan now to take part!***

The Blessing of the Fleet—an Occoquan tradition—is sponsored and coordinated by the [Occoquan River Maritime Association \(ORMA\)](#) and its member organizations, with support from the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and Fairfax and Prince William County public safety agencies.

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