

Apostolatus Maris

The Church in the Maritime World

Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People, Vatican City



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“Allow yourselves to be ‘conquered’ by Christ. May his word of salvation and his merciful love penetrate your consciences and guide you in your choices of every day”

John Paul II, 27 March 2004

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Dear friends and Colleagues,

I have assumed my new ministry at the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerants, where I am responsible for the Maritime Sector, the Apostleship of the Sea, since the 17th November 2003, and I take this opportunity to send my fraternal greetings to all of you. These new responsibilities in a new environment make me realise even more that although the circumstances are diverse and the priorities different, our mission is a common one because *“in the Church there is diversity of ministry but unity of mission”*. It is this one mission that the Church received from the Lord Jesus that the AOS world network is continuing in the Maritime World.

One of the vital characteristic that constitutes a network is sharing. In spite of our legitimate differences and specificities it is proven that one experience that has proved successful in one part of the world is likely ,with the necessary adaptation, to prove equally successful elsewhere. To share is a form of charity and to be open and ready to accept from others is a necessity if we want to grow and progress. One of the basic tenet of the small ecclesial communities that have done so much to redynamise many Christian communities in so many parts of the world is that: “no one is too insignificant that he has nothing to give, and no one is too important that he has nothing to learn”.

Solidarity among the regions is another important element. At a time when there is so much talk about North / South cooperation and not much is being achieved, AOS is in an excellent position to show the way of solidarity within the region and between the regions. “Charity is not a passing or vague sentiment of compassion” but “ a firm commitment for the common good” (Bishops’ Conference of Italy,1990). Many in the AOS are ready to put their resources at the disposal of others, but they want to know how in practice, this can best be achieved.

Another essential aspect is the free-flow of information. If we want to build up solidarity and support among ourselves we must first know each other, know our problems, our priorities and difficulties, and avoid the risk of imposing our point of view on others. In spite of the vast distances and of the lack of resources and equipment, we must not resign ourselves to stay strangers to each other. Ignorance or indifference breed fear of the other which in turn engenders suspicion and aggressivity. National, regional and world conferences are therefore important but their organisation are expensive, this is why we should practice “economy of scales” and hold meetings back to back whenever this is possible.

Many regional meetings are scheduled for this year, the first one will be in the Philippines in April and the next one in Brazil in June. Europe held its meeting in Hamburg in October last year and others are at the planning stage. Each of these meetings, among other things, will examine how to implement in the region the Rio Congress recommendations.

Although our mission field is vast and the issues difficult, this time of Easter gives us new hope and new courage. May the joy and grace of Easter renew our Christian life and our commitment to follow in the footsteps of Jesus to serve the seafaring and fishing communities to whom we are sent. Yours sincerely in Christ

Jacques Harel

More resources needed in the Regions

The recent **Regional Coordinators Meeting** which was held on 28th-29th January 2004 in Rome, was the occasion for a vast and enriching exchange of ideas. Since we carry together, in solidarity, the responsibility of the maritime mission we would like to share with our readers the main points which came out of these two days.

In his opening speech, **Cardinal Hamao**, President of our Pontifical Council, welcomed the eight Regional Coordinators and Commodore Chris York, AOS National Director for England and Wales, who had also been invited as a resource person, and added: "Our main concern now is to see that the recommendations made in Rio are followed up and whenever possible implemented. There are also some items, such as the function of Regional Coordinators and their supporting Committee,

we appreciate your collaboration and the important and good work you are doing in your Regions. We greatly value your loyalty and competence; we know that your work is not always easy, that very often you are faced with difficult situations, which you have to confront with little personnel and even less finance, which are amply compensated by your motivation and apostolic zeal. Jesus, too, and his disciples had very little material means but great faith and generosity. You surely remember his instructions when he sent out his twelve apostles: 'Don't take along any gold, silver or copper coins ... the Spirit from you Father will tell you what to say' (Mt 10,5-10)".

The Coordinators' system has proved very efficient. It is true that most of the Regions are vast, but usually there is a degree of homogeneity that makes networking possible and worthwhile.

1. Communication is and will be for some time a major problem. Even to communicate within a region, with National Directors and Bishop Promoters, is difficult if not impossible, and this renders meetings, sharing and

cooperation even more problematic. We have great hopes that the current ICSW managed "IT Project" will propose practical solutions that would help. Also the lack of knowledge of English by many AOS

operatives can be a major obstacle to communication.

2. The lack of personnel is another problem. In countries where there are so many people, especially seafarers, without work it is difficult to ask for volunteers. There is a lack of appointed chaplains, and even where there is one, he is very rarely a full-time chaplain. Often the reason is that AOS is a low priority for

On page 8 highlights of the AOS International Committee on Fishing which was held on the 30th January are reported, together with some excerpts from the Oceania Report by Mr. Ted Richardson,

Dioceses and Parishes. At the AOS we are becoming more aware of the necessity to give more "publicity" or exposure to our work. This can be achieved by involving the local/port parishes in our pastoral plans and by giving more importance to the celebration of Sea-Sunday.

3. There is also a lack of fund and infrastructure (no centre, no vehicles or IT equipment). Port facilities are being built far from the city centres and their access is more and more restricted. Sometimes they are in unsafe environment, controlled by gangs. The situation has been further complicated by the outbreak of epidemics, such as SARS and Chicken Flu, while AIDS, hepatitis and

(Continues page 11)



which still have to be discussed. Then there are the Regional Conferences, which must be scheduled, and whose dates we must confirm". He concluded by saying "how much, at the Pontifical Coun-

SOUTH-ASIA

Fr. Xavier Pinto, C.Ss.R., Regional Coordinator



What is common to the Region

- **Poverty**- with the onslaught of Globalisation this is more marked in some countries and in some ports than the others. All Chaplains have difficulties because of lack of **funds and finances**.
- Many **ports are working under-par** to their built up capacity; yet some governments are building new ports.
- Except for a **space** facility of a specified nature in Tuticorin (India) and Colombo (India) as an “AOS” centre none of the others have any; efforts with the ITF have been ongoing for the past three years!
- **Chaplains in most ports have other portfolios**, some they are appointed to; some they seek out and aspire to - too ‘many irons in the fire’ phenomenon.
- Difficulty of the all important “**Pass**”- either due to non-handing over by the previous chaplain; non pursuance to renew the same; or due to the enhanced security measures of the aftermath of 9/11.
- The AOS as a valid **apostolate** of the Diocese or Parish is yet to be understood by lay people- hence the **shortage of volunteers**. Most “volunteers” are those who are working in the Harbour or in offices connected with the port. In the line of their duty they try to do their bit as apostles of the sea.
- All traditional fishers and **fishing communities** are under pressure with the onslaught of the Industrial Trawler and Industrial Aquaculture – poachers as well as licensed- who have depleted resources and continue to damage the Eco-system jeopardising future stocks and much needed protein intake by topical peoples.
- The **arresting of fishermen** by the Coast guards between the countries of India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan are a constant concern and require a lot of interventions with the Gov. officials as well as on the ground welfare to those who need it at the time.

In **Bangladesh** visiting of ships continues regularly. A good record is maintained on the computer of the names of the ships, the crew and some other details. Contacts with the Catholics who have been in shipping and sailing have seen a significant increase. There is great hope that a centre can be started. Finances are seen as a major hurdle .

In **India** we have no “full time” chaplain on any of our Ports who can devote all his time and energy to the development of the AOS ideals. An ongoing concern is about the situation of poor traditional **fishing communities** and the pressures of Globalisation they face.

In **Pakistan** the ITF has in word been very encouraging; especially since there is no facility of any sorts for Sailors in Karachi. If the church can take the initiative in the proper and a solid way the apostolate can develop well.

Colombo, **Sri Lanka**, is taking on a strategic position in the region as a leading and increasingly busy port. Many shipping companies opt to transit their cargo there instead of India due to the relaxed laws in place. The year 2003 saw an increase of 27% berth and pier occupancy. This means more ships are coming and hence more crew! The AOS has a big scope in Colombo of being a leading Centre.

East South East Asia

Fr. Bruno Ciceri, CS, Regional Coordinator

The main news in the region for last year is the SARS that deeply affected the general economy, but especially the maritime industry in Singapore, Taiwan and Hong Kong:

In Taiwan from April to July seafarers were not allowed to come ashore and sometimes we were not allowed to go on board the vessels. We had one cruise vessel with 800 crewmembers on board that practically went bankrupt because of lack of business.

Things are recovering a little bit but it will take always long time to go back to normal. Now we are again in the news for the chicken flu, that hopefully want be devastating as the SARS, but for sure the travelling industries will be affected.

SARS forced us to cancel also our Regional Meeting last year for difficulties of moving around

because quarantine was imposed for people coming from affected areas. The regional meeting is planned for this coming April 26-28, prior the official opening of the new Seamen Centre in Cebu.

In the region there are the problems of fishermen on board Taiwanese fishing vessels that are recruited illegally moving from one ship to another (Filipinos go to Singapore, Indonesians go to Davao and Vietnamese fly to Bangkok).

There is a lot of competition among the different ports in our Region to keep the business and the importance of the port in the Region is changing very fast. Hong Kong and Singapore are struggling to maintain the supremacy in Asia but the new port in Malaysia and especially Xangahi in China and Pusan in Korea are developing very fast forcing Kaohsiung to lag behind.

Indian Ocean

Mr. Jean Vacher, Regional Coordinator

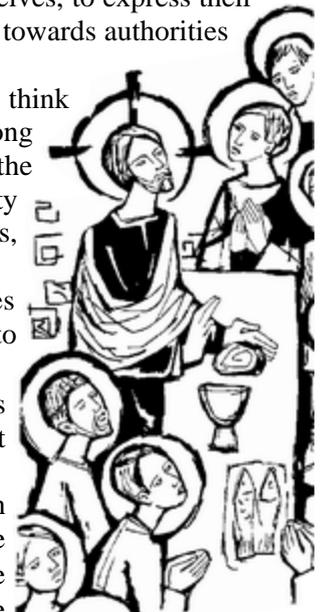
The AOS decided to strengthen the regional network and its involvement with fishermen's organizations. The main objectives were to help create or consolidate, where they exist, fishers' associations. In this collaboration we learned a lot on the difficulties of fishermen to organise themselves, to express their needs, to consolidate their solidarity, to forecast the future, and to voice their problems towards authorities and law making bodies..

A series of seminars was organized to listen to fishermen and their families. We think that this kind of collaboration is most welcome to enforce a solidarity network among them. The celebration of the Sea Sunday was an opportunity to improve the image of the coastal regions and of seafaring and fishing communities. It is a time of high visibility for them and it is an occasion for the people of the sea to be seen and heard by ministers, district counsellors, and other national and local authorities.

A socio-Economic Survey on the way of living of fishermen and their families will be published soon. The study will enable us to have a comprehensive approach to the pastoral care of fishermen and their families.

In the **Mauritius** AOS National Conference held in 2003 special attention was offered to the children of fishermen and seafarers who were able to express their point of view. We are convinced that this experience should be repeated.

IOSEA (Indian Ocean and South East Asia) mid-term meeting was held in Madagascar in December 2003. This meeting was a good opportunity to appreciate the progress achieved in **Seychelles, Madagascar, and Reunion**. New centres are planned in Seychelles and Rodrigues. The Mauritius project is near completion and the Majunga renovated centre has been inaugurated. We must point out the urgent need for Mozambique to receive the visit of a delegation composing of the Regional Coordinator and delegates from ITF and Rome. In Tanzania and Kenya in spite of sporadic efforts, AOS activities are dormant.



North America & Caribbean

Fr. Lorenzo Mex Jimenez, Regional Coordinator

AOS-**Canada** has launched its own website (www.aos-canada.net), a one-stop source of information on the work of the Catholic Church in the maritime ministry. The site will allow access to up-to-date news from the various Canadian ports. For the future AOS Canada intends to continue improving its infrastructure through the appointment of Port Chaplains, providing them with proper training and understanding of the scope of this ministry. The appointment of 2 new chaplains one at Montreal and the other at Prince Rupert has been announced. A National Conference is being planned and there is a firm commitment to continue further collaboration with other denominations involved in port ministry.

AOS-**USA** is one of the oldest and best-established Human Mobility Apostolates in the United States. There is a network of some 500 Members, who provide pastoral care at maritime ports, among fishermen, and on cruise ships. AOS-USA is a membership organization made up of pastoral, associate, Mariner, and Affiliate Members. It certifies and accredits Maritime Chaplains, operates a Chaplaincy Training School in Houston, has an

annual meeting for all members, and is now operating a Cruise Ship Priests Program recognized by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. AOS has experienced growth and progress at its 65 Maritime Port Chaplaincies.

AOS in **Cuba** has started the first steps. Since the World Congress in Rio de Janeiro, the lawyer Roldando Suarez did the necessary connection towards the PCMI to be able to receive help to promote in this Island this new Pastoral.

Favourable wind blows for the AOS in **Mexico**. In 2003 in Veracruz, the first port of Mexico, was celebrated the first National Congress of Human Mobility. March 16, 2003 was an historical day, with the opening of the Stella Maris in the port of Progreso, Yucatan, the first of Mexico, an antique construction donated to the Archdiocese and remoulded with the help of the governor of the State of Yucatan and of the Catholic Community of this port. In a future not far away, in the centre there will be offered courses for the formation of future chaplains. For the inauguration of the Center, Archbishop Marchetto was present. He participated also in the National Congress of Veracruz.

Central & South America

Fr. Samuel Fonseca Torres, CS, Regional Coordinator

Brazil. Stella Maris in Santos offers a range of social and spiritual services. The social facilities include: ship visiting, telephone, Internet, newspapers, magazines, books etc. The centre is ecumenical, there is a Lutheran pastor, a catholic priest and many volunteers. We are sensitising the authorities and the local churches on the importance of our apostolate. In Rio de Janeiro there is a catholic chaplain in charge of the AOS. Since the beginning port, civil and religious Authorities helped us in the procedures to enter the port and visit the ships arriving. We have two centers to welcome seafarers: a centre 500 metres from the port which offers a wide range of cultural and recreational facilities, and a smaller centre situated within the port area easily accessible to seafarers.

Argentina. The Stella Maris of Buenos Aires was created approximately 150 years ago and its name was "Victoria Sailor's Home". It offers social and religious services for all the seafarers who pass by. Some of them come from all over the country to take professional courses and the more experienced ones are informed about the insecurity and hazards of working on flag of convenience ships. For this purpose there is collaboration with ITF. We also have a list of addresses of ship companies looking for seafarers. Moreover, through our good relationship with consulates, official unions and organizations, we try to help and quicken the embarkation procedures.



Colombia. Thanks to the ITF contribution, to the endless support of Bishop Carlos José Ruiseco and to a lot of generous-hearted people, in 2002 a new centre was opened offering a peaceful place for praying, resting, and multiple social services. Technical English Language Courses are offered and have benefited 45 seafarers, some of whom have managed to get contracts.

Central and South America Region is organizing in June 2004 in Rio de Janeiro the first meeting of AOS National Directors to promote and strengthen AOS pastoral plans and networking in the Continent.

Europe

Fr. Edward Pracz, C.Ss.R., Regional Coordinator

Since the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the breakdown of the Soviet Union, Europe has entered a new expansive phase with the recent independence of the Baltic States and the planned enlargement of the European Union. This process has already begun, with the opening of borders for the Russian, Lithuanian, Estonian, Latvian and Ukrainian seamen.

The enlargement of the EU in May this year will result in shifting the borders further to the East. Secularisation of lifestyles has had an increasing influence on the seafaring communities. Last year in October during the AOS National Directors in Hamburg it was acknowledged the need for more unified approach to the AOS activity across Europe and the need to help in developing the AOS institutions in countries where there are none such services available.



In Eastern Europe we are facing the lack of AOS centres and the small number of chaplains who speak English. There are also some chaplains who are willing to work but they need to finish training courses first. The ministry services are just starting to develop. Right now there are mostly information centres - Interclubs - for seamen. In Western Europe there are many Stella Maris established, mostly well developed and very popular among seamen. The individual institutions work with one another to provide the best possible service for people of the sea. They cooperate with institutions of other faith. Northern Europe is mostly a rich and well-developed region, with their own religious institutions that offer service for the seafarers. In Central Europe Poland, being in the middle of the continent, is in a very good position to be the mediator between east and west.

To face the challenges of the new times, a new evangelisation is a major objective. Hospitable Europe through AOS centres may become the main theme in our spiritual, human and social work. Training courses and spiritual formation for the chaplains and the AOS staff should continue to be available and even increased. The AOS centres should encourage all kinds of social/spiritual gatherings including Pilgrimage of the People of the Sea to the international and national shrines.

Africa Atlantic

Fr. Cyrille Kete, Regional Coordinator

The Region stretches from Mauritania in the North to Namibia in the South, a total of 19 countries. In fact if we do have an official AOS antenna in each country, we are really active in 12 countries.

Because of the huge distances we only make real contact when we have regional meetings or during the world congress. In October 2002 there was a meeting in Accra, in March 2003 in Lomé, and in November 2003 in Lagos. These 3 meetings were organised and financed by ICSW .

The wars and civil strives in the region are also a major hindrance to the development of our work. We lack infrastructures, personnel and money. The West Africa Regional programme of the ITF-ST managed by ICSW is a source of hope and will hopefully give the maritime ministry in our region a new boost.

As AOS Oceania Pacific concentrates merely on Fishing issues, the Report is to be found in the “Fishing” Section (page 9)

AOS International Committee on Fishing



Left-right: Fr. Bruno Ciceri, CS, Archbishop Agostino Marchetto, Fr. Michael Blume, SVD

This AOS International Fishing Committee was set up following a recommendation of the Rio World Congress. It will not be a separate entity but will function within the structure of AOS International.

Because of lack of funds and to achieve economy of scales it was suggested that, on a regular basis, we hold every year the Fishing Committee back to back with the annual AOS Coordinators Meeting and then any other extraordinary meeting could be convoked and held on the occasion of other international meetings. Other Agencies and organisations will be needed as observers as the need arises.

Its mission is to reach out and provide pastoral care to all fish workers and fishing communities. The objectives cannot be universal as situations vary considerably from country to country, e.g. India wants a complete ban on Industrial fishing vessels and this would be unacceptable to many countries of both hemispheres.

One of the basic tasks of the Committee will be to establish reliable lines of communication with those actually involved in the work with fishers (industry, parishes, local chaplains). Good information is essential about what is being done, what has been achieved and is needed. Existing legislation and regulations in different countries and whether or not they are applicable and practical must also be researched.

As a serious database is essential to reach an objective assessment of the true situation, it was decided to set up such a database following a questionnaire which will be sent to as many interested parties as possible.

The ILO and FAO welcomed the creation of this Committee and already its help has been enlisted for the forthcoming ILO meeting for its 92nd session which will discuss comprehensive standard on work in the fishing sector. The Committee will send two delegates (in the ICMA delegation) for the session.

*In his Introductory speech, **Archbishop Marchetto** said that this new Committee is the result of a very strong and unanimous recommendation that came out from the Rio Congress in 2002. In fact, by setting up this Committee, we are acknowledging the traditional concern of AOS with fishing communities and its long time commitment at every level (International, regional, national and local) to fisheries issues.*

We should remember—he added—that this Committee is not a new independent entity, but an AOS Committee, which will function within its existing structures for a more coordinated, and more adapted approach to this most important sector of our Pastoral care. It has a function of stimulus.

In its conclusion, the Rio World Congress insisted on the contribution of the AOS in building a new world order that involves taking into account the values of the Gospel and the Social Doctrine of the Church. We believe that this new International Committee, given the right support and encouragement, could be an important step in the right direction. It will be certainly committed also to advocacy in favour of fishers and their families.

While it is true that there can be no real peace and progress without justice and respect for human rights, we are also reminded by the Holy Father in his message for the World Day of Peace on 1st January 2004, that “justice must find its fulfillment in charity ... Certainly law is the first road leading to peace, and people need to be taught to respect that law. Yet one does not arrive at the end of this road unless justice is complemented by love”.

Mr. Ted Richardson, Regional Coordinator

Firstly, the culture of fishers has been so downgraded for many years that there is a reluctance to form any sort of union, which is so vitally important to influencing political decisions on an industry basis.

The natures of fishers are that they are mostly seasonal workers and may only work one or two seasons and move on. In Australia and New Zealand, there are often families involved with fathers, sons, and in some cases, daughters. In this scenario, families tend to look after their own business and see unions as controlling their family business.

Our first priority should be to encourage and develop a solidarity of fisher workers nationally and internationally to have a voice in the decision making process of their industry. Perhaps this could be best facilitated as a joint program with the ITF.

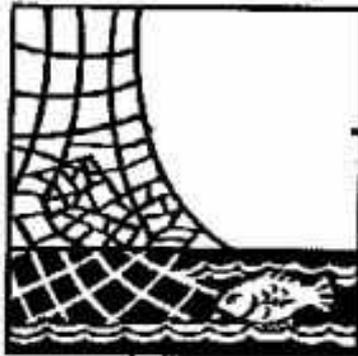
“Association of Coastal Seafarers and Fishers”

An Association of Coastal Seafarers and Fishers in each nation will help to build an industry focus and public awareness of the hardships endured by fishers and their families. Membership of such an Association could be offered and also a special day to recognize the fishing community, not for an appeal to the Dioceses, but linked with the *“Blessing of the fleet”*. The aim would be promotion of the Association and public awareness. Within the Association, could be such groups as Fishers' Wives Support Group, Committees for improvement of working conditions and to put submissions forward to Government, the forma-

tion of support centres, and relief for hardship in loss of life. This would all be combined with parish communities. A National body could help co-ordinate such Associations with guidelines, etc.

International Seafarers and Fishers

In the Region, there is strong animosity between international seafarers and local fishers. Several times a year, cargo ships runs



down fishing vessels. There is a great loss of life in the fishing industry. Often entire families are lost and wives are left to bury husbands and sons, with no income and no future support. They do not have the insurance coverage that shore based employees enjoy. I would imagine in many countries, situations would be even worse. Combining existing seafarers' centres with fishing fleets could pose an extraordinarily difficult challenge, given this situation.

It may be possible in some ports to combine the two but I have not found it possible in Australia or New Zealand, with the exception of Lyttleton in New Zealand, which has the large Russian trawlers, which fish the Antarctic waters. These trawlers are the size of a small ship and the crew see themselves as seafarers,

not fishers. The Lyttleton Seafarers' Centre caters well for this kind of fishing ministry.

Stella Maris Darwin, Australia, had until midway 2003 a Seafarers' Centre devoted mainly to fishers. This Centre was established for both international seafarers and fishers with a Committee made up of respected Church leaders. Over the past decade, the Committee changed and was made up of all fishers with very little church involvement. Seafarers were no longer part of the centre and were actually criticized for even wanting to come in.

I highlight this incident in order to show that if we go down the path of providing centres for the fisher folk, the Church members must take responsibility for guidance of the organisation to provide for the spiritual as well as the social needs.

In the fishing industry, we also have a problem with drug and alcohol abuse. This places extreme danger on fishermen. We also need to have protocols and literature advising on the dangers of this type of substance abuse, which is often caused by the fact that the fishers are expected to work very long hours when the fish are running.

Traditionally, the AOS has always been engaged with the fishing communities. Port Chaplains are to be encouraged to continue working with this milieu, which often lie far away from international ports. These Chaplains need to know what they will be facing, with appropriate training and tools to do the work.

AOS Australia website:
www.ashore.org

AOS training in England and Wales

Thirty-six AOS port chaplains and ship visitors from ports all around England and Wales gathered from 1st to 3rd March. This reunion was part of their continuing personal, spiritual and professional training. This meeting built on the previous three training sessions in the last 12 months, (Spirituality/ Faith Development/ and the use of Scripture for Prayer). Each event has the three training elements, which are factual knowledge, a personal experience and application to our AOS maritime work. This time our aim was to focus on Reconciliation and then link this to an examination of the sources of conflict for seafarers (pay, conditions, abandonment etc) and explore the role of an AOS chaplain in conflict resolution.

In our first session we saw how the scriptures presented man's need for reconciliation and how God prepared and answered this need in Jesus Christ. Using a questionnaire, we looked at our own contemporary and individual understanding of the sacrament of reconciliation and our own personal need to convert and be reconciled with God, each other and the community of the Church. After an extensive presentation of the history of the sacrament we were led by a Verbum Dei missionary in reflection for a couple of hours on the parable of the prodigal son (Lk 15:11-32) to prepare to celebrate together the sacrament of reconciliation in a communal celebration. In this celebration, we first listened to the word of God, prayed for forgiveness and conversion and had the opportunity for individual confession. That evening, we shared our AOS awareness and instances of the need for reconciliation within a seafarers or port community and how we could help identify these needs and effect it and also improve skills for this task



The next day the ITF (International Transport Federation) and MCA (UK Marine and Coastguard Agency) spoke about their work plus the inspections process and the causes of ship detentions, ship arrests, disputes and ship abandonment etc. AOS Trustee Eamonn Delaney, an expert in marine insurance, spoke of the work of P&I (Protection and Indemnity Insurance) clubs and their role in resolution of seafarer problems including dealing with stowaways, hospitalised or injured seafarers and abandoned seafarers. The aim of these last three presentations was to increase our knowledge of others working in the port community, to be more aware of their particular area of expertise so that together we could better serve seafarers in difficulty.

In April, we will continue with this model of training and formation as we focus on the Eucharist. Again, we will look at the Church's teaching, at how this helps us personally and then reflect on how to raise seafarers' faith awareness through appropriate liturgies and seafarer participation when Holy Mass or a Liturgy of the Word with Holy Communion is celebrated on board ship or in the seafarers centre. Within each training event we address personal formation and also aim to develop our professional awareness of the maritime world. We plan for the Chamber of Shipping, which represents British ship owners, to brief us about the ship owners' perspective of the industry today. We hope that it will also be an opportunity for the Chamber to better know the work of AOS.

Rosary of Migrants and Itinerant Peoples

At the conclusion of the Year of the Rosary, the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant Peoples, as part of its pastoral commitment to serve all people on the move, has prepared a special text for praying the Rosary, confident that it will prove to be a support and a stimulus to the recitation of a prayer to which the Holy Father dedicated 2003.

This Rosary draws inspiration from the intuition of Blessed John XXIII and therefore is characterised by the indication of special intentions at each decade (mystery).



In the Rosary of Migrants and Itinerant Peoples the mysteries are dedicated to migrants, refugees, foreign students, nomads, circus and fairground workers, seafarers, air travellers, tourists, pilgrims and the apostolate of the road. Each mystery is illustrated with an appropriate biblical text and, as an aid to reflection, with an excerpt from a magisterial document referring to the above-mentioned categories.

This edition of the Rosary, which also contains the ritual prayers, is published into six languages: Italian, English, French, Portuguese, Spanish and

AM World Directory

AUSTRALIA

(new port chaplain)

MACKAY

Fr. Kevin Philips

GLADSTONE

Fr. Shimus McMahon, SM

(continues from page 3)

malaria remain major killers.

After a general exchange of views, a broad agreement was reached on AOS priorities. In the forefront was the necessity to strengthen the AOS network and enhance its visibility, by informing the public, the Church, the Authorities and NGOs of our work and by cooperating willingly with their initiatives.

AOS pastoral care must be extended where it does not exist or where it is struggling or weak, but first we must have a clear vision of our mission, which must adapt to the needs of each country. This can be achieved only by understanding and living fully the AOS spirituality and by promoting it. Then we need a firm structure and a professional approach (within the Church and society at large); the training and formation of chaplains, pastoral workers and volunteers must be ongoing and cover all the aspects of our ministry (seagoing, cruise, ship visiting, hospitality, yachting, etc)

Three other important priorities were also highlighted:

- the role and place of women and families; - Scriptures, catechetical and spiritual resources adapted to our ministry; - a more pro-active role concerning HIV/ AIDS pandemy.

Also a call for regional solidarity and for North /South Cooperation was made. We cannot claim to combat the darker side of Globalization if among ourselves we do not have solidarity. Many well established branches of AOS have shown great interest in supporting the younger or fledgling members.

INDONESIA

Fr. Ben Prado, SVD, the Port Chaplain of Jakarta since 1987, passed away on March 27th, 2004, after being hospitalized during six months. He was born in the Philippines 77 years ago, and spent most of his priestly life in Indonesia, as a missionary of the Divine Word and a chaplain of the AOS. We extend his community and his family sincere sympathy and the assurance of prayers. A message of condolences was sent by Cardinal Stephen F. Hamao and Archbishop Marchetto.

May he rest in peace.

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of Migrants and Itinerant People**

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