



NEW PRESIDENT FOR THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL

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On February 28th, 2009 the Holy Father accepted the resignation of His Eminence Cardinal Renato Raffaele Martino, as President of the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People, who had reached the age limit for retirement, and he appointed in his place, His Excellency Monsignor Antonio Maria Vegliò.

Monsignor Vegliò is titular Archbishop of Eclano and was born on 3rd February, 1938 in Macerata Feltria, in the province of Pesaro (Italy). He was ordained priest in 1962, serving as Parish Vicar in Pesaro, until 1968 when he was called to the Vatican Diplomatic Service. He has worked in the Apostolic Nunciatures of Peru, Philippines and Senegal and, after few years in the Secretariat of State, was sent to Great Britain and then, as Papal Representative, to Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands, Mauritania, Lebanon, Kuwait and the Arab Peninsula. He was ordained Bishop in 1985. Since 2001 he has been Secretary Archbishop of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches.



While bidding farewell to Cardinal Martino and thanking him for having it guided during these past years, the Apostleship of the Sea “welcomes on board” the new President to whom we wish a fruitful ministry at the helm of the Pontifical Council.

POPE BENEDICT XVI REMEMBERS THE PEOPLE OF THE SEA

“I would like to add a special word for seafarers and fisherman, who for some time have been experiencing great uneasiness. Besides the usual difficulties, they are also suffering from the restrictions of bringing chaplains on board, as well as from the dangers of pirates and the damage of illegal fishing. I express my nearness to them and the wish that their generosity in being of assistance at sea be compensated by greater consideration”.

Sunday 18th January 2009, before praying the Angelus

EASTER GREETINGS FROM THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL

Dear Friends of the Apostleship of the Sea,

***The Lord has risen!
He has risen indeed! Alleluia!***

Soon after the passion and death of Jesus Christ the first community of disciples find themselves in a situation of despair, uncertainty and fear. The hopes and dreams for a better world that they had placed in the Messiah were shattered when He was hang and left to die on the cross.

The resurrection of Christ enabled these discouraged disciples to become a group of people who changed the history.

In these days of global crisis, economic difficulties, a lot unemployment and uncertain future, not only in the maritime industry but on the world, we might feel very much like the disciples in the days leading to the first Easter Sunday. The hopes and dreams for a world more just and compassionate, seem to be buried in the indifference and selfishness of many people.

But, on the night of Easter celebration, the words of joy announcing: "He is risen! Alleluia!" will bring a new prospective in life as St. Paul puts it: *"Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus"* (Rm. 8, 39).

HAPPY EASTER, to AOS chaplains and volunteers, that might bring the peace and joy of the resurrected Christ to the people of the sea.

HAPPY EASTER, to the people in the maritime industry, that the power of the resurrection



of Christ might renew their hearts.

HAPPY EASTER, to seafarers and fishers, wherever they may be, that the resurrection of Christ may support their commitment to announce the Good News of the Lord on board.

HAPPY EASTER, to all the families, that the resurrected Christ be a consoling presence while their loved ones are far away working on the sea. In this family perspective we desire to wish.

HAPPY EASTER also to the people who are cruising and linked with yachting.

Christ, is with us all the time!

Christ, strengthen our doubting Faith!

Christ, bring a new life in the world and in our hearts!

As the Blessed Virgin was together with the disciples on Easter Sunday, may Mary, the Star of the Sea, be with you, guiding your journey.

✠ Antonio Maria Vegliò
President

✠ Archbishop Agostino Marchetto
Secretary



AOS REGIONAL COORDINATORS MEETING

(16-17 February 2009)

ADDRESS OF RENATO RAFFAELE CARDINAL MARTINO

Dear Regional Coordinators,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you in Rome. A special greeting must go to Deacon Albert Dacanay who is with us for the first time and also to Mr. Anthony Philips who is now “filling the shoes” of Mr. Ted Richardson. I know that you have come to this meeting with mixed feelings and emotions: a sense of satisfaction and gratitude knowing that you have welcomed and assisted seafarers and fishermen within the vast network of AOS Centres, concern for the many restrictions and abuses experienced by crew members, and perhaps also some frustration because not all that you have planned has materialized. As the psalmist says, it is “good and pleasant when brothers [meet] together in unity” (Ps 133). This is a precious time for you as Regional Coordinators to be together, to share and confront your experiences with us also, and to regain confidence, hope and a reaffirmation of your important ministry.

While we remember and express our gratitude to Msgr. Jacques Harel who, after five years of service at the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People, has returned to Mauritius, we welcome Fr. Bruno Ciceri, who has come to take over his charge in the office. He is well known to all of you, as he has served for many years port chaplain in Kaohsiung and as part of the AOS family.

We are blessed to have this meeting during the Jubilee Year of St. Paul, a great Apostle to whom we should look for guidance, inspiration and strength: “*The Apostle to the Gentiles, who was especially committed to taking the Good News to all peoples, left no stones unturned for unity and harmony among all Christians*” (Benedict XVI, celebration of First Vespers of the solemnity of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, 28 June 2007). In the Acts of the Apostles we find detailed descriptions of his journeys sailing within the Mediterranean Sea, and of the dangers that he faced including that of a shipwreck

in Malta. We can imagine St. Paul in his missionary journeys as a type of sailing chaplain, sharing the same life and experiencing the same dangers of seafarers while announcing that “...*nothing can separate us from the Love of God*” (Rom. 8,38.39).

We gather at a time of great political changes and of a global financial crisis that have deeply affected the maritime world with an increased number of vessels sent to scrap and a cancellation of orders for new vessels. In addition some *Stella Maris* Centres have been forced to reduce their services or close because of lack of funds.

A year in which piracy attacks have gained the headlines of all the mass media with a total of 49 vessels hijacked, 889 crew members taken hostage and 46 vessels fired upon: 32 crew members were injured, 11 killed, 21 lost at sea, presumed dead, and an estimated 30 million dollars in ransom pay. According to the Lloyd’s List News Bulletin, there are still 10 vessels with 207 crew members in the hands of pirates. These are alarming figures in themselves, but when one considers that, more often than not, the charters and owners are more concerned about the vessels than the crew that are left alone to overcome the physiological effects of this traumatic experience, the situation becomes even more disconcerting. The Holy Father also mentioned this tragic matter very recently, during his Message in St. Peter’s Square prior to the *Angelus* on Sunday, 18 January 2009.

Even though the memories of the XXII World Congress in Gdynia may have begun to fade away, I hope that the commitments made at that time are still strong in your minds and hearts, and at the top of your agenda. In this regard we have several important items to discuss.

AOS International Website

At the XXI AOS World Congress held in Rio in 2002, the creation of an “AOS International Web-

site” was recommended. The responsibility for this task was entrusted to the AOS International Office (our Pontifical Council), and to a committee, which together made a proposal. After a consultation among AOS Bishop Promoters, Regional Coordinators and National Directors, and having received positive and encouraging responses, with the exception of some concerns related to financing the Site, the Pontifical Council approved the project of the “AOS International Website”. AOS-GB graciously offered to develop the Site in close association and under the guidance of the Pontifical Council. Regrettably, however, after three years into the project and a great economic effort, AOS-GB reported that: *“Following a meeting with Archbishop Agostino Marchetto, Secretary of the PCPCMIP, and the lack of international funding for the AOS (International) website, AOS-GB has reluctantly terminated the web editor’s post”* (July 2008 Questionnaire, response).



We would like to express our appreciation for the work done by AOS-GB in designing, developing and launching the website, in spite of all the difficulties. It is unfortunate that such an effective instrument of communication has not been able to be fully developed and to reach its full potential, wherein: *“Through the website, AOS personnel can learn about each other. The website also enables us to present our work to seafarers, the wider Church, partner organisations and other interested parties”* (Manual for Chaplains and Pastoral Agents of the Apostleship of the Sea, Part V).

Listening to Pope Benedict XVI in his 2009 message for the World Communications Day: *“These technologies are truly a gift to humanity and we must endeavour to ensure that the benefits they offer are put at the service of all human individuals and communities, especially those who are most disadvantaged and vulnerable.”* During these days we are called to reflect on *“the extraordinary potential of the new technologies, if they are used to promote human understanding and solidarity”* and to find practical ways, if possible, to

overcome our difficulties in this respect.

Turning now the cruise ministry, *“AOS must recognise this new challenge and especially that the conditions of ministry in the Cruise Industry are different and specific”* (Manual for Chaplains and Pastoral Agents of the Apostleship of the Sea, Part I). For this reason, in the next few days we will proceed hopefully towards the finalization of the *Code of Practice for Cruise Ministry*. We are aware that, in spite of the economic crisis, cruising is the fastest developing sector of the maritime industry worldwide. *“The sector has been growing steadily and it has more than 150,000 employees, of whom about 120,000 are at sea at any given time. It is estimated that each year there are more than 12 million passengers travelling on Cruise ships. Today we are witnessing also the introduction of huge ships with a capacity of more than 3,500 passengers and 1,500 crew, with a large proportion of women.”* (Manual, Part VII). Cruise ministry is really a great challenge to our apostolate.

Code of Practice for Cruise Ministry

Tomorrow we will have with us Fr. Giacomo Martino from Italy, Fr. Sinclair Oubre from USA, and Fr. Arnaud de Boissieu from France, to stimulate our discussion with a presentation of their national experiences; we also invited Fr. John Armitage from UK, but, because of previous commitments, he is unable to join us.

After having listened to our reflections and suggestions, they will work together to prepare for Wednesday afternoon a possible final version of the *Code of Practice for Cruise Ministry*. Once reviewed and adopted, the Code will provide general guidelines, taking into account the various national/regional differences, with a view to enhancing and strengthening the *AOS Manual for Chaplains and Pastoral Agents* in this matter.

AOS International Fishing Committee

The fishing sector is a matter of great concern for all of us. It is also the most difficult sector to approach from a pastoral point of view. *“Most of*

what has been or will be said concerning pastoral care, etc., can be applied to fishers on board international fishing vessels. There are also however matters which deserved to be considered and addressed specifically in ministering to fishers and ministering to them is a challenge because the needs and the situations of fishers and theirs families are very different" (Manual, Part VII).



There are many external factors that affect this profession. The oceans are harvested faster than they can regenerate. Marine pollution constitutes one of the major threats to the livelihood of fisher folk. Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fisheries activities have become a worldwide problem, affecting both domestic waters and high seas, and all types of fishing vessels. Such activities are harmful to global fish stocks and will have a consequence on fishing communities, as they will have a direct impact on the amount of fish that are left for legal fishers to harvest and on which to make a living. While we recognize the importance of the adoption by the ILO of the Work in Fishing Convention 2007 (No. 188), we have to admit that very little has been done towards its ratification and entrance into force. If you remember, promoting the Convention in this regard was one of the tasks assigned in Gdynia to the National Delegations. On Wednesday, at the AOS International Fishing Committee Meeting, you will hear more about these problems from Archbishop Marchetto, Mr. Grimur Valdimarsson, Director of the Fish Products and Industrial Division of FAO, and Mr. Jon Withlow, Secretary of the ITF Seafarers Section in charge of Fisheries.

We feel very much supported and encouraged by the words of Benedict XVI, again delivered before praying the *Angelus* on Sunday the 18th January 2009: "I would like to add a special word for sailors and fisherman, who for some time have been experiencing great uneasiness. Besides the usual difficulties, they are also suffering from the restrictions of bringing chaplains on board, as well as from the dangers of pirates and the damage of illegal fishing. I express my nearness to

them and the wish that their generosity in being of assistance at sea be compensated by greater consideration".

To the Blessed Virgin Mary, the "Star of the Sea", I entrust these days of reflection and sharing. To Jesus, the "Lord of the Sea", I ask for Wisdom to guide our thoughts and decisions for the benefits of the people of the sea.

I shall follow your three-day's work with much interest and I shall try to be present as far as my agenda permits. May you enjoy your stay in Rome and have a safe journey back to your respective region. Please bring, "data occasione", to AOS Bishop Promoters, National Directors, Chaplains and all the volunteers my words of appreciation and encouragement for their work and dedication.

I now have the great pleasure to declare this meeting open.

CALENDAR OF REGIONAL MEETINGS

As the cost has become prohibitive, AOS meetings have to be organized whenever feasible back to back with other meetings. The Regional Coordinators were asked to provide the schedule of their Regional Conferences for 2009, which is the following:

Africa Atlantic:

May 4-5, Sub-Regional Meeting Abidjan, Ivory Coast

November, Central Africa Sub-Regional Meeting Luanda (Angola)

South Asia:

November 21-24, Regional Meeting, India

Oceania:

November 13-15, Regional Meeting, Brisbane, Australia

Indian Ocean:

August 2-8, Regional Meeting, Durban, South Africa

Latin America:

October 25-29, Meeting CELAM for AOS, Lima, Perú

Europe: to be decided

East Asia:

July (third week), Regional Meeting, Pattaya, Thailand

AOS REGIONAL COORDINATORS MEETING

Report

The Regional Coordinators presented their reports and shared in the pastoral initiatives and projects of their regions. The following are the main points & suggestions taken from the SWOT analysis.

Strengths

- Generally AOS enjoys good relations and is well supported by the different Bishops' Conferences.
- In USA there is a strong commitment and love for the ministry done by Chaplains, pastoral team members and volunteers and a growing awareness in the local Church of the activities of AOS in their community, with a clear understanding of individual roles.
- The Cruise Ship Priest Program by AOS-USA is a strong resource for AOS Chaplains and the promotion of AOS into the local community and provides a very much appreciated service to the cruise industry.



- AOS is strongly involved in the fishing sector.
- AOS collaborates ecumenically with other Christian denominations. In North America there is a close link with the North American Maritime Ministry Association (NAMMA).
- Several new seafarers' centres were opened in previous years in the Latin American Region and there is a plan to have more of these centres.
- AOS social, pastoral and legal services have been the key ingredient for seafarers' welfare work.
- In India the initiative of ICSW to establish Port Welfare Committees (PWC) is creating an awareness that cooperation should be fostered between government, seafarers' mission, port authorities, ship owners and the larger community to be

able to advance seafarers' welfare. All Chaplains continue to be on the local PWC organized by the ICSW.

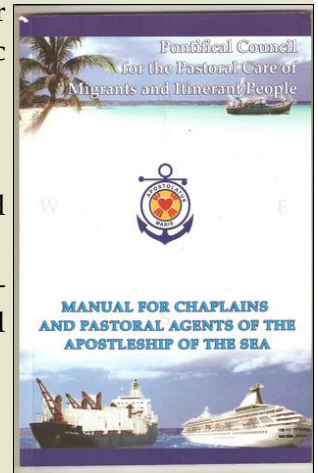
- There is also a growing engagement of the clergy, lay pastoral agents and volunteers in some countries of the region that's South Korea, Philippines and Indonesia.
- It exists a growing capacity to intervene in a moment of crisis as and when required, e.g. case of piracy in Somalia, October 2008, involving Indian ships and crew.
- AOS Spain received a national award for the commitment and the work done with the marine society.
- Good use of IT technology.

Weaknesses

- Recruitment of volunteers and some form of training for those already in the ministry for several years.
- In East Far East Asia AOS is not a priority for most of the dioceses and chaplains are multitasked.
- Insufficient funding for activities is felt strongly in most of the countries especially in the so-called third world.
- Seafarers are still vulnerable to unscrupulous ship owners and manning agents as there is still no strong legislation to protect them from abuse.
- The non-existence of PWC in some areas of the regions.
- The global economic downturn that will inevitably affect the job security of seafarers.
- There is an absence of communication of what is happening to each of the individual countries among members in the regions, maybe because there is no need felt for regular sharing.
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bers in the region maybe because there is no felt need for regular sharing.

- Personal contact between the regions where the number of flights is not regular and they are expensive.
- Written communication: all have postal addresses, e-mails and phones. But frequently when the mails are sent they bounce back and are not delivered. Is it because people change their addresses and e-mails so often, or don't they have time to look at their electronic mail?
- Lack of IT equipments.
- Lack of/aging Volunteers.
- Lack of translation into more languages of the AOS Manual for Chaplains and Pastoral Agents.
- It is still very hard to have real apostles. Sometimes our volunteers also our Chaplains act as very good social workers but they have no courage to evangelise and to be really part of the MISSION of the sea.



Challenges

- The work of the Regional Coordinators is being made increasingly difficult because of the rising costs of communication and transport. In some regions it is practically impossible to organize regional meetings because of the social and financial situations; unless there are subsidies from outside sources.
- Because of the economic downturn which also affects diocesan finances, some Bishops have cut back on personnel including diocesan supported AOS chaplaincies.
- ISPS Code implementation continues to create problems regarding access to the ports in different areas.
- Some major ports across the region do not have a Port Chaplain whilst other ports have one who does not or cannot actively do his job – due to age, physical limitations, or too many external responsibilities (parish, school/jail/ hospital/nursing homes/ etc), or due to lack of funding from the local Church.
- Lack of training for some Port Chaplains and their pastoral team members especially in the area of pastoral care to face the new and more complicated challenges and achieve stability and continuity of the centres and services offered.
- Need for the local Church to provide financial support and allow time for the Chaplain to attend training courses.
- More cruise lines should join the Cruise Ship Priest Program.
- The recent loss of very dedicated AOS Chaplains.
- Lack of communication among Organizations that operate for the seafarers' welfare.
- Safety is a subject of importance and concern that we cannot ignore; it is not only for the seafarers but also for each and every person who is part of the team.
- Volunteers are a human potential indispensable in our welfare work, because they are an example of commitment and love to the mission.
- Obtain Bible and New Testament copies in different languages for free distribution.
- To improve quantitative and qualitative cruise chaplaincy reporting.

Opportunities

- AOS involvement in the Ship Welfare Visitors Course, though it should be integrated with a specific pastoral formation.
- The openness and eagerness of the Archbishop of Nassau (Bahamas) to establish AOS in the Caribbean.
- The Regional and National Newsletters together with the websites are important medium to promote awareness and develop support for the ministry.
- The AOS Manual offers opportunities to Chaplains and volunteers to be more specific in their pastoral outreach.
- In India, three Catholic magazines have agreed to serialize the AOS Manual, starting from May 2009.
- Regional Conferences and seminars have been very effective to improve the communication and motivate Bishop Promoters, Chaplains, employees, secular and pastoral agents.

- An interchange of volunteers has started in Stella Maris Centres (Latin America and Philippines). For the year 2009, the Region counts on two pastoral agents coming from the Philippines to train and share their expertise, with the support of ITF.
- Interest in seafarers' welfare among government agencies is a positive development.
- Organizing cooperatives among seafarers' family is an emerging means to find financial support for work among seafarers.
- Participation of seafarers' families and women is an encouraging sign.
- Refusal to enter the port and to visit vessels should mean more creative onshore pastoral services offered.
- Participation in the WYD Exhibition held at the Sydney convention Centre during the WYD celebrations (July 15-22, 2008). A good number of people expressed their interest in AOS by leaving their e-mail addresses. It is necessary now to maintain contact and provide additional information.
- Newly formed National Welfare Council.
- The interchange of personnel should be a new phase to strengthen the Stella Maris Centres in the Region.
- Engaging the Bishops into a more supportive role, not only to promote seafarers' well-being, but providing them with information on a more regular basis on the activities in their port.
- Providing parishes with more newsletters on the work of the AOS and getting articles into Catholic Newspapers.

Threats

- Changing chaplains and pastoral agents affect their development and strengthening.
- The Center has become unattractive for seafarers as it does not answer to their needs.
- Indifference of some sectors of society to seafarers' welfare.
- Lack of resource or expertise in newly appointed personnel to AOS work.
- Political situation in Sri Lanka and Pakistan has been tense over the past two years, with bad consequences for AOS.
- Presence of fundamentalist sects.
- Loss of balance between business and ministry
- Global economic downturn.

Projects

- To extend and strengthen the coverage of the ports in Latin America by opening new Stella Maris Centres.
- To make CELAM more involved, as well as Episcopal Conferences, local Churches and organizations working with seafarers.
- In Latin America to organize a meeting with Bishop Promoters, National Directors and Chaplains. [taking always into consideration the AOS as a "Work"]
- Streamline email/communication facilities among Chaplains.
- Look at specific counselling services.
- Trying to create a three-way relation between State-port authorities, ships owners and shipping agents.

Recommendations

- The Pontifical Council has been requested to send letters of encouragement and provide information materials to AOS Bishop Promoters to increase their awareness and dedication to this ministry.
- Suggestion was made that in India the Bishop Promoter be another Bishop, besides the Chairperson of the Labour Commission.
- Given the increase in piracy and risk of being terrorized, the AOS Manual should contain an additional section on this to inform and 'train' AOS personnel in matters of direct counselling and assistance in this field.
- Because of the problems experienced by some AOS in regards to grants received by ITF, a reflection should be made on how to avoid future difficulties.
- It was recommended to make wider use of Skype and other forms of IT communication not only for seafarers but also among the Regional Coordinators and the Pontifical Council. [It must be studied what it does signify]



AOS INTERNATIONAL FISHING COMMITTEE MEETING

(18th February 2009)

THE ADDRESS OF ARCHBISHOP AGOSTINO MARCHETTO

Dear friends,

Welcome to our fifth AOS International Fishing Committee Meeting. We are glad to welcome Mr. Grimur Valdimarsson, Director of the Fish Products and Industrial Division of FAO - an organization to which I was representing the Holy Father during more than 3 years - and Mr. Jon Whitlow, Secretary of the ITF Seafarers Section in charge of Fisheries. We are grateful to them because in their hectic schedule, they were able to find time to be with us and share their experience and observations.

Fishers, their families and communities, have traditionally been an important part of AOS pastoral care and ministry. As recommended by the XXI AOS World Congress in Rio, an "AOS International Fishing

Committee" has been set up to promote fishermen's welfare and dignity and a better coordination of its pastoral care in supporting and strengthening fishermen's communities and organizations (Manual for Chaplains and Pastoral Agents of the AOS, Part VII).

We all realize the importance of this annual meeting of the



AOS International Fishing Committee, especially in this year of global jobs crisis that has created

additional problems to the many already experienced by the fishing sector.

The situation

In Canada fisheries are closing down and the government push for more fish farms even though they are having a detrimental impact on the marine ecosystem itself. In Alaska part of the traditional fishing ground is closed to protect sea lions and near Hawaii vast areas of the Western Pacific Ocean is now off limits to long liners due to concerns for sea turtles.

In Central and South America large shrimp farms have destroyed mangrove habitats, displacing coastal fishers. Salmon farms in Chile, often owned by foreign corporations have polluted coastal waters and also

Mr. Grimur Valdimarsson, Director of the Fish Products and Industrial Division of FAO, shared some facts about the increase number of hungry and malnourished people in the world, on food prices and on agricultural products. There is an interaction between all of these. In fact, half of the fish used for food comes from aquaculture and even if fish play a small part on the food picture, consumption is higher than ever. FAO has been helping small scale fishers for many years bringing together responsible fisheries and social development. An interesting note seems to be a connection between piracy and Illegal, Unreported, Unregulated (IUU) fishing. Most probably many of these pirates before were practicing IUU fishing but now after a more strict implementation of regulations and more control on the origin of the catch they have had to abandon the IUU fishing practice and they turn to piracy in order to make quick and easy money. At the end he announced the important initiative of establishing a Global Record of Fishing Vessels and repeated that the fishing industry is one of the most dangerous in the world with 24,000 people being killed every year.

Mr. Jon Whitlow, Secretary of the ITF Seafarers Section in charge of Fisheries, talked about the industrialization of the fishing activities not only in developed countries but also in developing countries where artisanal fishers now are becoming mechanized. He added that in the last few years, in some European

(Continues on page 10)

displaced traditional small scale fishers. New tourist resorts developed in the name of eco-tourism, and large aquaculture developments threaten traditional fishing fleets and forcing many fishing communities to move away.

Fishers in Europe have lost control of their fisheries because decisions are no longer made at the national level, but at European level where outside political considerations can influence and even dominate fishery decision making.

In Asia and Africa cash-poor governments sell off valuable fishery quotas to company-owned factory trawlers from Europe and other western nations. The fisheries that once employed local people for catching and processing the fish are forced to close down. The fish never reach the shores of the villages, instead is processed at sea, unloaded in some western port to feed first world nations, and the cash that returns goes not necessarily for the benefit of the local fishers and fishing communities.

Even in Australia, where the fisheries appear to be prosperous and well-managed, there is a push by sport fishermen to restrict or close commercial fishing along many areas of that nation's coast.

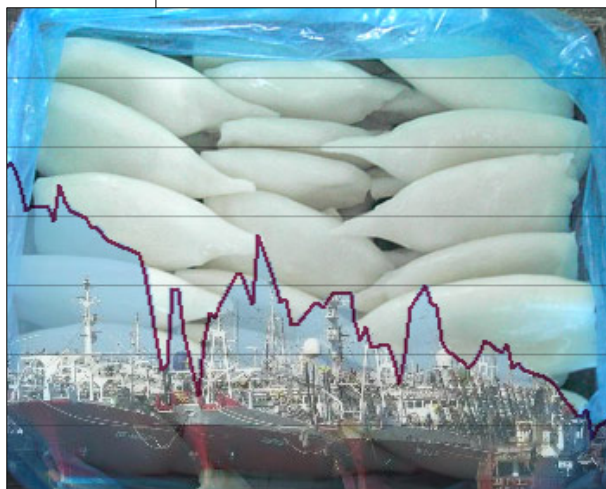
Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fisheries activities exist worldwide affecting both domestic waters, high seas, and all types of fishing vessels. Such activities are harmful to global fish stocks and undermine the measures adopted nationally, regionally and internationally to secure fish stocks for the future.

Finally, many substandard fishing vessels are registered under flag of convenience that could neither control nor implement safety regulations. Crew members are subject to cheating and deceit: contract substitution, non payment of wages, abandonment, etc. While out at sea the crew members can endure long hours of work without rest, ver-

bal abuses, even physical violence and sometimes are lost at sea leaving family without compensation and support.

Long standing cooperation between FAO and its sister organizations, ILO and IMO, has led to the development of instruments regarding fisheries management, standards on the safety of fishing vessels and fishers. However many of them, because of their non binding nature, produce little result.

The situation looks gloomy and dark like the stormy sea encountered many times by the fishers. Facing all these problems we feel sometimes discouraged like the Disciples that have



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countries, the employment of migrant fishers from developing countries has increased. Talking about the global financial crisis, he mentioned that it might bring some benefit to the maritime world because of the new emerging policy against "tax heaven" countries, which might affect especially the flags of convenience. Finally, he mentioned the many abuses committed on the fishing industries and the lack of clear data and evidence to prove them. Lastly he invited AOS with its network to assist ITF in gathering information and data on exploitation in the fishing world by collecting statements, pictures, copies of contract, etc. and to pass them on to ITF.

AOS commitment to the Fishing sector was also noted through the reports on fishing done by the Regional Coordinators. Most national AOS are already engaged in pastoral work with fishing communities. Many Chaplains do care for fishing communities in their parishes; religious services are often offered in the port and children of fishers attend parochial schools. The situation unfortunately is still bleak. Arrests and detention continue, boats and nets are confiscated all over the world and fishers keep knocking at the doors of AOS Centres to ask for assistance and protection from exploitation and abuses.

It is important for AOS to remember the consensus document of the Global Conference on Small-scale Fisheries (officially titled "Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries: Bringing Together Responsible Fisheries and Social Development", and abbreviated as 4SSF), co-organized by the FAO and the Department

been fishing all night without catching anything. In spite of all “...we need the greater and lesser hopes that keep us going day by day. But these are not enough without the great hope, which must surpass everything else. This great hope can only be God, who encompasses the whole of reality and who can bestow upon us what we, by ourselves, cannot attain. The fact that it comes to us as a gift is actually part of hope. God is the foundation of hope: not any god, but the God who has a human face and who has loved us to the end, each one of us and humanity in its entirety” (Spe salvi 31).

Fishers and fishing communities are looking for people whom could offer a beam of hope in the dark of night, people whom will sail with them through the stormy sea and as AOS chaplains and volunteers we are called to fulfil what has been said in our Manual for Chaplains and Pastoral Agents of the Apostleship of the Sea: “The small-scale, traditional fishermen in developing countries are, in general, the poorest of the poor;.... They are rarely, if ever, consulted concerning policies, regulations or decisions

that will affect their conditions of life and livelihood: being voiceless, they often rely on Church Organizations and friendly NGOs to make their voice heard” (Part VII).



The Final Document of the Ad Hoc Committee on Fishing of December 2003 talks among many other points about: “Networking among the different AOS members... Recognize, define and advocate the rights of fishers to decent living and working conditions and their rights to access to resources... Assist in the development of fishers’ organizational capacity, and introduce methods that facili-

tate their effective participation in policy-making decisions.”

What to do?

AOS could be relevant in these times, in the context of globalization by intensifying its actions and try to:

a) Organize fishers groups and fishing communities.

Fishing is a very divided and scattered industry. Though there are several organizations such as World Forum of Fish Harvesters and Fish Workers (WFF), International Collective in Support on Fishersworkers (ICSF), etc., fishers all over the world are still either poorly or not organized. Every coastal fishing village, any group of fishers and we could say, almost every single fishing vessel are a different reality, divided and separated by the others because of social-cultural traditions, and perhaps jealousies in protecting the location of fishing grounds. We need to make an extra effort to create avenues for single fisher owners to talk among themselves and we should invite to our Centers and parishes, groups of fishers to

of Fisheries, Thailand, from 13 to 17 October 2008, at Bangkok.

I. Securing Fishing Rights:

Access rights of small-scale and indigenous fishing; Prohibit industrial fishing in inshore waters; Prevent the privatization of fisheries resources; Prevent the displacement of fishing communities; Reject industrial aquaculture.

II. Securing post-harvest Rights

Protect access of women of fishing communities; Ensure that trade promotes human development; Sustainability of fisheries; Effectively involve fishing communities in negotiations; Identify social and ecological fisheries.

III. Securing Human Rights

Cultural identities, dignity and traditional fishing rights of fishing; Rights of the Child and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIPS); Basic services such as safe drinking water, education, sanitation, health; Implement the ILO Work on Fishing Convention 2007; Eliminating all forms of discrimination against women.

share their concerns and get pastorally organized.

b) Education and advocacy.

Often fishers are uneducated and knowledge is an important aspect in the process of making them aware of their rights. Fishers and fishing communities must be empowered through different form of educations to stand up for their rights and advocate for the adoption and implementation of FAO/IMO instruments and specially the latest Work on Fishing Convention (188).

Regarding this, I would like to highlight first, a European Parliament Legislative Resolution that was adopted on 8th October 2008 in which it *"Urges all EU Member States to proceed rapidly to ratification of the Convention and put its content into effect*

in advance of completion of the ratification process" and second, on 6th November 2008, at the sit-in of National Fishworkers' Forum (NFF) in Delhi, the Union Minister of State for Labour and Employment, Mr. Oscar Fernandez, declared that India agreed to ratify the ILO Convention 188 - Work in Fishing Convention, 2007. There is still a long way to go but these are encouraging signs towards having the Convention ratified.

c) Assist in collecting data.

Available statistics on fisheries are scarce, incomplete and of low quality. Data regarding fishing fleets, catch, abandonment, arrests, accidents and death, etc., if and when submitted to international organization (FAO, ILO, ITF) are late and incomplete. It might be necessary to

establish regional information centers that would gather data regarding fisheries, AOS with his extensive network of Centers around the world and grassroots contacts could be a reliable source of information especially in regard to the welfare of fishers. This information/data must be made available to all the different organizations and NGO's interested in the welfare and well being of fishermen.

The situation is quite complex, solutions are not immediate and the obstacles are many but, as a Latin-American poet says: *"Se hace camino al andar"* (We are making our way, walking). Let Mary, Star of the Sea, guide our discussions and decisions for the good of fishers and fishing communities.

ICSW NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (press release)

Roger Harris is to become the Executive Director of the International Committee on Seafarers Welfare (ICSW), the umbrella charity for seafarers' welfare organisations around the world. He begins the job tomorrow, 18th March. Roger Harris (53) has over 20 years of experience of fundraising, campaigning and management in a wide range of organisations. Most recently he was Head of Corporate Services and Projects at Concern Worldwide (UK), an international humanitarian organisation working towards poverty eradication in the developing world. He takes on the ICSW with a mandate to increase the profile and membership of the organisation and to implement projects which meet the needs of the world's seafaring community. He commented: "I am very pleased to join the ICSW at this important moment. It is a time of economic uncertainty for the maritime industry and also for seafarers, and the ICSW will help to meet this challenge and provide assistance to the seafarers of the world."

On the 26th March, the Pontifical Council sent the following message of congratulations to the new ICSW Executive Director:

Dear Mr. Harris,

The Apostleship of the Sea (AOS), the organization of the Catholic Church concerned with the specific pastoral care of the people of the sea, would like to sincerely congratulate you for your appointment as a new Executive Director of the International Committee on Seafarers Welfare (ICSW).

Many are the challenges laying ahead of you, specially in this time of global crisis. We are looking forward to cooperate and work with you, through ICMA, of which AOS was a founder member.

Yours sincerely,

✠Antonio Maria Vegliò, President

✠ Archbishop Agostino Marchetto, Secretary



WORLD FISHERIES MUST PREPARE FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

FAO releases new “State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture” report



2 March 2009, Rome - The fishing industry and national fisheries authorities must do more to understand and prepare for the impacts that climate change will have on world fisheries, says a new FAO report published today.

According to the latest edition of the UN agency's *The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture* (SOFIA), existing responsible fishing practices need to be more widely implemented and current management plans should be expanded to include strategies for coping with climate change.

"Best practices that are already on the books but not always implemented offer clear, established tools towards making fisheries more resilient to climate change," said Kevern Cochrane, one of SOFIA's authors. "So the message to fishers and fisheries authorities is clear: get in line with current best practices, like those contained in FAO's Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, and you've already taken important strides towards mitigating the effects of climate change."

Vulnerable food systems and communities

Climate change is already modifying the distribution of both marine and freshwater species. Warmer-water species are being pushed towards the poles and experiencing changes in habitat size and productivity. And climate change is affecting the seasonality of biological processes, altering marine and freshwater food webs, with unpredictable consequences for fish production. For communities who heavily rely on fisheries, any decreases in the local availabil-

ity of fish or increases in the instability in their livelihoods will pose serious problems.

"Many fisheries are being exploited at the top range of their productive capacity. When you look at the impacts that climate change might have on ocean ecosystems, that raises concerns as to how they'll hold up," said Cochrane. Urgent efforts are needed to help fishery and aquaculture dependent communities to strengthen their resilience to climate change, especially those most vulnerable, he added.

Fishing's carbon footprint

Fisheries and aquaculture make a minor but significant contribution to greenhouse gas emissions during fishing operations and transport, processing and storage of fish, according to today's report.

The average ratio of fuel to carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions for capture fisheries is estimated at about 3 teragrams of CO₂ per million tonnes of fuel used. "That could be improved. Good fisheries management can substantially improve fuel efficiency for the sector," Cochrane said. "Overcapacity and excess fishing capacity mean fewer fish caught per vessel—that is, lower fuel efficiency—while competition for limited resources means fishers are always looking to increase engine power, which also lowers efficiency."

Compared to actual fishing operations, emissions per kilogram of post-harvest aquatic products transported by air are quite high, SOFIA adds. Intercontinental air-freight emits 8.5 kg of CO₂ per kilogram of fish transported. This

is about 3.5 times that for sea freight and more than 90 times that from local transportation of fish where it is consumed within 400 kilometres of catch.

New production figures

Total world fisheries production reached a new high of 143.6 million tonnes in 2006 (92 million tonnes capture fisheries, 51.7 million tonnes aquaculture). Of that, 110.4 million tonnes was used for human consumption, with the remainder going to non-food uses (livestock feed, fishmeal for aquaculture).

The production increases came from the aquaculture sector, which now accounts for 47 percent of all fish consumed by humans as food. Production in capture fisheries has levelled off and is not likely to increase beyond current levels.

Status of wild stocks

Nineteen percent of the major commercial marine fish stocks monitored by FAO are overexploited, 8 percent are depleted, and 1 percent is ranked as recovering from depletion, today's report indicates. Around half (52%) rank as fully exploited and are producing catches that are at or close to their maximum sustainable limits.

Twenty percent of stocks fall into the moderately exploited or underexploited category. Areas with the highest proportions of fully-exploited stocks are the Northeast Atlantic, the Western Indian Ocean and the Northwest Pacific.

SOFIA identifies overcapacity—a combination of too many boats and highly effective fishing technologies—as a key problem

affecting fisheries today.

Progress in tackling this issue has been slow, it says, and "there has been only limited progress in mainstreaming precautionary and ecosystem approaches to fisheries, eliminating bycatch and discards, regulating bottom-trawl fisheries, managing shark fisheries and dealing with illegal fishing."

Other findings

SOFIA paints a clear picture of the importance of fishing and aquaculture in the developing world. An estimated 43.5 million people are directly involved, either full or part time, in capture fisheries and aquaculture. Most (86%) live in Asia. An additional 4 million are engaged in the sector on an occasional basis. Factoring in employment in fish processing, marketing and service industries

and including the families of all people employed directly or indirectly from fisheries and aquaculture, over half a billion people depend on the sector.

Fish provides more than 2.9 billion people with at least 15 percent of their average per capita animal protein intake. It contributes at least 50 percent of total animal protein intake in many small island developing states as well as in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Equatorial Guinea, French Guiana, the Gambia, Ghana, Indonesia and Sierra Leone.

Both direct employment and jobs in related industries are likewise important for developing countries, while their revenues from fisheries exports have reached \$24.6 billion annually.

The world's motorized fishing fleet totals around 2.1 million vessels. The vast majority (90%) meas-

ure under 12 meters in length. Some 23 000 are large-tonnage "industrialized" vessels. The nationality of several thousand of these is unknown—this "unknown" category has expanded in recent years in spite of global efforts to eliminate illegal fishing. *SOFIA* also includes chapters on the occupational safety of fishers, seafood certification schemes, marine genetic resources, shrimp fishing, and the use of wild fish as seed and feed in aquaculture.

Discussions at FAO

Starting today, representatives of over 80 countries are gathering at FAO's Rome headquarters for the 28th session of the UN agency's Committee on Fisheries (COFI), where they will discuss the issues raised in *SOFIA* and the program of work for FAO's Fisheries and Aquaculture Department.

LESS FISH IN THE SEA. FARMED FISH OVERTAKES WILD FISH. NOW THE KING OF THE TABLE IS RAISED IN A TANK

Fish farming is overtaking fishing. In the world today, one fish in two grows inside the walls of a tank before it ends up on our plate. And while the schools of fish in nature are becoming depleted, fish raising turns out to be the fastest growing food industry on the planet. The most recent data from FAO published in the report, "The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2008" leaves no doubt...Doctors and nutritionists constantly invite us to eat fish species and reduce our consumption of meat. But the same Organization confirms that one marine species in three is subject to "excessive exploitation by fishing".

To get out of this bind in a sector where more than three-fourths of production is concentrated in the developing countries, there is no other solution than to have recourse to what *Nature* described in a survey as "water chickens": that is, fish that are easy to raise and satisfied with low quality food but which repay the small effort with a flesh that is poor in proteins and fats useful to human health. "Among the seven species raised the most", writes the review, "five belong to the genus of carp which requires less rich food compared to other fish". And these have their greatest world production center in China. "For this purpose, the carnivorous fish in the fish farms have also been forced to adopt a more vegetarian style. For example, one fourth of the diet fed to salmon consists of soy". According to the data from Inran, the National Research Institute for Food and Nutrition, it is not true that this kind of food reduces the Omega 3 level in fish flesh. In a farmed gilthead sea bream, for instance, these fatty acids continue to weigh 20-24% of the total. However, what increases with respect to the fish caught in the sea are the Omega 6 levels, especially linoleic acid: from 6-7% to 14-22%. The relation between the two fatty acids (which is an important indicator of the fish's nutritional quality) thus falls from 3-4 to 1.6-0.8.

However, we will have to resign ourselves to pay this price if it is true, as the FAO points out, that in 2030 the world population will reach 8 billion and to feed everyone 20 million more tons of fish will be needed in addition to the current 110 million...Instead, in the USA, as *Nature* reports, the Food and Drug Administration has a decree ready that will approve a kind of salmon that is genetically modified to produce greater doses of the growth hormone and reduce by a third the time needed to achieve the right size for a fish market or restaurant.

(Elena Dusi, *Repubblica*, March 27, 2009)





THE APOSTLESHIP OF THE SEA OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA RESOLUTION

Inadequate Response to Somali Pirates

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WHERE AS, the mission of the AOSUSA is to be a spiritual and theological resource to the Roman Catholic Church in the United States of America. The purpose of the AOSUSA is to teach and witness to the Word of God and to serve God's people; especially seafarers, maritime personnel and people of the sea; by fostering their growth and renewal, through prayer, study and Christian service.

WHERE AS, for nearly 17 years, pirates in Somalia threaten the lives of seafarers and the security of world trade; the pirates are now attacking ships on a daily basis with assault rifles and rocket propelled grenades; and currently holding 15 vessels and 300 seafarer hostages.

WHERE AS, ships - which carry 80% of world trade - are the lifeblood of the global economy; and the indifference to the lives of merchant seafarers and the consequences for society at large; transiting the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea/Suez Canal is a vital Asia to Europe sea lane affecting not just those countries to which cargoes are destined but all global seaborne trade;

WHERE AS, since 9/11, the international shipping community has had to comply with new security requirements to address concerns about terrorism and various new cargo security requirements; yet when pirates attack merchant vessels, the response of many flag states is that it is not the governments' problem and ships should hire armed guards for protection;

WHERE AS, piracy is a criminal act and the arming of merchant ships will put the lives of ships' crews in even greater danger and escalate the pirates' level of violence;

WHERE AS, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea , Article 105, states 'On the high seas, or in any other place outside the jurisdiction of any State, every State may seize a pirate ship or aircraft taken by piracy and under the control of pirates, and arrest the persons and seize the property on board'. The rights of States to act against criminal acts at sea are reinforced by the IMO Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Maritime Navigation.

WHERE AS, there have been five U.N. Security Council Resolutions this year: 1851 (2008), 1846 (2008), 1838 (2008), 1816 (2008), 1814 (2008), the response by governments and their naval forces is inadequate; the pirates are operating with impunity, and governments stand idly by, consistent with current rules of engagement provided by participating governments;

WHERE AS, the world's leading nations, with the naval resources at their disposal, are unable to maintain the security of one of the world's most strategically important seaways, linking Europe to Asia via the Red Sea/Suez Canal;

WHERE AS, many countries are stakeholders in the maritime industry and international trade in Gulf of Aden and not fulfilling their responsibilities: The countries whose economies depend on free trade flowing through these waters, especially the European Union, the countries of Austral-Asia, the neighboring countries of East Africa and the South West Asia in particular the **United Kingdom, France, The Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Japan, China, South Korea, India, New Zealand, Australia, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Iran**; the flag states of the merchant ships, especially flags of convenience in particular **Panama, Liberia and European Secondary Registries**; the actual country of ownership of the vessels in particular the **United States, many western European countries and Japan**; and the country of citizenship of the seafarers in particular the **Philippines, India and China**.

WHERE AS, Alfred Thayer Mahan wrote: "the necessity of a navy, in the restricted sense of the words, springs...from the existence of peaceful shipping, and disappears with it."

BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE APOSTLESHIP OF THE SEA OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

RECOGNIZES, the unique opportunity, for many adversarial countries, to work together in a common goal;

URGES, governments to commit the necessary maritime law enforcement or navy vessels now, and to ensure they have the freedom to engage against acts of piracy in the Gulf of Aden;

URGES, governments to issue clear rules of engagement to allow maritime law enforcement or naval forces to intercept and take appropriate action against violent pirates, and the oceangoing 'mother ships' from which the pirates are operating, as permitted by UN Security Council Resolutions and existing international law about the rights of states to repress criminal acts on the high seas;

URGES, governments to bring the pirates to justice in a court of law and not allowed the pirates to resume their criminal activities unimpeded because of governments' unwillingness or incompetence to take the necessary action;

URGES, the United Nations and the UN Security Council to immediately take appropriate action; and the greater urgency is required by governments and their navies, particularly those stakeholder countries with the responsibility to protect their merchant seafarers, their vessels, their economies and restore security to this critical trade artery.



MOURNING AT ICMA



Rvd Berend van Dijken passed away on the 28th January 2009, after a serious illness. The same day, the Pontifical Council sent to the present ICMA Secretary General the following message of condolences.

Dear Reverend Hennie la Grange,

Thank you for informing the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants of the death of Revd Berend van Dijken.

Revd van Dijken was called to guide ICMA as Secretary General from 2000 to 2003. Even though he was no longer working in the maritime ministry, his premature departure is a great loss for those who have known him. For the Apostleship of the Sea (AOS) it was a privilege to work with him in an ecumenical spirit to foster cooperation among the members and to promote the development of the ICMA.

His love and dedication for the seafarers were well expressed when as speaker at the XXI AOS World Congress in Brazil, Revd van Dijken recalled his experience: *"Ten years I worked as a port chaplain. In my ship visiting and in the centres I met seafarers from all the regions of our Global Village: people of all nations, colours, languages, races, and religions. In the many meetings with them it was a privilege to experience in reality that all of us belong to the catholic, universal or global Church: 'Many are the light beams from the one light / we are one in Christ'."*

The Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People would like to express its sincere condolences to Berend's family, to his Church that has served for many years as a minister, and assure prayers that he may rest in the peace of the Lord.

Yours sincerely,

Cardinal Renato Raffaele Martino
President

THE PASSING AWAY OF A GREAT FRIEND

OF THE PEOPLE OF THE SEA

Fr. Mario Balbi, SDB, passed away on the 23rd February at the Port of Newark following an accident. Fr. Mario would have been 89 years old on March 25 of this year and he still went to work everyday as a chaplain at the Port of Newark. He was a great inspiration of pastoral zeal and hard work.



On the 24th February, this Pontifical Council sent the following letters of condolences to the AOS-USA Bishop Promoter Bishop Boland, and to Fr. Mario's Salesian Superior:

Your Excellency,

We received news of the tragic death of Fr. Mario Balbi, SDB, who for more than 40 years ministered to seafarers in the ports of Savannah and Newark.

This is a great loss for the AOS-USA because of his untiring and loving ministry for the people of the sea. He also guided the National Catholic Conference of Seafarers as a President for several years.

I would be grateful if you could express our solidarity to his family, his clergy, the AOS and the faithful of his diocese in this moment of sorrow.

With the assurance of our prayers and deepest sympathy, I am

Yours sincerely,

✠ Archbishop Agostino Marchetto
Secretary

Reverend Father,

We have learned with great sadness of the loss of Fr. Mario Balbi, SDB, who was well known in the maritime world (Apostleship of the Sea), having served for over than 40 years the cause of seafarers. His dedication and concern were very appreciated by this Pontifical Council, which he always visited during his permanence in Italy.

Fr. Mario will be missed not only by the Salesian family but also by the many seafarers that he has encountered on board of vessels or in the Stella Maris centres in Savannah and Newark. With his humble and gentle attitude, he was always available to offer pastoral care to seafarers and their families, regardless of their religious beliefs. As he used to say, "this is the Church on the move, there are no hours no times; I am always there for whoever needs to talk to me".

Now that he is climbing the last "gangway", we entrust him to God and assure the Salesian community, his family and all his collaborators in the port of Newark, of our prayers and sincere condolences.

Yours faithfully,

✠ Archbishop Agostino Marchetto,
Secretary

To the Religious Superior
Don Bosco Residence
518-B Valley Road
Orange, NJ 07050