



CHRISTMAS MESSAGE 2011

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Pontifical Councils ...

Dear People of the Sea,

On Christmas Day we are invited to reflect on the mystery of the Incarnation of the eternal Word of God, as we read in the first chapter of the Gospel of Saint John: *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth"* (Jn 1:1-14).

The mystery of the Incarnation brings first and foremost a message of universal Love which we are invited to share in the increasingly international, multicultural and multireligious maritime world. A Love that embraces all the people of the sea without barriers or discriminations and becomes the foundation of a new way of living together respecting the diversity and dignity of every human being.

This mystery is the celebration of Emanuel, the "God with us", which invites us to be Jesus' witnesses in the ever more varied world of the sea to become instruments of a new evangelization showing how the Christian prospective enlightens, in an unprecedented way, the great problems of history. (Synod of Bishops, XIII Ordinary General Assembly, *Lineamenta*, 7).

Moreover, Christmas announces that the Word of God was incarnated in our divided and imperfect human reality in order to bring it to perfection. With the power that comes to us from the Lord Jesus who walks together with all of us, we want to commit ourselves in finding lasting solutions to the different problems you have to face every day, including exploitation and abuses in the working environment, the criminalization of your actions, the abandonment in foreign ports, the separation from your families and the ever more threatening danger of piracy.

As I wish you a Holy Christmas, I hope that the gifts of joy, peace and serenity brought by the Baby Jesus will reach you wherever you may be, and will be shared by your families and bear fruits of love and happiness.

With all best wishes,

✠ Antonio Maria Vegliò, President

✠ Joseph Kalathiparambil, Secretary

**Bishop Joseph Kalathiparambil,
Secretary to the Pontifical Council of Migrants and Itinerant People,
visits AOS-GB**

27-30 September 2011



Martin Foley, National Director of AOS GB, welcomed Bishop Joseph and Fr. Bruno Ciceri at Heathrow airport on 27 September. From Heathrow the delegation travelled directly to the port of Tilbury, East London. There they were greeted by the AOS GB port chaplain, Deacon Paul Glock, who took them to the Tilbury Seafarers' Centre. This centre is run on an ecumenical basis by AOS GB, the Mission to Seafarers and the Sailors' Society. The centre manager, along with the port chaplain from the German Seamen's' Mission, was on hand to welcome Bishop Joseph

and Fr. Bruno to the centre. Also present were Mike Gibson, an AOS GB supporter and Managing Director of Tilbury Container Services (a company operating from the port of Tilbury) and Roger Hammond, a long standing AOS GB volunteer ship visitor.

A wide-ranging discussion ensued regarding chaplaincy provision in the port of Tilbury, the management of the seafarers' centre and general operations in the port. Following this discussion Bishop Joseph, Fr. Bruno and Martin Foley were escorted by Deacon Paul Glock to visit a large container ship berthed in Tilbury. The visiting delegation received a warm welcome on board the ship. The crew mainly comprised Filipinos, Russians and Ukrainians. The Captain was from Poland. Bishop Joseph was accompanied to the Bridge and the Engine Room and was briefed about the ship's operations by the Chief Engineer.

The next day, Wednesday 28 September, Bishop Joseph and Fr. Bruno joined the AOS GB cruise chaplains for a meeting to discuss cruise chaplaincy provision during Christmas 2011. The cruise chaplains shared with Bishop Joseph their experiences onboard, ministering to both crew and passengers. Questions were asked and an interesting discussion ensued about the challenges of cruise ministry. Martin Foley explained that AOS GB currently placed chaplains onboard cruise ships during the Christmas and Easter seasons. It is hoped that AOS GB will be able to expand its cruise ministry to cover other times of the year.

Following this meeting, Bishop Joseph joined Bishop Tom Burns, Bishop Promoter of AOS GB, for a Vigil Mass at Westminster Cathedral to mark the feast of Stella Maris. The Mass was concelebrated by AOS chaplains and priests from across Great Britain. The congregation contained AOS GB staff, trustees, volunteers and supporters from the Church, maritime industry, Parliament and elsewhere. Following the Mass there was a formal reception at which Bishop Joseph spoke, expressing his delight to be in London, his support and the support of the Pontifical Council for the work of AOS GB.

On Thursday, 29 September, Bishop Joseph and Fr. Bruno met with representatives of the International Affairs Department of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. These were Bishop Patrick Lynch, (Auxiliary Bishop for Southwark Diocese and Bishop with responsibility for migration issues), David Ryall, (Assistant General Secretary of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales) and Cecilia Taylor-Camara (Senior Policy Adviser, International Affairs Department). Discussion took place on a number of issues including migration, seafarers' welfare and piracy. AOS GB, the International Affairs Department and Bishop Joseph, on behalf of the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People, affirmed their commitment to closer collaboration for the benefit of those whom we serve.

After this meeting, Bishop Joseph, Fr. Bruno and Martin Foley travelled directly to the Museum of London (Docklands) for the press launch of the ITF sponsored Maritime Piracy Humanitarian Response Pro-

gramme. The programme is a pan-industry initiative involving AOS, ICMA, the ITF, NATO, ship owners and other welfare providers. It seeks to offer professional and holistic support and advice to those affected by piracy – seafarers, their families and the wider maritime industry. Bishop Kalathiparambil and Fr. Bruno, as representatives of the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People, were invited to join the panel answering questions from the assembled media, which included journalists from the BBC and other large media outlets. Bishop Joseph and Fr. Bruno were asked by one of the journalists present to outline the response of the Catholic Church to the piracy problem. This they duly did and a number of individuals present at this press launch have since commented on how impressive their response was. The most moving aspect of the press launch was a testimony from an Indian seafarer who had been held hostage by pirates off the Somali coast for 7 months. He was still deeply traumatised by his experience, which visibly demonstrated the importance of the Maritime Piracy Humanitarian Response Programme.

After visiting the AOS GB headquarters, Bishop Joseph was interviewed by Mark Greaves for the Catholic Herald newspaper, a national Catholic newspaper in Great Britain. A very busy day was concluded with the attendance of Bishop Joseph, Fr. Bruno and Martin Foley at a reception at the IMO headquarters to mark World Maritime Day. Bishop Joseph was introduced to Mr. Efthimios E. Mitropoulos, Secretary General of the IMO. The reception also gave Bishop Joseph the opportunity to meet with other senior representatives from the maritime sector including the Rev. Tom Heffer, Secretary General of the Mission to Seafarers and David Cockroft, General Secretary of the ITF.



Friday 30 September began with Bishop Joseph being interviewed by Debbie Smith, a journalist representing the Nautilus Telegraph newspaper. It was a very successful visit. Bishop Joseph considered it important that AOS GB use its experience and contacts within the maritime industry to assist with the planning for the World Congress 2012. Both parties also committed themselves to strengthening the working relationship between the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People and AOS GB, for the benefit of seafarers. It was further resolved that in the period leading up to the World Congress and afterwards, ways need to be found to better share expertise and knowledge across the AOS international family in order that we can demonstrate the true extent of our global ministry of service to seafarers. As was discussed in June 2011 when Martin Foley and Eamonn Delaney (Chairman of AOS GB) visited Rome, to have a greater impact on the maritime industry AOS should present itself not as a fragmented entity but as an organization operating globally. If information could be presented in a global manner, as was done for the AOS global cruise ministry report, it would soon become apparent that AOS is the main provider of spiritual and practical support to seafarers worldwide, outweighing the support provided by the Mission to Seafarers, Sailors' Society and others societies. This would greatly assist with enhancing the credibility of AOS and the Pontifical Council within the maritime industry and with donors and other sources of financial support.

Martin Foley, AOS-GB National Director

News on board

AOS Italy is producing a specific **FREE News on board** service (not be confused with *Balita News*) in 12 different languages. Italian, English, Indian, Pilipino, Russian-Ukraine, Turkish, Arab, Romaine, South American, Portuguese, Indonesian and Chinese. There is a plan to add soon news in Greek, Khmer and Serb-Croatian languages.

The news can be downloaded directly from the website www.stellamaris.tv or if subscribed receive it directly at your e-mail address.

World Fisheries Day

THE MESSAGE OF THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL

(21th November 2011)

World Fisheries Day is celebrated every year on November 21 throughout the world by fishing communities to highlight the precarious situation in which many of them live and the importance of maintaining the world's fisheries.

Fisheries are a source of income and livelihood for millions of people around the world, but it is extremely difficult to have precise data of the number of persons engaged in it. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), it is estimated that roughly 15 million fishers are employed aboard decked or undecked fishing vessels operating in the marine capture fisheries. If part-time fishers are included, as well as those involved in freshwater fisheries and aquaculture, the number rises to 36 million.

The vast majority of fishers engaged in small-scale and artisanal fishing are found along the coasts of undeveloped countries living in great poverty, using antiquated method of fishing and in extreme unsafe conditions.

Fishers employed on board of Distant Water Vessels (DWV) are forced to live on board of their vessels for extended periods of time, working long hours in all kind of weather conditions, sometimes without any protection, and receive very little salary.

Fishers from developing countries are confronted with lack of people interested in the job, increased prices of fuel and policies limiting period of catch and establishing restricting national quota.

For all of them every day is a struggle against the forces of nature that devastate their boats and nets, some of which in a very dramatic way like the tsunami in Asia in 2004 and, more recently, in Japan. They have to face climate change and ecological/environmental disasters that, together with overfishing, destroy the sources of their livelihood and finally the economic system that exploits their hard work. These facts are making fishing one of the most dangerous and hazardous occupations in the world.

The Apostleship of the Sea (AOS), with its network of Centers around the world, has been for long time a "safe harbor" for many fishers. Chaplains and volunteers have provided different kind of services and assistance to respond to their spiritual and material needs.

In this Fisheries Day we would like to unite our voice to the voices of fishers, to invite International Organizations and Governments to develop standards which will ensure decent and productive work for fishers employment, income and food security and to have the *Work in Fishing Convention*, 2007 (No. 188) ratified to guarantee a safe working environment and welfare provisions.

May Mary *Stella Maris* continue to be the source of strength and protection to all the fishers and their families.

✠ Antonio Maria Vegliò
President

✠ Joseph Kalathiparambil
Secretary

SEAFARERS' RIGHTS INTERNATIONAL

LEGAL SENSE AND SENSIBILITY IN A SEA OF TROUBLES



“Until now, there has been no single resource dedicated to the protection of seafarers’ rights,” said **Deirdre Fitzpatrick**, Executive Director of Seafarers’ Rights International (SRI). “Seafarers do not enjoy the same protections as land-based workers, and on a practical level, seafarers often find it difficult, if not impossible, to know the law, to access legal help, and to understand whether or not the law could actually help them.”

A passionate and committed champion of seafarers’ rights, Deirdre Fitzpatrick has considerable experience in the protection and enforcement of seafarers’ legal rights, having worked for over 15 years as Head of Legal Services of the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) before taking on the mantle and challenge of SRI.

What is SRI?

Throughout the years, many efforts have been successfully exerted by a welter of organisations to improve seafarers’ living and working conditions. These include trade unions and faith-based welfare organisations, such as the Apostleship of the Sea (AOS). The International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), for their part, have produced a number of laws, rules and regulations designed to improve the quality of a seafarer’s life and work at sea. And, yet, seafarers continue to remain worse protected in law and more commonly maltreated than those who work on land.

In September 2010, London-based SRI was founded, to raise awareness of seafarers’ rights, and to help seafarers who are caught up in the enormity of certain circumstances, through no fault of their own, to know their rights and the legal protections to which they are entitled.

A unique centre dedicated to advancing seafarers’ rights and interests around the world, SRI is the first initiative of its kind to bring together the experience and expertise of its varied stakeholders who have a sincere concern for the welfare and the safeguarding of the legal protection of seafarers. Working with stakeholders with whom it seeks to forge active and meaningful partnerships, SRI aims to develop and conduct research, education and training in the law concerning seafarers.

Fundamental rights at work

In a speech he gave in 2010, Juan Somavia, ILO’s Director-General, said that: “Fundamental rights at work belong to the realm of human freedom and dignity.” It is these fundamental rights that SRI seeks to uphold and protect on behalf of seafarers whose voices, in a noisy and self-seeking world, need to be heard.

“If I was working on land, I would have certain rights governed by my country. But when I go to sea, I don’t have those,” said a Bulgarian officer who was interviewed for a survey conducted by Working Lives Research Institute of London Metropolitan University in 2010. “No one in my country knows that I am going to sea to work. There is no one to protect me.”

The survey, of over 1,000 seafarers on ships that were visiting ports in Turkey, Holland, Belgium and the UK over the period May to September, found that a staggering 96% of those questioned wanted more information on their legal rights. But, worryingly, 25% of the seafarers surveyed, who said they needed expert advice on their rights, had failed to ask for it because they were afraid of retribution, their employment prospects being harmed, and their families being endangered by unforetold consequences.

A Filipino AB, who also took part in the survey, said: “There are lots of contractual abuses at sea. It is unseen and no one hears about it. We have no one to turn to for help. Everyone is as vulnerable as I am. We are scared to speak out and complain. Our livelihoods are at stake. We have to sacrifice.”

These are just a couple of lone voices yearning to be heard, snapshots of seafarer lives showing a dark side of shipping that most people will not have heard or read about.

Shipping today and the dangers swirling around it

Shipping – one of the most dynamic and truly global industries in the world today – employs over 1.3m seafarers from around the world whose unremarked work makes it possible for world trade to flourish, benefiting the

entire humankind. And yet, even in an age when we can send rockets and satellites to the moon, when we can map out the human genome for extraordinary advances in science and technology, seafarers' daily concerns over matters such as unpaid wages, personal injury, fatigue, sickness, shore leave, criminal charges, abandonment, discrimination and piracy continue to punctuate the harsh reality of their working lives.

As piracy has returned to the high seas with more violence and heightened virulence, and as cases of seafarers being victimised, abandoned and charged with criminal offences become more prevalent, the unfair treatment of highly vulnerable seafarers and the abuse of their rights have become increasingly compelling.

In the dangerous waters of the Gulf of Aden, right now there are 15 ships and over 300 seafarers held hostage by Somali pirates, whose increasing menace and violence show they are emboldened by the success of their attacks and ransom demands. Pundits have put the cost of this scourge – what the British Prime Minister David Cameron recently described as a “stain on the world” – to the world economy at between \$7bn and \$12bn a year. Seafarers held hostage have been physically abused, tortured and generally maltreated. A number of them have been killed. What is the cost of these seafarers' lives and the cost to their human dignity? From whom do they seek legal redress for their plight?

In recent high-profile incidents, seafarers have been charged and punished for accidents at sea. For example, in the case of the container ship *m.v. Rena*, which ran aground off the coast of Taruanga in New Zealand on 5 October 2011, the Master and the Navigational Officer have been charged with “operating a vessel causing unnecessary danger or risk to a person or property.” And because of the resultant oil spill that the damage to the ship had caused, they have also been additionally charged with “emptying hazardous substances into the sea.”

On 18 November, a 27-year-old seafarer fell overboard from a bulk carrier off Perth in Australia as he was attempting to throw a rope ladder over the side of his ship to allow a pilot aboard to steer the vessel into port; he was swept away by a wave that engulfed the front of the ship. “I’m actually quite alarmed by the amount of seafarers that go missing,” said Keith McCorriston of the ITF in Australia.



“We have had two or three go missing off the Western Australia coast in the past eight to 12 months alone.” This incident, as so many others like it before or since, has heightened serious concerns about the operating skills and the training that crews receive before they embark on their journeys. “It is for us in the industry to strive for standards above and beyond the escapable minimum set by the regulator who frequently refers to the ‘human element’, but fails to treat seafarers as humans,” said Allan Graveson, Senior National Secretary of Nautilus UK at a recent Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping conference.

How many more seafarers are out there whose lives are being put at risk by poor training and working rust-buckets; seafarers who have been abandoned without money or means of support in foreign ports by unscrupulous owners? How many are currently languishing in foreign jails, as they maintain their innocence and just want to be repatriated home?

What seafarers need to know

Seafarers need to know their rights. When these are ignored with impunity, or are abused, their representatives should have an effective working knowledge of seafarer law and how to access the law, in the interest of justice, to better safeguard seafarers' legal protection.

SRI's mission

SRI's mission is to advance seafarers' rights in international and national forums, to promote the development and dissemination of seafarers' law. Where it can act as a channel for structural change or influence policy within the maritime industry, SRI will work with governments and other international bodies and institutions to improve the legal rights of seafarers and their protection around the world.

What SRI does

SRI conducts legal research. Its current research programme is on seafarer criminalisation, abandonment and the responsibilities of flag states. Coordinating an international network of researchers, research bodies and universities, SRI analyses in depth these subjects that are clearly of tremendous importance to seafarers. Additionally, the centre monitors new and ongoing legal developments affecting seafarers around the world.

SRI education and training

SRI is also focused on developing education programmes on seafarer law, and in the fullness of time, will deliver legal training and consultancy for stakeholders who work for the benefit of seafarers.

Comprehensive legal database

SRI is building up a comprehensive, fully searchable online legal database that, as a resource, brings together years and years of accumulated knowledge, rules, regulations and legal instruments covering seafarers' rights. It is an enormous task that has not been attempted before. The results of SRI's research will be available, through its legal database, to all industry players, serving as an essential tool in the industry's search for practical and positive ways of advancing seafarers' legal protection.

SRI, the welfare agencies and missions

Welfare organisations, their missions and seafarer centres constitute a crucial stakeholder group for SRI because of their frequent contact and interface with seafarers.

Working with this stakeholder group, SRI will:

- Offer **paralegal training and other related courses** so that they have a good working knowledge of the law as they help seafarers to protect and uphold their rights;
- Deliver specially targeted essential **legal guidelines** so that welfare agencies know precisely where to go for the type of information needed, which they can subsequently pass on to seafarers who have been abandoned, charged with a criminal offence or unfairly treated;
- Offer **legal internship for stakeholders**, including to members of unions and welfare bodies, as well as to legal practitioners, who already deal with seafarers' rights and welfare. SRI's internship scheme has been designed to build up the know-how and expertise in maritime and seafarer laws. The London-based internship operates between February and May each year, and SRI is now accepting applications for this stakeholder-sponsored programme.

Work with AOS to develop a plan of action for responding to the legal needs of seafarers when they reach port; one that will also give practical assistance to welfare agencies in communicating with the local maritime and cadet-training colleges and universities in their areas on the fundamentals of seafarer law so that seafarers, once they have qualified and been certified for work, are better informed about their rights before they board their ships.

SRI's Advisory Board

Highly respected, key figures from intergovernmental agencies, the legal fraternity and sectors of the maritime industry comprise SRI's Advisory Board. They have the diversity and the collective expertise and experience to guide the strategic direction of SRI.

Fr. Bruno Ciceri, Representative of AOS and Member of the Executive Committee of the International Christian Maritime Organisation, is a Member of SRI's Advisory Board. Father Ciceri will be instrumental in helping SRI to implement the research centre's outreach activities and communications with various international welfare bodies.

Threats to seafarer welfare and the future

Today, the shipping industry is beset by an unholy host of threats and challenges – the high cost of fuel, fears about over-tonnage, the economic downturn worldwide, climate change and piracy. *Lloyd's List*, the industry newspaper, recently reported that owing to these conditions, business confidence in the industry is at its lowest level for three-and-a-half years. This state of affairs can only aggravate the concerns for seafarers' welfare, for they are mobile workers working, largely unseen, in increasingly hostile and hazardous environments.

It is hoped that, in time, these straitened conditions will improve as the levers of commerce and industry right themselves. But the health and prosperity of the world economy will still depend on the work of seafarers who play a vital role in the conduct and facilitation of international trade. So it is only right and proper, in the words of Efthimios Mitropoulos, the outgoing IMO Director-General: "...that we care about seafarers, that we will do all we can to look after and protect them when circumstances of life at sea so warrant."

"SRI", said Ms Fitzpatrick, "is dedicated to providing the resources and the focus to really make a difference in the work and lives of seafarers." After all, how can it not be right for seafarers to be made to feel that they have a rightful stake in the society they endeavour daily to serve?

A THOUGHT FOR THE SEAFARERS

*SEAFARERS WERE IN THE SPOTLIGHT IN SEPTEMBER
WITH THE WORLD MARITIME DAY
AND THE EUROPEAN CONGRESS OF THE APOSTLESHIP OF THE SEA*



The last Sunday of September is the occasion for the maritime community of Marseille to come together in Notre-Dame de la Garde to pray for the embarked seafarers and their families, to gather before the monument of those lost at sea, and to go out in the afternoon for a ceremony in memory of those who died at sea organized by the Escolle de la Mar. This year the presence of the participants of the European Conference of the Apostleship of the Sea gave our day a particular dimension. They were meeting in Port-de-

Bouc around the AOS Bishop Promoter of France, H. E. Most Rev. Claude Schockert, under the patronage of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People of which the Apostleship of the Sea is part.

This Conference makes it possible to redefine the particular focal points of our apostolate among the seafarers and to prepare the XXIII AOS World Congress. After the Philippines, Brazil and Poland, we will meet again in Rome in 2012.

It is essential for our actions to be shared and coordinated because every local Mission is called to welcome the seafarers of the whole world who are facing problems that are not necessarily their own, such as piracy (the number of seafarers currently in the pirates' hands is estimated at 350), the lack of respect for the law on maritime work or even the presence of chaplains on board. This also allows an exchange of views on local particular features or initiatives, such as the chaplaincy of the Merchant Marine School of Marseille (two students were invited to the Congress) or the marine Fraternities present in our diocese. Since the port of Marseille-Fos is on two dioceses, we had the joy of having H. E. Most Rev. Dufour, the Archbishop of Aix, with us on Friday, and H. E. Most Rev. Pontier, the Archbishop of Marseille, on Saturday.

During the course of the Eucharist, at the Offertory Captains Jean-Robert Varaillon-Laborie and Jean-François Rossignol, from the ship Biladi flying the Moroccan flag, came to present a votive offering. Since both had a chance to save illegal immigrants in makeshift boats, they wanted to give thanks for those survivors but they also recalled that many others lost their lives and possessions. A painting by Vivi Navarro, a maritime painter, will commemorate their experience, while we will inscribe a text from the votive offering on the monument to those lost at sea: « To the victims of illegal immigration », in remembrance of those who only became seafarers to flee from their countries. Our thanks go to the priests who included the seafarers in the universal prayer this Sunday because it is the occasion to recall that 90% of world trade is done by sea and that the «profession» of seafarer is classified as one of the most dangerous in the world.

Jean-Philippe Rigaud, Deacon of the "Mission de la Mer"

THE TESTIMONY OF TWO REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MERCHANT MARINE

As student officers of the Merchant Marine School of Marseille involved in its chaplaincy, we were invited to take part in the European Congress of the Apostleship of the Sea which was held in Port de Bouc in the South of France at the end to September. The conferences were very interesting and educational: we realized to what extent the missions of the sea, Christian missions, were necessary in our constantly changing world today.

Through the testimonies and meetings at the Congress, we understood that we are one of the links in the chain of volunteers who, through their different actions, have always maintained a Christian presence anchored in the maritime world.

At present, we continue our mission, within our possibilities at the Hydro, while we wait for the International Congress of the Apostleship of the Sea in Rome next year.

Provence Payen and Damien Carassou-Maillan, representatives of the Merchant Marine of Marseille

AOS MARITIME CHAPLAINCY TRAINING PROGRAM

Grand Seminary, Montreal, Quebec
August 7-19, 2011

The Apostleship of the Sea-Canada hosted the 1st AOS Port Chaplaincy Training Program in Canada at Le Grand Séminaire de Montréal last August 7-19, 2011. There were twenty AOS Port Chaplains and Pastoral Team Workers who registered and were accepted to attend the Training. There were 8 priests, 4 deacons and 8 lay people, 17 of them are from Canada and 3 come from the United States of America.

This program is a project of AOS-Canada supported by the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant Peoples. It has the endorsement of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB). The program was designed and created to allow AOS-Canada Port Chaplains and Pastoral Team Workers to be trained and provided many tools in key aspects of maritime ministry and a better understanding of the works of the Apostleship of the Sea.

This Training Program is a pilot project and could be the model to be used by AOS throughout the world. The speakers and participants have given the program very high marks in their evaluation. The program began with the celebration of the Eucharist presided by AOS- Canada Episcopal Promoter, Bishop Robert Harris concelebrated by Bishop Thomas Dowd, from the Archdiocese of Montreal and all the priests who attended. Deacon Albert Dacanay, AOS-Canada National Director, presented the overview of the program and introduced the class of 2011. Bishop Harris gave his welcome remarks and read the welcome message of Archbishop Antonio Maria Vegliò, President - Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant Peoples. Bishop Dowd welcomed everyone to the City of Montreal and described the importance of the ministry

The program started immediately in its full gear on Monday, August 8 . Fr. Tiburtius Fernandez began by describing the biblical foundation of maritime ministry, starting from the time of Abraham proceeding to the new testament on the travels of St. Paul. Rev. Lloyd Burghart, past General Secretary of the North American Maritime Ministry Association (NAMMA), introduced the class to various organizations, agencies, roles and individuals that Port Chaplains and seafarers do encounter.

Fr. Sinclair Oubre, President of AOS-USA, talked about the origins and rich history of the Apostleship of the Sea and shared about the Cruise Ship Priest Program of AOS-USA. Deacon George Newman and Bill McInerney introduced various Charismas that each one has that could be of great benefit and use to the ministry. Deacon Newman as well touched on important ministry areas - listening and cultural differences. Rev. Lloyd spoke about the North American Maritime Ministry Association (NAMMA) and its relationship to various agencies and denominations involved in the seafaring ministry. The chaplains were taken to the Montreal Port Authority and given a tour of the facilities and they received gifts from the Port Authority,

Mr. Mario Rimbao, a shipping agent for FEDNAV and Mr. Patrice Caron an S1U and ITF agent, provided an overview of their roles and responsibilities and showed areas and means of effectively and efficiently working together with the chaplains. Deacon Ricardo Rodriguez Director of Center for Seafarer's Rights from Barcelona – Spain talked about Seafarers Rights and brilliantly explained legal is-



sues, various issues, situations and best practice and response by Chaplains. Deacon Kenrick Sylvan taught them Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) and guided them through their Pastoral work during their night and weekend duties at the Mariners House.

Fr. Andrew Thavarajasingam talked about AOS-Montreal-the extent of its service and operation. Rev. Jason Zuidra of the Mission to Seafarers- Montreal and Rev. Michelle de Pooter of the Christian Reformed Church of Montreal also shared about their service and operations.

Sr. Myrna Tordillo, AOS- USA National Director spoke about cultural diversities while Fr. Guy Bouille talked on the spirituality of Seafarers. Deacon Michael Ho gave a comprehensive Ship Welfare Visitors Course and Fr. Terry Gallagher talked about inter-faith issues.

A great support was extended by the Mariners House in Montreal, who allowed the Chaplains to use the facilities during their night and weekend duties; they sponsored luncheons for the participants; the use of their mini bus for transporting the Chaplains from the Seminary. The Mission to Seafarers Toronto (c/o Fr. David Mulholland) and FEDNAV International Shipping Company also sponsored dinner and luncheon for the Chaplains.

A special thanks to Fr. Ed Jackman and the Jackman Foundation who made this project possible through their generous financial contribution and support. Fr. Ed Jackman supported the last Apostleship of the Sea – North America & Caribbean Regional Conference, and we look forward to his and the Jackman Foundation's support in future AOS endeavors and projects.

A special thanks is extended to of Archbishop Antonio Maria Vegliò, President the Pontifical Council who gave full endorsement; to Bishop Robert Harris for his dedication and commitment to this ministry; to the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB) who gave their support and blessing; to Fr. Bruno Cicceri for all the support and encouragement in undertaking this project; to Delia and all the volunteers who for months have helped organized this Training Program to be a success.

Class of 2011

Fr. John Eason, Fr. Miguel Rabino, Fr. Andrew Thavarajasingam, Deacon Michael Ho, Deacon Jim McLevey, Deacon Geronimo Guinto, Mrs. Leoni Guinto, Mrs. Edna Vieau, Mr. Edward West, Deacon Wayne Lobell, Mrs. Toni Lobell, Mr. Paul Rosenblum, Ms. Loida Opiniano, Ms. Florian Constantino, Fr. Jude Sebastampillai, Fr. Gregorio Nunez, Fr. Jessie Dimafilis, Fr. Victor Emmanuel, Fr. Saverimuthu Yesappan, Mr. Ray Wong



Deacon Albert M. Dacanay
National Director – AOS Canada



AOS-Canada is proud to announce that its AOS Pastoral Team Worker, Edna Vieau, from the Port of Halifax has been given a Volunteer/Mariner Award. She completed the AOS Port Chaplaincy Training Program in Montreal last August. Congratulations Edna to your dedication and hard work.

UN UPDATE ON THE AOS TSUNAMI FUND

In a letter to Archbishop Antonio Maria Vegliò, President of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, the Episcopal Promoter of the Apostleship of the Sea of Japan expresses his thankful appreciation for the support received and reports on the progress in the distribution of the AOS special Fund for the victims of the tsunami. Here is an excerpt from the letter.

Your Excellency,

I wish to express my appreciation for your continued support and also to report on the progress we have made regarding the AOS Japan Relief Fund.

After evaluating several fishing communities, the AOS Japanese Team and I decided to support the fishing workers and their families in the town of Ryouri, Iwate Prefecture. Iwate's fishing industry is based mostly on coastal fishing and on marine farming. There are 24 fishing cooperatives along the Iwate coast, almost all of them small-scale like the one at Ryouri. Out of the total of 700-800 house-holders in this community, 500 are members of the Ryouri fishery cooperative. The tsunami in March destroyed or swept away 400 out of the 600 boats based at Ryouri. The fishing port, the abalone and sea weed processing factories, and the cooperative office were similarly devastated.

With Soon-Ho Kim, the AOS Japan National director, we visited Ryouri on the 11th October to disburse the AOS funds and to extend our support and encouragement to the fishing community. 16 families from the cooperative in Ryouri were selected to receive donations from the total of 1,600,000yen [Euros 15.500]. Three of these families had lost their breadwinner. The six children from the three families received money from the AOS fund as scholarships. Among the many fishermen who have lost their boats were 13 with young children. Insurance is not sufficient to replace these boats, so the contribution from AOS would subsidise the purchase of new boats.

We took time to listen to the concerns of the local community about their present circumstances. Through this sharing, we discovered that their situation is much more serious than portrayed by the media. The daily struggles they face are significant. Bearing the loss of beloved family members is still a severe sorrow. Uncertainty about their own future is the greatest cause for anxiety. Will they be able to return to fishing? How to rebuild livelihoods with no income at present? Despite the many problems the



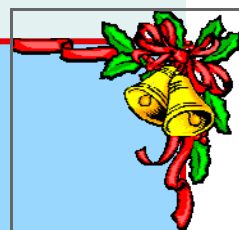
The campaign of solidarity launched by the Pontifical Council for the victims of the disasters that have hit Japan last March, has raised:

Euros 34.000 and US \$ 35.000

These amounts were transferred to H.E. Msgr. Goro Matsuura, who has already started the distribution (see article in this page).

The Apostleship of the Sea International thanks all those who have generously showed their closeness to those who have been so badly affected, and entrusts them to the protection of Mary, *Stella Maris*.

Sincere Christmas greetings to all





Bishop Matsuura with fishermen and families of Ryouri

Ryouri cooperative is moving forward slowly. The goal is to reach at least 70% of the pre-disaster fishing capacity within 3 years. AOS Japan hopes to continue to strengthen this new relationship with the Ryouri community.

Now we are discerning who the next beneficiaries will be. We would like to support the young generation of fishing workers with education and new initiatives. Aging is a serious problem in the fishery sector and young people are needed for the future of fishery. A new initiative by one young Japanese man has been to set up an online fish market that directly connects the fishery worker and the consumer, and so bring

some well needed fresh air to fish marketing. He informed us of the many problems that fishery sector workers face in order to restart their fisheries. According to him, most of the fishermen working with the internet shop are young and have lost almost everything. They will be burdened by a large amount of debt if they restart. Besides the boat, it cost more than several million yen to buy fishing gear, nets, baskets and tackle. Most of them do not have sufficient income. In addition daily living expenses are a continual concern. All this becomes more debt. We are in consultation to find the preferable way for AOS Japan relief Fund to contribute.

Takata high school is therefore under consideration. The school has a department of fisheries and prepares students for work in the fishery sector. The school building was destroyed by the tsunami and several students died. The vice- principal stated the school lacked funds for additional support for poorer students. We are in communication with them about financial assistance.

I promise to keep you up to date with any progress and reports about the disbursement of the AOS Japan relief fund. Sincerely yours,

Michael Goro Matsuura, Auxiliary Bishop of Osaka
Chairperson of Commission for Migrants, Refugees, and People on the Move CBCJ
Episcopal Promoter of AOS Japan

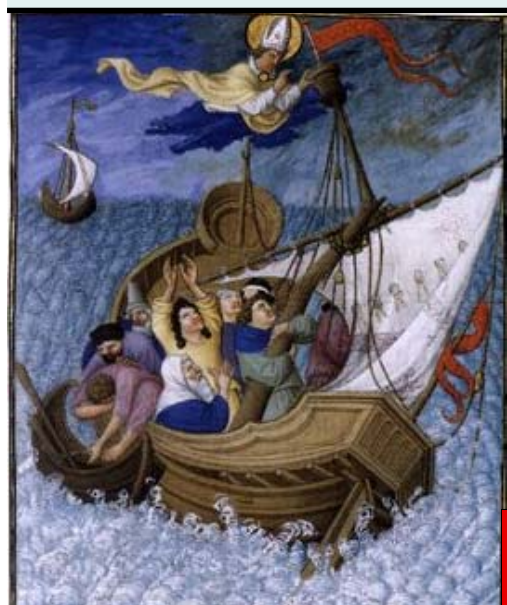
Feast of St. Nicholas - Patron for Seafarers

St. Nicholas, patron of all seafarers, pray for those who work on our rivers, lakes and seas. May your intercessions guard all mariners from the perils of the sea, and the evil that flows from the hearts of men.

St. Nicholas, patron of all seafarers, pray for the families of mariners while they are at sea. May your intercessions protect them while their loved ones are away, and open they hearts to welcome them when they return home.

St. Nicholas, patron of all seafarers, pray that I may welcome all seafarers in the name of Christ the Lord, and prepare for them a place of safety, hospitality, and peace.

(AOS USA Maritime Updates)



Saint Nicholas Saving Seafarers
Belles Heures of Jean, duke of Berry,
The Limbourg Brothers, France (Paris), active ca. 1400-1416

"BY SAILING YOU UNDERSTAND THE MULTI-ETHNIC SOCIETY"

**Fr. Giacomo Martino, National Director
Apostleship of the Sea-Italy**

"Sailing to see realized a multiethnic society": Fr. Giacomo Martino, National Director of the Apostleship of the Sea-Italy, within the Migrants Foundation of the Italian Bishops' Conference, summarizes the role of chaplains on board. It might be the most important aspect of a job often overlooked and not talked about, although it is crucial for crews and passengers that for a few hours are sailing the waters of the world.

The crisis of vocations means that there are fewer and fewer priests willing to leave their parish to sail on ships, especially cruise ships. The numbers speak louder than words: the full time chaplains on board who, aside from short periods, are for the most part of the year at sea, are fifteen; those who sail between two to four months are around forty. The average age is 40 years, with the oldest being 70 and the youngest 33. Seventy percent are Italians, the rest mostly European. "An experience that opens the heart, this is what most of the priests write at the end of this experience", emphasizes Fr. Giacomo, working out of the port of Genoa already for some time.

Being a chaplain on board means officiating functions but it is also much more. An edge for passengers, a real point of reference for the crews. In the latter, the term "seafarer" is a community on the move made up of 600 to 1400 people of 40 different nationalities, mostly young, 42 per cent of women who, for reason of work, leave behind husbands and children.

The work of the priest on the cruise ship is a little bit different from the one of the parish priests which we are familiar with. He is the one who must be concerned especially for the welfare of the crew. Taking care of different aspects: sport and community activities, organization of free time, a custodian for the material possessions of the seafarers. "The availability is constant, says Fr. Giacomo. Perhaps the biggest problem for the chaplains on board, is that they sleep few hours per night. In my six years of experience of continuous sailing I found the solution to rest for a few minutes after lunch. Now I'm struggling to make sure to have shorter contracts with breaks throughout the year necessary to recuperate."

The environment of the cruise ship is unique, even the religious boundaries crumble. "I think it's really one of the few places where the multi-ethnic society is already a reality, an example for the mainland - underline the Director of the Apostleship of the Sea -. Legend has it that sailors have a woman in every port. We prefer not to say anything further, without first understanding that instead the seafarers have a lot to teach starting from the value of the family. Hindus, Buddhists, different professions of faith meet together in the chapel. Even the relationship with Muslims is direct and sincere, indeed they have much to teach because they have a deep spirituality and often know more aspects of the Gospel than us. A continuous exchange, without confusion, each one routed in his/her own religion, but without barriers and filters."

The vocation for the sea, requires hard training, with manuals of hundreds of pages. "The parish priest is the 'center' of his own church, he moves in his own environment - stresses Fr. Giacomo -. On the ship you are part of a working structure, and the idea of not being at the center, is revolutionary and for someone unpleasant. But with great joy I can say that the majority of priests who go through this kind of experience, write e-mail describing their enthusiasm when they return to land."



Technology has a central role in the life of a chaplain on board. Young and old, to stay in touch with their loved ones, develop skills that otherwise they would not dream of using. Skype is one of the means of communication used by those traveling by sea. And in early November there was a meeting by audio conference for chaplains on board to share experiences and problems.

Closely cooperating with AOS-Italy there is also the National Foundation of Stella Maris, which has the task to welcome and assist the seafarers in the 28 ports of the peninsula. On the website www.stellamaris.tv you can find written: "The sailor finds in our centers a true 'home away from home' where it is offered the warmth of a disinterested hospitality. It is important to promote a real culture of hospitality that welcomes the persons for what they are without frontiers, in the deepest respect of their dignity. As a seafarer who passes, we are for him a family by the hour."

This is a mission of almost a primary social value, at least according to current events in recent months, e.g. pirates and illegal landings. But the need to increase the number of chaplains on board is pressing. "For this reason I would like to make an appeal to the priests who want to have a special missionary experience, that might have a desire to take a sabbatical year from the daily reality to open the heart to a world that is a microcosm from which there is much to learn – Fr. Giacomo Martino concludes -. A great opportunity to break away from what I call 'manias of the mainland'. To return then enriched and be more ready, even in their own dioceses, for a true hospitality of the stranger."

Taken from

<http://vaticaninsider.lastampa.it/homepage/news/dettaglio-articolo/articolo/cappellani-mare-apostolato-fede-9517/>

INTERVIEW WITH FR. ARTUR JEZIOREK, IN CHARGE OF CHAPLAINS ON BOARD OF CRUISE SHIPS



"When I was ordained a priest, I totally accepted God's gift giving, despite the fragility of the human condition, my availability to His manifestation in me and, through me, in the service of the Church, to meet his person."

In this way begins the testimony of Father Artur Jeziorek, responsible since September of the chaplains on board, of the Apostleship of the Sea-Italy. His alive and enthusiastic gaze makes us feel at ease immediately. Father Artur has several pastoral experiences, all carried out with seriousness and dedication. The first question is mandatory:

How did you decide to leave the mainland to dedicate yourself to the people on board ships?

Basically, rather than a decision it is a sequel. In the Motu Proprio Stella Maris, of January 31, 1997, Blessed John Paul II is very clear: "Jesus Christ, accompanied his disciples in their vessels, helped them in their work and calmed the storms. And so the Church accompanies seafarers, caring for the special spiritual needs of those who for various reasons live and work in the maritime world." The experience as a port chaplain in Civitavecchia introduced me closely to the world of the "people sea", in particular to the lives of seafarers on cruise ships. I was struck both by the number, more than a thousand on each ship, and by their life conditions. Cruise ships are equipped with many amenities to offer to the holidaymakers the ultimate in relaxation. Behind all this there is an "invisible people" serving some three thousand persons who are constantly changing. Watching it, I felt challenged and found the words of the Motu Proprio really timely. I talked with my bishop, and I was sent to carry out the priestly ministry among these people.

Could you help us to know this "invisible people"?

Let me point out that "people", in our case, refers to a mixed multitude of persons. In a rather small space live a relatively large number of human beings, different for ethnicity, culture, history and faith. They share the work, that are performing with dedication and competence, but above all they address the basic needs of every person to love and be loved, to be heard and understood, to be happy. For those living and working in land, everything is easier. You have a circle of friends, a family, a place in which you recognize yourself, you leave and return home the same day or the same week, the contact with loved ones is continuous, etc.. On the ship, all this does not exist or is very limited. The ship is a floating city but is home to no one. Within this space, relatively small, aside from the passengers who are the protagonists of the cruise ship, live the people who, with his hard work, makes everything possible.

You talk about a heterogeneous multitude. How do you combine the ethnic and religious diversity with the specificity of a Catholic chaplain?

Some cruise Companies request the presence of the chaplain on board only at certain times of the year, closer to major Holidays. In others, the chaplain is part of the crew. These are two different things. In the first case, his function is purely cultural, it takes place in a given period and with a well-defined task. In the second case, the chaplain is a full pledge member of the crew, his mission is to take seriously the basic needs of the people who run the "floating city", starting from the unique and universal value that is the dignity of a person. This is in common with every culture, religion, etc. Of course we need a clear identity, a good knowledge of the great civilizations and religions, in order to avoid unwanted diplomatic incidents, and especially we need a great sense of humanity. When at the knowledge, certainly indispensable, is associated the heart, we always understand each other. It is a fascinating mission because, more than anywhere else, you can live the teaching of the Bible fully. On the one hand there is the person who seeks in the things a response to his fundamental needs, on the other there is God who, through things, goes towards man to welcome him as a son.

What problems could have a chaplain who, despite being a member of the crew, is a priest and works as such?

I do not think there are specific or different problems from those that may be encountered in land. But I think it is very important to assume the correct attitude towards others, respecting the differences and accepting of the fundamental rights of the person. However one problem is the number of chaplains. There are more and more bishops unwilling to send their priests for this important mission. Probably because of the reduced number of vocations, increasingly the bishops tend to think first to the needs of the their Diocese rather than to the needs of the Church. Then there is another problem, some prejudices not yet entirely dismissed, because of the ignorance about life on board a ship and the real needs of the "people sea". But even this problem can be resolved. If there is any priest who wants to experience this mission, he has only to ask the Apostleship of the Sea (onboard@stellamaris.tv) and we will send the necessary documentation to clarify anything on this ministry, that has equal in dignity and importance of all the ministries in the Church. It is an expression of the Church which meets the persons living on land and even more so those who though living in a "floating city" are without a home or a nation.

Father Artur looks at the horizon and thinks about his next contract on board, and from his eyes you can see that he carries in his heart all the seafarers and all chaplains who serve on ships.

We leaves with a little of nostalgia for a fascinating world that still remains distant from the concerns of all. A world that has already achieved the peaceful coexistence of diversities while on land, in large cities, the barriers are many and different.

from stellamaris.tv ,19th October 2011

IN WINTER TIME SEAFARERS OFTEN SUFFER FROM THE COLD WEATHER

One and a half year ago we started a knitting club at Stella Maris Seafarer's Club in the port of Ghent. Ladies aged between 24 and 85 years, gather monthly at the Seafarer's center and, surrounded by seafarers, they knit caps and collars. When the first cold arrives in Belgium these colorful caps and collars are given to the seafarers. They all are very nice pieces of craftsmanship in yellow, green, blue with glitters, various co-lours... and made with love. These evenings, ladies, knitting and chatting together with the foreign seafarers are very special, creating a particular atmosphere.

On one of these nights a lot of seafarers visited the club: Filipinos, some Russians, Ukrainians, and others. Amongst them an Indian captain together with his wife, their child and various crewmembers. They all started to talk and it turned out to be a very sensible sharing. It became an emotional evening for both, the seafarers and the knitting ladies. The ladies got an inside view on the life of the seafarers, and they enjoyed the company and the attention.

That evening about 70 caps were given also for those who had to stay on board. The Indian captain and his wife showed their appreciation for the work of the ladies: they donated 100 dollar to buy more wool. To our ladies this was a heart-warming experience. Until today we did not have to buy much wool as we sent mails to friends, acquaintances, asking for wool. Some of them even joined the knitting club. Later on we wrote articles



in magazines about our work, asking for wool and this was successful. We were able to collect a lot of wool and even clothes, all useful for the seafarers.

Due to these actions, more and more people got to know the seafarer's center, and some of them tried to help. Early December 2010, when the knitting club existed only for 9 months, the club's activities were shown on the regional and national TV network. Around Christmas, the caps stuffed with candy, were distributed to the seafarers. These men, religious or not, did appreciate that they were not forgotten during this particular period of the year. As this was video-taped, it can be seen on our website: www.stellamarisgent.be

In January 2011 we took part in a very touching Christmas story at our center. A young family with a three month old baby entered the club. They were aware of our call for wool, and they brought us various useful things, collected amongst their friends. That night a lot of seafarers from Egypt, Russia and the Philippines were present. The baby could pass as the Christ-Child. A tall, long haired Egyptian man asked if he could hold the baby. He was full of emotions when he took the child in his arms and he blessed the baby. The other seafarers followed him. It was very touching to see how this little girl was cherished. Then a young Egyptian took the microphone and sang a song for the knitting ladies.

The knitting club has brought people closer to seafarers. It is not only about the caps, but about meeting people. A group of ladies can bring a lot in motion. They organize, care, chat and some ladies do more than knitting. They often are engaged in other activities within the center. All as volunteers, their biggest reward being the contact with the seafarers, listening to their stories.

The captain of our port shows a lot of support for our center. He is a member of the board and gives us occasionally permission to take some ladies of our knitting club on board of ship for a visit. After that they even knit quicker !

A knitting club is not the most important and probably not feasible everywhere.

But it is all about the strength of the ladies that can be used in a creative way.



Ann Van der Sypt – shipvisitor Stella Maris Ghent

ECAR-APOSTLESHIP OF THE SEA, MADAGASCAR

ANNUAL NATIONAL MEETING

« In Solidarity with the People of the Sea, Witnesses of Hope Through the Word, the Liturgy and Diakonia»

Introduction

On Wednesday **September 14, 2011**, a Eucharistic celebration in the St. Joseph Cathedral in Toamasina opened the National Meeting of the Apostleship of the Sea in Madagascar. Presiding at the celebration was H. E. Most Rev. Désiré Tsarahazana, Archbishop of Toamasina, together with H. E. Most Rev. Marcellin Randriamamonjy, Bishop of Fénérive-Est and Promoter of the Apostleship of the Sea in Madagascar, surrounded by the participants in the meeting who had come from the four corners of the Great Island, including eight priest chaplains with their vicars general, five women religious and six laypersons, all involved in the Maritime Pastoral Care.

In his homily H. E. Most Rev. Désiré Tsarahazana recounted the Fisher Apostles' state of mind when they struggled all night without catching anything. They were about to wash their nets when Jesus said to them: «Put out into deep water and lower your nets for a catch». (*Luke 5: 4-5*). The realities of life in the Apostleship of the Sea might seem to compel us to wash our nets, but let us adopt the Apostle's answer to Jesus: «Master, we have worked hard all night and have caught nothing, but at your command I will lower the nets». The wishes expressed for the official opening of this national meeting is: «At the Lord's Word, let us cast our nets so that in solidarity with the Peoples of the Sea, we will be witnesses to Hope through the Word, the Liturgy and Diakonia».

Conduct of the Meeting

Intervention by H. E. Most Rev. **Marcellin Randriamamonjy**, the Promoter Bishop, at the beginning of the meeting:

- The Eucharist we have just celebrated is an unerring sign of our communion in Christ, the One who unites us at the same time in this Apostleship of the Sea.
- I express thanks for your will to participate by coming to attend this national meeting together with my warmest welcome.
- Reading the message sent by the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People on the occasion of this annual National Meeting of the Apostleship of the Sea in Madagascar. We express thanks to Mr. Félix Randrianasoavina, the National Director, who provided this contact between Madagascar and our headquarters in the Vatican in Rome.
- In general, throughout this meeting, three important points should attract our attention:
- The importance of our commitment; - the objectives of our mission; - the details of our program.
- First, what is worthwhile and should be known about the pastoral care of the Peoples of the Sea?

The task of evangelization: to make Christ, dead and arisen, known to those who live on the sea: real faith, the Church's effort and her encouragement. It is for this cause that the Church enlists us with confidence in this pastoral task. It is a daily task that aims at man, the whole man: physical, intellectual and spiritual. Therefore, to immerse ourselves even more in this pastoral work, let us read together what is written in the Manual for Chaplains and Pastoral Agents: a) – The challenge raised to the A.M.; b) – Responding to a changing maritime environment; c) – The attention of the universal and local Church.

Finally, in conclusion, we have some questions:

We must not forget history: the Religious Congregations of Priests, Brothers and Sisters who began this work of the Maritime Apostolate in Madagascar; the Bishop Promoters who succeeded one another; the Laypersons who joined in the action; no one should feel like an outsider in the communion of evangelization.

- What communion unites all the dioceses working in this maritime apostolate? Many of them need restructuring, improvement and an extension of their efforts
- What does the extension of their efforts amount to? The need for better national coordination.
- The National Head Office is located in Toamasina (Tamatave): an organization is necessary. How can the structure be authenticated in relation to the diocesan structure? Should a separation of the structure be considered?
- How to well define a Priest, Religious and Layperson in each one's respective commitment? How can collaboration be improved? These are the three basic pillars of the work and, as a result, if there is disagreement, this will affect coexistence.

Mr. **Félix Randrianasoavina**, the AOS National Director, presented the Malagasy translation of the Manual for Chaplains and Pastoral Agents and the draft of the Statutes for the Bishops' Commission for the Pastoral Care of the Peoples of the Sea and their Families; a history of the development of the Apostleship of the Sea in Madagascar from 1973 until the present. Finally, the intervention of each delegate from the diocese represented: Toamasina – Mahajanga – Morombe – Tolanaro – Toliara – Ambanja – Antsiranana – Fénérive Est.

- Maritime realities and living conditions of the sea workers;
- Pastoral realities on the terrain.

Work Group

Reflection concentrated on the pastoral objective: «Peoples of the Sea, Witnesses to Hope through the Word, the Liturgy and Diakonia ».

Two vital points were thus raised:

- Getting a grip on the maritime pastoral care in this Apostleship of the Sea.
- Communion of action for the new year with a better form of collaboration and renewed objectives.

First, all of the different participants merged

and divided up into three groups to reflect and respond to the first two questions. Afterwards two groups were formed: one for the priests and another for the women religious and laypersons.

Questions :

- How to set up a national team for the pastoral care of the Peoples of the Sea, and what would its competences be?
- What would be the competences of the Diocesan Team?
- How to promote the «Pastoral Work» within the Apostleship of the Sea so that the seafarers and fishers will really be Witnesses to Hope through the Word, the Liturgy and Diakonia?

Conclusion

After the discussion, three major points were raised, namely:

- Everyone recognizes the importance of setting up a national structure in the Apostleship of the Sea;
- The competences are already stipulated in the Apostolic Letter *Motu Proprio Stella Maris*;
- The composition of this national structure is proposed as follows: a Bishop Promoter; 1 National Director, who must be a Priest, will carry out the pastoral role; 1 woman Religious (the presence of a woman religious in the national team is important); 1 Secretary General who will assure the homogeneity of action with close collaboration on the national level. To avoid the use of the term «secretary», only the Secretary General will have this title. 1 Accountant; 1 Archivist.

The composition of this structure is endorsed but the appointments will depend on the next Bishops' Conference. A Eucharistic celebration presided by H. E. Most Rev. Marcellin Randriamamonjy, the Bishop Promoter of the AM in Madagascar, took place in the Saint Joseph Cathedral of Toamasina to close this 2011 Annual National Meeting.

Toamasina, September 30, 2011



S.E. Mgr Désiré TSARAHAZANA, Archevêque de Toamasina
et S.E. Mgr Marcellin RANDRIAMAMONJY, Evêque Promoteur de l'A.M.
entourés des Aumôniers, Religieuses et Laïcs en Apostolat de la Mer,
après la Messe d'Ouverture de la Rencontre Nationale le 14 Septembre 2011

AN IMPACT NO ONE COULD “SEA”

Written by Steve Wideman | For The Compass, Wednesday, 26 October 2011

MSGR. DILLENBURG'S SEAFARING MINISTRY TOUCHED ONE LIFE THAT, IN TURN, TOUCHED OTHERS

GREEN BAY — "Wait Father. I need to talk to you."

The voice reaching out to Fr. James Dillenburg as he worked his way through the cabin area of the 447-foot-long Great Lakes freighter Paul H. Townsend was not a surprise to the then-associate pastor at St. Agnes Parish in Green Bay. As one of three port chaplains for the Port of Green Bay, an appointment conferred on now-Msgr. Dillenburg in 1969 by the late Bishop Aloysius Wycislo, Msgr. Dillenburg — who prefers to be called Fr. Jim — always stood ready to answer the spiritual needs of sailors.



Msgr. Jim Dillenburg, retired port chaplain for the Port of Green Bay, stands in front of a cement storage ship docked at Green Bay on Oct. 18. The ship is similar to the Great Lakes freighter on which Msgr. Dillenburg met Norman Martinson 40 years ago.

"I always say God picks the strangest people. I don't know how to swim and I get seasick, so who do they pick to be port chaplain? Me," said Msgr. Dillenburg who retired in 2010 as pastor at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Green Bay.

Despite Msgr. Dillenburg's issues with water, his love for the seafaring lifestyle was well known to church officials at the time of his appointment as port chaplain. "I grew up in Casco living 10 miles from Lake Michigan. My father and I always went to watch the car ferries on Lake Michigan. That planted a seed in me," Msgr. Dillenburg said.

The seed would bear fruit on a summer afternoon in 1971 when Norman Martinson, chief engineer on the massive Paul H. Townsend, sought out Msgr. Dillenburg during his rounds of the ship while it docked at Green Bay to dump its 7,850-ton load of dry cement.

Msgr. Dillenburg was part of a three-man, ecumenical team who ministered to sailors from around the world who found themselves away from home for months at a time. "We were two Protestant chaplains and a Catholic priest whose purpose was to welcome sailors to Green Bay in the name of the churches of Green

Bay and to let them know someone cared. It's a ministry of presence," Msgr. Dillenburg said.

Martinson, of Alpena, Mich., needed someone who cared at that point in his life. For years a devout Catholic, Martinson married his wife Carol, a Protestant, whose refusal to participate in her husband's Catholic faith led the Catholic Church not to recognize the marriage at that time. That prompted the discouraged Martinson to stray for years from his own faith. Martinson had rejected a visit from Fr. Dillenburg two weeks before he finally called out to the Catholic priest as he passed Martinson's cabin on the Townsend. "So we went into his office on the ship. He closed the door and explained he really wanted to be a Catholic again, but didn't know if anything could be done," Msgr. Dillenburg said.

With 48 hours before the Townsend was due to leave port and with Christmas less than two months away Msgr. Dillenburg gave a quick call to the chancery office of the Green Bay Diocese, where research found a process called "sanatio in radice" that would allow validation of the marriage in the eyes of the church.

"Sanatio in radice means, in effect, 'let's bless what we have.' And that's a pretty loose translation," Msgr. Dillenburg said. "Norm was anxious to return to the church and really wanted to receive Communion during Christmas. So we filled out the paperwork, the marriage was blessed, Norm went to confession and then went home the happiest man in the world."

Martinson's son, Chris, a lumber broker who lives in New London and is active in the nationwide Fellowship of Christian Lumbermen, said the meeting changed his father's life and his as well.

"It changed my Dad's life dramatically," Chris said. "Prior to that meeting my Dad's goals were worldly goals. I would describe my Dad as a believer in God, but from a distance without a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. After the meeting my Dad was on fire for the Lord. He began storing up treasures in heaven rather than on earth."

"What Fr. Dillenburg did was what we all are called to do here on earth, which is to be a witness to the saving power of Jesus Christ. He let my father know that God wanted him back and that God still loved him," Martinson said. Chris, who is active in youth ministries at Shepherd of the River Lutheran Church in New London, said Msgr. Dillenburg's work with his father eventually inspired Chris himself to return to church after a 30-year absence.

"At the time of the meeting between Fr. Dillenburg and my father I was 20 years old and in full rebellion against faith in God, but when I came to my senses in the 1980s my father's strong faith had an impact on me," Martinson said. "My father and I became best friends."

Norm Martinson died of cancer in 1996.

Msgr. Dillenburg said he and Norm became "good buddies" for life and shared respect for the need for seafaring ministries. Not long after the 1971 meeting between Norm Martinson and Fr. Dillenburg, the Green Bay priest was named as national director of Apostleship of the Sea, an apostolic work of the Catholic Church offering help and pastoral counseling to seafarers around the world.

Msgr. Dillenburg had served since 1969 as the diocesan director of AOS. "I never met a seafarer who has been around for awhile that didn't believe in God," Msgr. Dillenburg said. "One good November gale and they knew they weren't in charge of their ship. And they have a tremendous sense of God's creative powers after watching many sunrises and sunsets."

Shortly after Msgr. Dillenburg was named to head the national AOS program, the Vatican approved a long-sought American proposal to allow seafarers to receive the Blessed Sacrament at sea. "One sailor is designated as a eucharistic minister at sea who distributes Communion. Norm Martinson became one of the first seafaring eucharistic ministers in the world," Msgr. Dillenburg said.

Martinson eventually took a land-based position as fleet engineer for National Gypsum Company, later Inland Lakes Management, and endured a significant pay cut to be closer to his family.

Martinson became a well-respected lector, usher and youth minister at St. Catherine Church in Ossineke, Mich., and was known for using Bible verses to inspire athletes on a high school cross-country team he coached. His interest in coaching runners came about after gaining a love for running while jogging around, in and through the giant ships he served on in the Great Lakes.

Msgr. Dillenburg served in the Vatican from 1991 to 1996 as the Pontifical Council as AOS International representative. His job entailed coordinating AOS port chaplain programs around the world.

"You'd have sailors from Asia coming to Europe by way of Africa. We had world conferences to make sure the chaplains would get to know one another so they could warn each other of possible issues with sailors coming into port," Msgr. Dillenburg said. "We were also in a position to monitor changes in the maritime world and lobby for seafarers' rights. Seafaring is very complicated. A ship may be owned by someone in one country, operated by someone in another country and be staffed by crews from 14 different countries. Sometimes the most responsible party was the one with the least authority — the port chaplain."

Msgr. Dillenburg left the port chaplain program in 2000 to focus on his work as pastor at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish.

"I don't know how many lives Msgr. Dillenburg touched as the port chaplain, but I know one he touched and that was my Dad. That 1971 meeting impacted a lot of other people beyond my Dad and continues to impact people today," Martinson said.

That call for help 40 years ago from Norm Martinson will forever remain a part of Msgr. Dillenburg's memory as port chaplain in Green Bay.

The meeting was one of those things where you start with a seed. Norm Martinson said he wanted to be a Catholic again. You have no idea where a seed like that is going to go so you just try to be helpful and suddenly the seed grows and grows and blooms, sending out more seeds," Msgr. Dillenburg said.

"Norm Martinson didn't have to tell me all his secrets. I knew right away he was a good man and his crew knew he was a good man," he added. "But here was a man who was willing to tell me his story and ask for help. What a privileged position to be in."



Msgr. Jim Dillenburg is pictured in May 2009 with Chris Martinson, whose father, Norm, befriended the former port chaplain in 1971 and returned to the Catholic faith. Chris Martinson also abandoned his faith while a young man and credits his father's renewed faith for bringing him back to church.

IMO AWARDS FOR EXCEPTIONAL BRAVERY AT SEA

During the General Assembly of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), a United Nations agency **responsible** for the **safety** and security of shipping, last November 21, in London, were presented the 2011 awards "exceptional bravery at sea" that IMO assigns every year.

The important award was bestowed by the Secretary General of IMO, Mr. Efthimios Mitropoulos, to the Master of a Korean merchant vessel, Capitan Seog-Hae Gyun, who off the coast of Somalia, at the risk of his life, with great courage, rationality of action, and serious consequences for their personal safety, led to safety his 21 crew



Captain Seog receives medal from IMO Secretary-General Efthimios Mitropoulos in London, 21st November 2011



Chief Inspector General Commander of the Italian Coast Guard, Adm. Marco Brusco, receives the important award.

members in spite of the pirate attack. Another award went to the soldiers of the Italian Coast Guard of Lampedusa (Italy) for rescuing hundreds of boats carrying thousands of migrants in danger of drowning at sea.

This year the number of candidates nominated to receive the sought-after certificate was the highest ever recorded and this made even more difficult the task of the judges of choosing the winners. The nominees for the prestigious award are people who, risking their life, show exceptional determination and presence of mind, saving lives at sea, facing extreme sea conditions.

THE ITALIAN SECTION OF WISTA AWARDS AOS

On December 6, in Genoa, in an event organized by the Italian section of Wista (Women's International Shipping & Trading Association), the chairman Daniela Fara, Director of the Italian Academy of the Merchant Marine, presented the award to Father Giacomo Martino, National Director of the Apostleship of the Sea, Italy. He dedicated it to all the abandoned and suffering seafarers, a plague to which he has devoted all his energies.

The cases of abandoned ships with crews by unscrupulous ship owners - said Wista Italy - is a recurring drama and unfortunately most of the time hidden in the landscape of international maritime transport. The Apostleship of the Sea is present in Italy with 26 *Stella Maris* Centers scattered throughout the ports of the country. In these Centers, solidarity and welcoming are put into practice every day by especially trained volunteers: the visits on board sometimes reveal situations at the limits of survival, where food and water are lacking. Wista Italy showed that, because of the economic crisis, calls for solidarity and action have multiplied and extreme cases of abandoned crews occur in similar ways. Father Giacomo Martino said that these difficult and inhumane consequences in which the seafarers find themselves can be compared to those of piracy.

During the evening the Director of the Apostleship of the Sea has also recalled the "champion of the rights of seafarers", Mrs. Raina Junacovic, wife of the officer's radio operator who died along with 30 other people in the sinking of the *Seagull*, in 1974. Her battle against the flag of convenience lasted all life: it is thanks to her - he said - if today the seafarers travel safe.