



EASTER MESSAGE 2012

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Dear chaplains, volunteers and people of the sea,

The Easter proclamation rings out once again in the world: Christ is risen! He lives beyond death, He is the Lord of the living and the dead.

In His resurrection is fulfilled the great hope of "new" heavens and earth, of a world without suffering and tears, of a society founded on peace and justice and of a life without end.

In welcoming the risen Lord, a new life begins in Him, a new way of living, hoping and loving also starts in all those who believe in Him

This experience of new life in Christ is not something personal, but must be shared with others. In fact, in the apparitions after the resurrection, Jesus sends the apostles to the nations and the whole world.

The celebration of Easter calls all of us to become faithful witnesses of the gospel, and commits us to be missionaries of the Christian faith.

In the pain of separation from one's families for many months, let's bring the consolation of God's love that brings everyone together across the miles.

In the uncertainties of life at sea (piracy, criminalization, etc..) let's bring the assurance that God protects us from every unknown danger.

In situations of injustice and abuse, let's defend the human and working dignity of every person.

In the maritime world increasingly diversified, in the ports crossroads of humanity, on the ships with crews of different nationalities and religious beliefs, let's bring the message of a new world recognizing in the face of others, a person to love and respect.

Together with my most sincere wishes for a Holy Easter, for renewing this missionary commitment, for sharing your experiences and planning for the future ahead, I would like to invite you all to attend the XXIII World Congress of the Apostleship of the Sea to be held in the Vatican from 19th to 23rd November with the theme: **New Evangelization in the maritime world** (*New ways and means to proclaim the Good News*).

In the Risen Lord,

Antonio Maria Card. Vegliò
President

✠ Joseph Kalathiparambil
Secretary

The new Cardinals are entrusted with the service of love

In the Consistory of the 18th of February, the Holy Father Benedict XVI created twenty-two new cardinals. Among the new cardinals there is the President of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People

H.E. Antonio Maria Vegliò

In his address, the Holy Father said that "the new cardinals are entrusted with the service of love: love for God, love for his Church, love for the brothers ... They also are asked to serve the Church with love and strength, with the transparency and wisdom of the teachers, with the energy and fortitude of the shepherds, with the fidelity and the courage of the martyrs." Then, addressing to the newly elected cardinals, urged them that their "mission in the Church and in the world would be always and only 'in Christ', answering to his reasoning and not to the one of the world, and would be enlightened by faith and animated by charity which are coming to us from the glorious Cross of the Lord."

The Apostleship of the Sea International expresses to Cardinal Vegliò sincere congratulations and cordial good wishes, and it is confident in his leadership to better serve the people of the sea.

AOS International was present at the Consistory with a delegation composed of:

Mr Eamonn Delaney, Chairman of Trustees of the AOS-GB, with his wife, Zita,
P. Edward Pracz, AOS National Director of Poland and European Regional Coordinator,
Fr Giacomo Martino, AOS National Director of Italy,
and Captain Lampros Nellas of Piraeus, with his son.



H.E. Antonio Maria Cardinal Vegliò was born in Macerata Feltria (Pesaro e Urbino), diocese of San Marino-Montefeltro, on February 3, 1938. He was ordained priest on March 18, 1962 and Bishop on October 6, 1985. Since February 28, 2009, he is President of the Pontifical Council.

XXIII WORLD CONGRESS OF THE APOSTLESHIP OF THE SEA

Vatican City, Synod Hall, 19th – 23rd November 2012

Theme:

New Evangelization in the maritime world
(New ways and means to proclaim the Good News)

The main objective of the Congress is to bring together as many active members as possible, representing the different AOS realities around the world, to listen qualified speakers, share the best pastoral practice and be reconfirmed in their commitment to the service of the people of the sea.

PROCEDURES

NATIONAL DELEGATIONS. The responsibility to form the delegation of each country rests with the Episcopal Promoter and the National Director. The delegation should consist of AOS port chaplains, directors, personnel and volunteers operating in any national seafarers center. Delegates of other significant welfare organizations and associations, working hand in hand with AOS in the country, can be invited as part of the national delegation.

REGISTRATION. The deadline for the registration of all the participants is the **30th June 2012**. **The National Director will be responsible for sending the registrations forms, either by fax or by e-mail, to the Pontifical Council:**

Fax +39 06 6988 7111

e-mail: aosinternational@migrants.va

The Congress will be held at the Synod Hall, in the Vatican. The delegates will be accommodated at the Hotel Casa Tra Noi, Via Monte del Gallo 113, 00165 Rome
<http://www.hotelcasatranoiroma.com>

EXPENSES for each participant:

SINGLE OCCUPANCY: € 640

DOUBLE: € 580

TRIPLE: € 550

These amounts include:

Full board (from dinner of Sunday 18th November to breakfast of Saturday 24th November) **plus tourist city tax and the registration fee.**

Extra expenses at the hotel will be charged directly to the individual participant.

COST OF THE FLIGHT IS NOT INCLUDED!

Booking and payment of hotel rooms **for the duration of the Congress** will be done by the Pontifical Council when registration forms and payments will be received.

The delegates staying additional days (before dinner of Sunday 18th and after breakfast of Saturday 24th) at the Hotel Casa tra Noi, must book through the Pontifical Council but they will pay personally to the Hotel.

Considering that the global economic downturn might prevent the presence of some people, we would like to invite everyone to contribute, according to his/her possibilities, to a "solidarity fund" to support the participation of delegates especially from developing countries.

Additional days: (bed and breakfast plus tourist city tax per day, per person):
in single occupancy: € 55; in double: € 45; in triple: € 42

PAYMENT. National Directors are kindly requested to make one single payment for the whole delegation. Payments must be done before **10th September 2012**.

Further instructions will be given on how to make the payment

TRAVELLING to Rome. There are two airports: Fiumicino, accommodating international/European flights by the main airlines and few low cost companies and Ciampino, mainly accommodating European flights of low cost companies.

VISAS. The delegates are asked to contact the Italian Diplomatic/Consular Representations in their countries for specific information concerning the required documents and conditions regarding the VISA to enter Italy. If a letter of invitation to obtain a VISA is necessary, we will provide it on request.

Simultaneous translation will be provided in English, French, Spanish and Italian.

Please note that the Apostleship of the Sea within the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People has a new e-mail address.

Therefore, from now on please address all correspondence concerning AOS to this specific e-mail.

aosinternational@migrants.va



Award to AOS

On December 15th, AOS Barcelona got the "Premio a la Solidaridad en el Mar". This price is given by the Instituto Marítimo de España (IME) and the lawyers office Ruiz Galvez. This is the first edition of the price and the ceremony was in an Hotel in Madrid.

We are pleased to inform you that AOS Gdynia has launched a new website:

www.aos-pl.org/en



30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ITF-SEAFARERS' TRUST CELEBRATED IN LONDON



March 25, 2012, the ITF Seafarers' Trust celebrated its 30th anniversary with a major seminar in London on seafarers' welfare and gala dinner. Tom Holmer, Administrative Officer of the Trust welcomed around 80 delegates who met at the Church House Conference Centre in Westminster to look at the questions of: why MLC2006 is important and what it means in practice;

Welfare at the Sharp End. The AOS International was

represented by Fr. Bruno Ciceri, who presented to David Cockcroft a plaque of appreciation for the support and assistance offered by ITF-ST to AOS worldwide. The Pontifical Council sent the following letter to Mr. Holmer and the Trustees.

From the Vatican, 10th March 2012

Prot. No. 6530/2012/AM

Dear Mr. Holmer and Trustees,

On behalf of all the chaplains and volunteers of the Apostleship of the Sea, I would like to offer my best wishes and congratulations to the ITF-ST on the occasion of the 30th Anniversary of its establishment.

Since its inception the Trust played an essential role in developing a maritime welfare system in the ports around the world by supporting organizations directly involved in providing welfare services to seafarers.

Throughout the years priorities and policies have shifted but the general objective of making funds available to activities that would provide spiritual, moral and physical welfare to seafarers irrespective of nationality, race or creed, has never changed. Undoubtedly the Trust has provided funds for a variety of projects trying to respond and adjust to the ever changing needs of the life of the seafarers, that were identified by specific researches and survey.

The Apostleship of the Sea recognizes with gratitude being one of your privileged collaborators in this mission since many vehicles, buildings, IT equipments, training courses and even Congresses were greatly funded by the ITF-ST.

From your financial support the seafarers have directly benefited by more professionalism on the part of our chaplains and volunteers, more reliable transportation and communication systems and an assurance that in many ports around the world there is a welcoming center, a home away from home, where to seek assistance and get help if necessary.

In this joyful occasion, the AOS international network would like to renew its commitment to continue to collaborate with the Trust in acting as operational organization, delivering immediate and tangible answers to the needs of the seafarers in the years to come.

Antonio Maria Card. Vegliò, President

✠ Joseph Kalathiparambil, Secretary

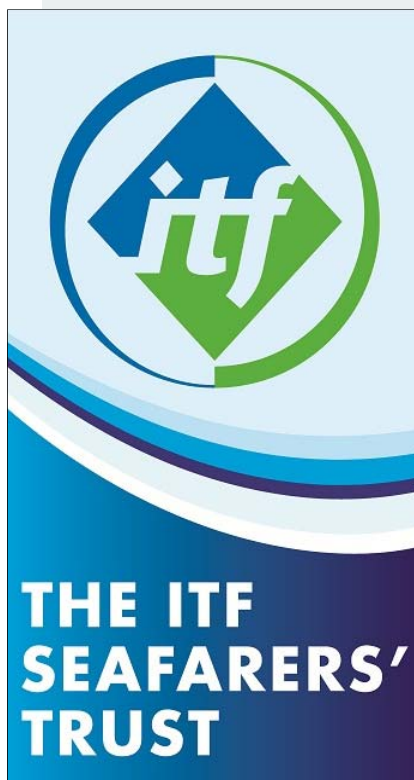
Mr. David Cockroft, on behalf of the Trustees and staff of the ITF-ST, while thanking for the good wishes, expressed appreciation for the contact with the Pontifical Council, both from the point of view of the Seafarers' Trust and also as General Secretary of the ITF.

"We have worked—he said—for many years in cooperation with the Roman Catholic Church in our work for seafarers, and we have much appreciated the support of your excellent staff and of the many port chaplains around the world who serve seafarers regardless of their faith or nationality".

In his presentation on Welfare services on board passengers Ships, Msgr. Giacomo Martino explained at the Seminar the part played by AOS with the crew of Costa Concordia. "Among the huge and impressive ministry which has been built up for seafarers working on cruise ships, — David Cockroft said— he was able to give an account of the way in which the chaplains, the Costa company staff and the union were able to work together and to help seafarers in a very human way in a time of great stress and sadness".

"This terrible incident is at least a good example of the way in which we can work together at a local level to benefit the lives of seafarers".

TRUST LAUNCHES LOGO AND FILM FOR 30TH ANNIVERSARY



A short 30 minute documentary made by David Browne of Parachute Pictures was released in time for the Trusts 30th anniversary.

The film gives a good illustration of the way that the Trust is funding its partners in providing seafarers welfare around the world and highlighting the work in Barcelona, Hamburg, Odessa, Mumbai and Kandla.

www.itfglobal.org/seafarers-trust/index.cfm

A few Copies on DVD are also available from the Trust.

The Trust also launched its new logo which has been updated to incorporate the ITF logo and clearly show we are the ITF Seafarers Trust. New vehicle, building and equipment stickers with this new logo have been produced and these are now available from the Trust Office. March 29, 2012.

"This anniversary — Tom Holmer, administrative officer of the ITF Seafarers' Trust, said — has been a landmark for us. With the support of the seafarers' welfare community we have been able to share and explore how best to meet the changing demands of helping seafarers. This latest tranche of grants builds upon the excellent work undertaken by these organisations and is a great pointer towards the future."

THE ITALIAN EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE'S NEW OFFICE FOR THE APOSTLESHIP OF THE SEA AND ITS INCOMING BISHOP PROMOTER AND NATIONAL DIRECTOR



Fr. Natale Ioculano with some seafarers

A historic date for the Apostleship of the Sea-Italy

During its last Permanent Council, the Italian Episcopal Conference made a historic decision regarding the Apostleship of the Sea by recognizing it as a Work of the Universal Church and creating a specific office for it within its General Secretariat.

This is a gift that hails from John Paul II's *Stella Maris* Motu Proprio of 1997, which stated, under Section IV: "In each Episcopal Conference

with maritime territory there should be a Bishop Promoter whose responsibility is to foster the Work of the Apostleship of the Sea... The Bishop-Promoter will choose a suitable priest and present his name to the Episcopal Conference which will then appoint him, in writing and for a determined period of time, as National Director of the Work of the Apostleship of the Sea."

Aptly, the last Conference on the Apostleship of the Sea in Italy dealt with the theme: "The *Stella Maris* Motu Proprio: Social Engagement and Care for the Seafarers". The event's final document highlighted "the vital role that the Motu Proprio plays in the activities of *Stella Maris* volunteers. Through their visits onboard and work onshore at the *Stella Maris* Centres, they bring the support of the Church to seafarers, much like Christ's accompaniment of his disciples.

The organisation of this mission for seafarers is still relevant and can, given the originality and flexibility of its action, shape the activities of the diocesan and national networks ... as a sign of a truly Universal Church. The legal entity of the Work for the Apostleship of the Sea has been chosen for this specific type of pastoral care ... maintaining the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People as its international point of reference with the task of "overseeing" this Work, while respecting the autonomy of each Episcopal Conference. "

The Apostleship of the Sea in Italy will finally have a Bishop Promoter who, as the guidelines contained within John Paul II's document states, has been named "preferably from among the bishops of dioceses with ports". The Bishop Promoter will be Msgr. Francesco Alfano, who was recently named Archbishop of Sorrento-Castellammare di Stabia. He will be a key point of reference for the Italian Church and particularly for the new National Director.

The Office will also have a new Director who will succeed Don Giacomo Martino, after his 10 years of service to seafaring people. Don Natale Ioculano, a priest from Calabria, is coming from a number of years tenaciously working to set up and direct the *Stella Maris* Centre in Gioia Tauro.

The National Director's many duties include fundamental responsibilities such as those listed under Section IV of the Motu Proprio: to promote specific training programs for chaplains; to direct chaplains of the Work of Apostleship of the Sea without prejudice to the rights of the local Ordinary; to make sure that chaplains diligently fulfil their duties and observe the prescriptions of the Holy See and the local Ordinary.

Don Natale is sincerely in love with the sea and the people who live on it. After a number of postings as parish priest in the diocese of Oppido-Mamerina-Palmi, as economo of the seminary and the diocese, he came in contact with the people of the sea and wished to create a "home away from home" for the many thousands of seafarers

who wander the piers of the Gioia Taura. Stella Maris - as it is popularly known all over the world – is the Welcome Center for seafarers and ship workers, and it really is their home, even for the few hours that they are in port.

A smile, a "Welcome to Gioia Tauro" during the visits on board, a chat or an opportunity to telephone their families who are far away, as well as a game of table football have been the daily bread of this lucky port's Diocesan Mission. His, along with his volunteers' work, has grown from the outset, extending to port workers who have needed solidarity during the critical periods that have hit the shipping industry in recent years.

For over a year, the Stella Maris team has taken care of the entire crew of the Tiger, a vessel abandoned by its shipowner. This multiethnic crew of Russians, Jordanians and Turks was left without food and water and no way to get home. In Gioia Tauro, they have really found a family, a "home away from home", at the Stella Maris.

The "iron basilica", which is actually two containers welded together and turned into a little church, has become a meeting place, a place of prayer, a breeding ground for volunteers for the care of seafarers, who are often left abandoned but now constantly accompanied by the pastoral care provided by these faithful.

The Italian Apostleship of the Sea thanks the volunteers of Gioia Tauro - who will feel both honored by the choice of their Don Natale but sad to lose the physical presence of their chaplain - for the gift of its new director

We offer Msgr Alfano and Don Natale all of our good will, prayers and faith in a Church that is renewing itself under the sign of its profound Universality and tradition. Like the Good Shepherd, the whole of the Apostleship of the Sea will continue to seek out and provide our care for seafarers hidden within the hulls of their vessels in the silence of their cabins who miss their families, so that they feel part of a Church that does not leave them alone.

We give a heartfelt farewell and sincere thanks to Don Giacomo Martino – Don Natale's predecessor in the Office for Migrants of the Apostleship of the Sea and Air (which has been superseded by the new Office) - for his years of service and for having infected us with this intense passion for all seafaring people. Thank you.

The Stella Maris Centres and Onboard Chaplains of Italy

On 9 February 2012, Fr. Giacomo Martino was appointed chaplain of His Holiness. Msgr. Martino, of the Diocese of Genoa, was ordained priest in 1987. After having been chaplain on board, he was appointed director of the "Stella Maris" of Genoa in 1998.



Msgr. Giacomo Martino

March 30, 2012

The Apostleship of the Sea International presents to Msgr. Giacomo Martino its sincere gratitude and appreciation for the commitment and dedication of the 10 years in which he was at the "helm" of the Italian Apostleship of the Sea. With his guidance, the presence of centers "Stella Maris" in the Italian ports has grown numerically and has been strengthened thanks to the creation of the National Committee on Welfare.

He leaves to the new Bishop Promoter and National Director a structure at the front line in responding to the needs of seafarers. We offer to His Excellency Msgr. Francesco Alfano and to Rev. Natale Ioculano our warmest greetings and assure them of our support.

EASTER FOR SEAFARERS

On universal holidays like Easter, even the sea becomes a place for celebrations thanks to the commitment of so many priests and volunteers. Msgr Giacomo Martino spoke to Vatican Radio about this:

Msgr Martino: there are two major ways of being present: through the seafarers' welcome centres, known as Stella Maris Centres, and through chaplains on board, who are priests that accompany the thousands of persons and crew on cruise ships, even if these chaplains are more for the crew and not as much for the passengers.

Question: what does it mean for these people to be isolated at sea for such long periods?

Msgr Martino: they are essentially communities of people of different nationalities, faiths, cultures who live truly in contact with one another. I often think about them as the prophets of what will hopefully be the society of the future, that is, a truly multi-ethnic society living with an active respect of one another and not merely a tolerance of the other; a society in which people enjoy each other's holidays, and in this spirit, Easter is a holiday for even those who do not believe in Jesus.

Question: Who are the people who go to sea nowadays? Who are the people who live their lives on the sea? We have the image of the old fisherman fixing his nets, but I think there are others...

Msgr Martino: They are people who used to be classified as migrants but today, thanks to John Paul II's Stella Maris Motu Proprio - which speaks specifically about the Apostleship of the Sea - is a better understood phenomenon. They are atypical because they are away from home for so long but then they return home only to depart again. There is a point of departure, but there is never a destination: it's a type of nomadism on the sea now made up of many young people who are often mothers and fathers. I think mention mothers because the number of women with children is very high - even women who are at sea for 8 or even 12 months in order to earn a living. At the end of the day, this is the most important motivation for people who go to sea today.

Question: So, how do you work? I mean how does the Stella Maris Federation work?

Msgr Martino: Seafarers have called it their "home away from home". We feel that we are to some extent their family in those few hours and above all we try to get them in contact with their family over the telephone or through Skype, which is a way that they can now see each other. Sometimes I see husbands in front of the screen and say "the computer is broken, it won't work" but then bit by bit an image begins to come into focus and it's his wife and child who he hasn't seen since the child was born. They are "stolen" images which make us feel amply rewarded for the sacrifices of so many volunteers.

Question: What does the sea teach us?

Msgr Martino: The sea teaches us many things: above all, it teaches us about the communion among peoples. During the war between Serbia and Croatia, I was the chaplain in Genoa. One time, I went on board a cargo ship where Serbians and Croatians worked together at the same time as their peoples were killing each other so cruelly. On board ship, perhaps because they are forced to, we learn to see the good side of others. This, for me, as a human being firstly, has taught me to see the good side of other people and the things that unite us. Many times, people think of the sea as the water that divides nations. For seafarers, on the contrary, the sea unites: it unites people and different peoples.

Question: do you have an Easter wish for seafarers since they are so close your heart?

Msgr Martino: My wish is that they don't feel alone. Jesus told us, "I will be with you until the end of the world". Jesus is with us and He is truly represented by the thousands of volunteers who board ships every day to welcome those on board, who bring tapes of your news programs so that they feel loved and cared for by a Church that they cannot physically attend.

Vatican Radio, April 9 2012

CRUISE TERMINAL IN THE PORT OF BARCELONA

The magazine "Rosa dos Ventos", published in Vigo, Spain, edited by Maria Cristina de Castro, interviewed Dadin Jerónimo, director of the cruise terminal at the port of Barcelona, asking him to explain the commitment that this service requires.

J.D. The center is open every day from 10.00am to 15.00pm all year around, although this year, unfortunately, we closed 2 or 3 days for lack of volunteers. Each day we makes a brief visit to every ship, and leave information about where our center is located and what services are available.

RDV. Practically you spend the all-day caring for the seafarers coming ashore with the longing to relate after a long period at sea. What are the services that you offer them in the port?

J.D. Currently we have 6 phone lines for international calls working with prepaid cards. We have international Sim cards to make call from their mobile phones, something very much in demand lately. Then there are also 4 computers with Internet connection, and we have wi-fi for seafarers who want to use their laptop. Three times a week we distribute for free news bulletins, newspapers and magazines, always with articles related to the sea. We have a small library with books in different languages, where seafarers can take the book they like. We also offer assistance and advices in general, both on legal and religious issues or any help that is within our capacities.

RDV. As it is expected in the maritime profession, for sure you will welcome young and old seafarers, who want to relax after long days living in the limited space of a small ship. Do you offer or plan for them relaxing activities or sports?

J.D. We organize football and basketball games at the sports facilities of the port of Barcelona. Thanks to volunteers and the minivans of "Stella Maris", we pick up the seafarers at the ship and, after the game, they are brought back to the ship.

RDV. It would be interesting to know the statistics about this service. What is the index of presence in reference to the various nationalities?

J.D. The office was closed for repairs in the harbor, from mid-September 2009 to 1st May 2010. Since the reopening until 31st December, 2010, we welcomed 786 seafarers of 41 different nationalities. 75% are Asian, with a presence of 341 Filipinos. Followed by Indonesians (144) and Indians (114).

RDV. What services are the most used?

J.D. The most popular service is the connection to the Internet (1,586 people), used usually to communicate with the family, the pre-paid phone cards (293 cards), those for the cellphone and the top up card. Moreover, in 2010 we organized 21 football and 4 basketball games, with the assistance of the students from the Nautical Faculty of Barcelona. The networking with chaplains has increased the organization of sport activities. Seafarers are grateful for this service. In 2011 (1st January to 31st October) we received at the center 2864 seafarers, of whom over 80% Asian, mostly Filipinos (1266), Indonesians (503) and Indians (527).

RDV. What you do, it is an interesting job, to have a welcoming place that allows seafarers to communicate with others pursuing the same profession. A humanitarian service for many seafarers who live far from their homes working for long period at sea. Congratulations!



(Boga, Revista Internacional de Mujeres de Pescadores. Año 2012. N. 20)

TESTIMONY FROM LAURENT AND MARIE-CLOTILDE MAUBERT

CARETAKERS OF OUR LADY OF CONSOLATION IN HYÈRES

Barcelona, Palma, Cagliari, Palermo, Rome and Savona: so many destinations that were very attractive to us. All in a week on board the Costa Concordia, relaxing, sightseeing, taking in the sun on the sea...

This was our first cruise. And then we had our first shock on board: the superficiality, the easy life, the temptations, the games, the faux luxury decor, the kitsch photos against surreal backgrounds, etc. Everything is made for you to spend as much money as possible in complete peace. Nevertheless, we lived our simple life like other people and families on the ship; we saw magnificent landscapes, amazing churches, fortresses, ports, and we had just spent the day in Rome. We had seen the awe-inspiring Coliseum, the Roman Forum, the Palatine Hill...



And then, **the second shock**, the one that all the media is talking about: the sinking. The noise, the tearing metal, the ship that begins to list, the screams, the panic. Thanks be to God, we lived through all of this; in great fear of course, but with an incredible inner calm. It was like a storm on the high seas while the depths remain calm. As we stood hand-in-hand about to get on the lifeboat, the last thing that we both saw was the tabernacle behind the half-open curtain of the little chapel. For us, this was a symbol of the certainty that God is always with us, whatever happens, whatever the situation may be. What reassurance this was! We put ourselves completely in His hands. We thought of our three children of course. But if it were our hour, God would take care of them. He would not leave them on their own. We felt complete trust as we said a few Hail Mary's. We didn't say them begging to come out alive, but just because we wanted to pray. Then there was the anxiety of climbing down into the lifeboat. The members of the crew who saved us showed great poise, despite the screams and panic of many people. They acted in a very professional manner: from the cook, to the mechanic and the waiter, each one performed her or his task admirably.

We felt great relief as we got to the island. The port soon filled with those who had been rescued. We were all more or less numb from the ordeal. The ship leaned more and more on its side while we hoped that all the passengers had made it off. It was getting dark and you couldn't see what was happening. The inhabitants made extraordinary efforts for us. There were so very few of them trying to take care of the more than 4,000 who had landed. Little shops opened where people were able to sleep on the floor sheltered from the elements. The little hotel and the school opened their doors. The parish priest put on the heat for the crowd who "invaded" St. Lawrence's. He gave us all that he had. Everything. Somebody had a chasuble on, someone else had put on the altar cloth, another wrapped himself in the curtains... anything to keep warm. He came with a packet of potato chips, oranges and a packet of sweets. He gave them all with a smile and a kind word. I've never had a sweet that was so delicious as this "sweet of charity".

We waited all night to get off the island. It was a strange experience to be without identification papers, with no money and no telephone. I looked at my fellow passengers: some of them in pyjamas, in bathing suits, in evening wear, barefoot, in a T-shirt, with a baby in their arms, helping with an elderly person. I thought about a television advertisement that says, "Come as you are". People were calling out names, looking for their loved ones. We finally got to the mainland. The mass of us disembarked, proceeding slowly towards organised relief and registration efforts. We had our first hot coffee. It was a little after eight o'clock in the morning. The local people looked on us as we walked by. Women came, handing out bags of food. For us. In the spirit of charity. Everything was wrapped in a layer of silence. We were led somewhere. We waited. We moved on. We waited. They brought us to a gymnasium. We got a little rest. It was a nightmare. And we were eventually going to wake up. We moved on. We waited. On 30 December at midday, we had a visit that warmed our hearts. The French Ambassador in Rome came to see us, to get our news. He had the Embassy ring our children to reassure them of our wellbeing. Here was a Frenchman who was getting our news and explaining how we would get home. We went back by bus. We arrived in La Turbie where there were firemen, the Red Cross, psychologists, chocolate and cakes awaiting us. Everybody was so sweet. Then we got to Marseille. There was a tangible warmth from the many people who took care of us. We went through the formalities of registering at the hotel, went to our room and fell into bed at three o'clock in the morning. We had breakfast and then the last step was to say goodbye to our "cellmates", to the people with whom we had lived through such an intense experience. Then, we finally arrived home and fell into the arms of our children. It was just so emotional. Thanksgiving.

What is the moral of the story? Emmanuel: God is with us. Everything superficial was pushed into the background. God is a rock. If I lean on him, I risk nothing. Thanks for giving thanks with us and for us. Thanks for praying that peace reign in our hearts and of all those who were shipwrecked and their families. Forgive us if we are not really "in good working order" for a bit, but the shock was enormous.

21 January 2012, [Yann de Rauglaudre](#)

PRAYER TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY AFTER THE COSTA CONCORDIA TRAGEDY

O Mary, that through the centuries you have been called: Star of the Sea and Mother of sailors

in this tragic moment for the Italian and international maritime world,
we people of the sea, once again turn to you to plead your mother's help.

Mary, Star of the Sea

we want to entrust you the victims of this tragedy,
welcome them into your arms and bring them to their Creator and Father
that they will receive the eternal reward for the good they did in their life.
We want to recommend you also the relatives of these victims,
wipe away their tears, give them comfort and assurance that one day
they will again embrace their loved ones in an endless life.

Mary, Mother of sailors

we want to pray for the missing ones and their families.
Sustain them in this distressing waiting
full of hopes, doubts and uncertainties.
If their fate is already done, promote the discovery of their bodies
so that their loved ones will have a grave where to lay a flower.

Mary, Star of the Sea

in this tragedy, many are those who have been injured in the body and the spirit,
especially children. Reinforce them with your motherly care
so that they can soon return to embrace their loved ones and
be back to normal life without trauma or fear.

Mary, Mother of sailors

on behalf of all survivors we wish to thank you for all the lives that were saved,
for the commitment and generosity of the crew,
of the volunteers and of the civil and military authorities.
Bless the people of the Island of Giglio
who did not hesitate to open the doors of their homes and their hearts
to provide immediate assistance to survivors.

Mary, Star of the Sea

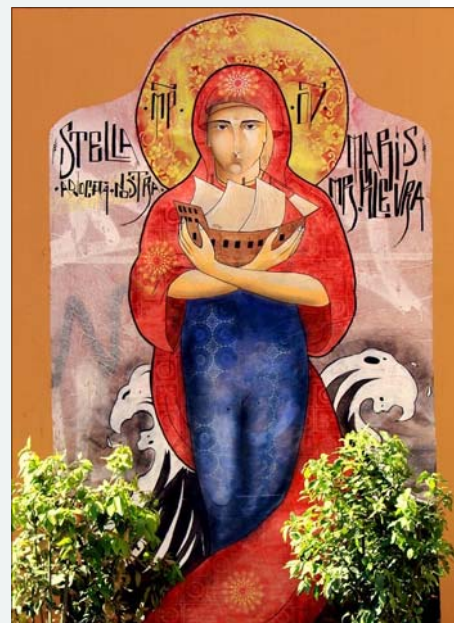
There are many controversies, debates and accusations surrounding this tragedy.
While we do not feel to condemn anyone, we ask for justice
objectively analyzing the events, identifying the personal responsibilities
while respecting people and the law
without seeking the scoop or sensationalism.

Mary, Mother of sailors

we implore to cover with your maternal cloak
all those that for any reason are out at sea
protect them from all dangers, and always guide them to a safe harbor.
In particular we would like to entrust to you
the undocumented immigrants who rely on the sea to sail towards a better future
and often disappear beneath the waves of the sea with no fuss and no one talking about them.

Mary, Star of the Sea

Finally support with your sanctifying grace all of the AOS chaplains and volunteers,
so that they can continue to do
their mission of welcoming and of spiritual and material assistance
to all seafarers regardless of race, creed and nationality
and ensure that the Stella Maris Centers around the world can always be
a home away from home ... and offer shelter, hope and comfort



Mr. Klevra, Stella Maris, Trastevere

Genoa, January 22, 2012

Seafarers Welfare Seminar held in Bangkok

2nd March 2012

The ITF-Trust funded South East Asia Programme held a Welfare Seminar at the kind invitation of the Merchant Marine Training Centre, Samut Phrakhan in Bangkok.

The event was attended by around 100 people from various organisations in the Maritime Community. Mr Tawalyarat Onsira the Director General of the Marine Department opened the seminar and welcomed the initiative to have such a seminar which he said was timely. Mr Roy Paul ITF Seafarer Trust gave a brief introduction to the ITF seafarers Trust and he was supported by Mr I Dewa Budi ICSW Coordinator South East Asia who introduced the ICSW and SEA Region.

A view of Seafarers Welfare in Thailand was given by the Thai Maritime Dept represented by Sub Lt Preecha Phetwong R.T.N Royal Thai Navy. The aim of the seminar was to promote the MLC2006 and the importance of seafarers welfare and Prudence Mooney, Technical Officer

International Labour Standards and Labour Law from the ILO Regional Office Asia Pacific (Bangkok) gave an excellent presentation on the importance of this legislation and the difference it will make to seafarers.

It was a pleasure to hear the views of Thai seafarers and Cadets Mr. Anuchit Sennun and Mr. Phit Meepuech and also Captain Visun Nakluan and Chief Engineer Nopadol Kaewsuwan gave their experiences of their welfare needs and how those needs had been met. The event was also partly sponsored by Thai Seafarer Association and Capt.Boondej Mewongukote President of TSFA and Capt.Phasan Thamparj General Secretary of TSFA spoke about their association.

After a very enjoyable lunch the seminar was led to look at the needs of Seafarers by Roy referring to the 2007 survey on Port based Welfare. Budiasa then reported on the RWC findings in the visit and plans for welfare centres in Thailand.



Roy Paul, ITF Trust, addresses the seminar



Apinya Tajit (far left) at the Seminar

him one day. Of course that day came and the company looked after the crew very well and he kept one of the bags the money was dropped in as a reminder of his freedom.

In summing up the seminar the Thai NSWB Chair Captain Pisanu Dowcharoen said there were committed to provide welfare for the seafarers and looked forward to working with ICSW in the region.

Ms.Apinya Tajit, Deputy Director Apostleship of The Sea (AOS) Sriracha National Catholic Commission on Seafarer (NCCS), Caritas Thailand

Earlier, in February, Jam was prominent in organising the Maritime Games in Thailand, a sporting event for sea cadets. The commitment of ICMA's network to professionalism in caring for seafarers is widely acknowledged in the seafarers' welfare sector.

To connect with Apinya Tajit and her global network of friends among seafarers and chaplains go to her facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/apinyastellamaris>

SOUTHEAST ASIA: THE NEXT MEDITERRANEAN OF CRUISES?



Singapore's new cruise terminal opens later this year and features bigger and deeper berths to accommodate larger ships.

By [Karla Cripps](#) 27 March, 2012, Southeast Asia editor of CNNGo. Land ahoy, cruisers. Singapore's new International Cruise Terminal (ICT) is set to open later this year, with officials hoping the massive US\$400 million facility will bring in some of the world's largest ships.

The ICT will feature two berths, an arrival and departures hall, advanced passenger processing technology and a ground transportation area. In other words, plenty of room for cruise-loving travellers looking to cram as many experiences as possible into a single vacation.

Cruises are certainly getting more popular in Asia, with several of the big global lines -- Royal Caribbean, Silversea, Holland America and Celebrity -- already offering passengers itineraries in the region. But the Asian cruise industry is a long way behind Europe or North America, the latter of which accounts for around 60 percent of the global cruising market according to industry figure.

Aw Kah Peng, CEO of the Singapore Tourism Board, told media she hopes that will change with the opening of the city's new cruise terminal, located between downtown Singapore and Sentosa Island. "We think there's a lot of untapped potential in cruising," she says. "Southeast Asia as a whole region is really interesting for cruising because of the many islands that form the archipelago of Indonesia, as well as Philippines and the long wonderful coastlines of our neighbours like Malaysia, Vietnam and Thailand.

"We think that Southeast Asia can be the next Mediterranean when it comes to cruising." So can the wonders of Southeast Asia -- i.e. Angkor Wat or the beaches of the Philippines -- compete with the likes of ancient Greek ruins, Alaskan glaciers, Caribbean islands and French cafes? No. At least not when it comes to cruising, say experts.

Among the big brands being targeted by Singapore's new ICT is Royal Caribbean. When the ICT opens in mid-2012 -- no official date has been announced yet -- it will be big enough to facilitate Royal Caribbean's Oasis of the Seas, the largest cruise ship in the world with a passenger capacity of over 6,000. But don't expect to see Oasis sailing into Singapore any time soon.

"Cruising is a regional product and cruise lines look at the Southeast Asian region as a whole for business planning, not just based on one port," says Jennifer Yap, managing director of Royal Caribbean Cruises (Asia) Pte Ltd.

"To cater for Oasis, we will need ASEAN [the Association of Southeast Asian Nations] to come together to ensure that each country has one or more ports that is Oasis-friendly. They need to have terminals and piers that allow ships of Oasis' size to dock and for the guests to disembark the ship smoothly, and not with tendering boats.

"So every ASEAN country will need to step up their infrastructure development to handle our large ships, so cruise lines can design and operate attractive itineraries in the region."

Until that happens, cruisers will have to make do with ships like Royal Caribbean's [Voyager of the Seas](#), which holds about 3,800 passengers. The ship will arrive via Dubai in May and is equipped with a rock-climbing wall, basketball court, ice-skating rink and mini-golf course. "The new International Cruise Terminal has enabled us to deploy our larger ships to Singapore namely Voyager of the Seas, Celebrity Solstice and Celebrity Millennium this year, all three from above 90,000 GRT [gross register tonnage] to 138,000 GRT," says Yap.

"This brings the total number of our ships calling at Singapore to seven, compared to only two last year. We are calling at new interesting itineraries on these ships such as one to Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand, as well as another to Bali and Australia."

SEAFARERS CENTER OFFERS RESPITE FOR SAILORS

Lake Charles celebrates its 50th anniversary of foundation

8 January 2012, by Dom Yanchunas

On a spring afternoon, the dry bulk carrier Macondo took on a load of rice at the Lake Charles, La., docks. While the ship was at berth, Capt. Gustavo Torres and some of his crew relaxed by playing air hockey and phoning their families back in Colombia. The men were able to catch a break ashore as a result of the work of the port's Stella Maris Lake Charles Seafarers' Center. The center, a project of the local Roman Catholic diocese, provides visiting mariners with a much-needed respite from their regular grind.

The facility offers a recreation room, computers, phone cards and van rides to buy grub. The experience allows the weary seafarers to feel grass under their feet, relieve boredom, have some fun and contact their loved ones. "Sailors around the world are very, very grateful for the services of Stella Maris," Torres said. "You're like a prisoner when you're inside a ship. If you come from five days on the sea and



you have no facilities and nothing to do and you have to wait inside the ship and then go back to sea for another five days, it's not so good for a person's mind." Stella Maris is Latin for "star of the sea." The Lake Charles center serves in the tradition of the papal Apostleship of the Sea (AOS), the official international Catholic ministry to people on the water. About 60 port ministries in North America operate as Stella Maris or as AOS centers, which are not formally connected to a diocese.

The Lake Charles organization operates with the help of diocesan funding and revenue from the sale of phone cards. The facility is in the Lake Charles port area, but is outside the security perimeter. The director, Deacon Patrick Lapoint, holds a Transportation Worker Identification Credential. He enters the port and picks up the mariners in the center's van. Foreign seafarers need a D-1 visa to go ashore.

Once at the Stella Maris center, the ship crews can play air hockey, table tennis and billiards. There is a library with books and magazines. Coffee and cookies are served. A priest celebrates Catholic Mass every Thursday. For seafarers who lack the necessary visa to go ashore, Lapoint boards the ship to visit them and provide friendly conversation or, if requested, spiritual support.

While the games and snacks are popular, Lapoint said, mariners are most grateful for the ability to phone or e-mail loved ones. Phone and computer banks are set up to facilitate that. "It's contact with family that is most important," Lapoint said. "They will spend their last \$5 on a phone card just to call their family, and the free Wi-Fi makes it so much easier."

The Stella Maris centers are the Catholics' contribution to the long tradition of ecclesiastical mission work on the waterfront. Anglican and Scandinavian Lutheran churches were the first to provide aid and worship opportunities directly to visiting seafarers as early as the 1820s. At that time, the religious organizations and the community were eager to provide seamen with an alternative to brothels and saloons.

Today church-related groups operate about 200 seafarer centers and port chaplaincies in the United States and Canada, according to the North American Maritime Ministry Association (NAMMA).

No two centers are exactly alike, said NAMMA's executive secretary, Chaplain Lloyd Burghart. Most of the organizations are operated by Catholic, Episcopal, Lutheran, Presbyterian or Southern Baptist clergy and volunteers. In addition to providing port chaplains, some assist with advocacy and mariner training. Seamen's Church Institute of New York and New Jersey, which is closely tied to the Episcopal Church, has major operations in Port Newark, N.J., and Oakland, Calif., among others, and runs an inland-navigation simulation center in Paducah, Ky. The Seamen's Church Institute of Philadelphia and South Jersey is totally separate and multid denominational. The Houston International Seafarers' Center and United Port Ministries of Seattle are other examples of multi-denominational organizations.

Two maritime ministries run hotels - Seafarers & International House, a Lutheran institution in New York, and Mariners House in Boston. AOS of the United States of America organizes a corps of Catholic priests who serve aboard cruise ships. While maritime labor practices and technology have changed, the port chaplains still fill a critical role in providing humanitarian aid to ship crews who sometimes face loneliness, cruelty and exploitation, Burghart said. "Seafarers are the neglected people of this world. Most Americans don't realize that 90 percent of what they use and wear is delivered by ship. They think it's all delivered by truck."

At Stella Maris in Lake Charles, the guest book is full of thank-you messages left by mariners hailing from all over the world. "Always love to be here," said one crewman from Liberia. "Muy bueno, very good!" wrote another from Colombia. "Very good - God bless" was the greeting from a Filipino. The center's rooms are decorated with gifts from the visitors. They include wood carvings, souvenirs from ships and paper currency from their homelands that is faithfully collected on Lapoint's "Money Wall." Domestic mariners use the Seafarers' Center too. Oceangoing tugboats frequently stop at Lake Charles, for example. The recreation room wall is decorated with old life rings from the U.S.-flagged cargo ships Maersk Texas, Maersk Tennessee and Maersk Constellation.

Back on the 389-foot Macondo, while machines slowly loaded 7,350 metric tons of rice destined for Haiti, officers prepared to welcome Lapoint aboard. Several crew gathered in the galley, where they greeted Lapoint and picked out phone cards. The captain said some terminals intentionally make it difficult for his crew to disembark, or they overcharge the mariners for escorted rides to the facility exit.

"If you don't know where to go for a phone or how to get a taxi, it's difficult for us. Sometimes you have a sick person at home, and you need to know how they are. It's very important. Stella Maris gives us one of the best facilities for that," said Capt. Torres. "Normally when we come in from the sea, it's necessary to have some recreation. The ship is very small and you have no place to play any games."

Although the Catholic diocese funds it, the Lake Charles center also works with a Baptist minister who offers a worship service in the building. The International Transport Workers' Federation awarded the center a grant, which helped to pay for the recreation room. "We're also advocates if a ship is having a problem, like the crew not being paid," Lapoint said.

Since 2001, his center has successfully assisted 17 ship crews who hadn't been paid. Those recovered wages totaled about \$700,000. For the crew of the Colombia-flagged Macondo, it's enough just to hang out and play some games. "You can go there to clear your mind," Torres said.

From the Vatican, 20th March 2012

Dear friends and supporters of the Seafarers' Center in the Diocese of Lake Charles,

on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of your Center I would like to express my sincere best wishes and congratulations.

The first idea of the Center goes back to 1956 when Bishop Maurice Shexnider (Bishop of Lafayette, Louisiana) ordered the establishment of the "Lake Charles Seamen's Center". In 1957 Fr. Theodore Hassink was appointed the first chaplain and began to develop his ministry while working out of his car and house. In the early 1960's building came into existence and on April 18, 1962 the papers of incorporation were signed by the Louisiana Secretary of State, Wade O. Martin. Then the Center has grown, developed and expanded to serve a great area and respond to the demands of an increased number of seafarers.

Since the foundation of the Apostleship of the Sea, the Centers have played an important role in the life of the seafarers often being a beacon of light in moment of difficulties and a safe port in the midst of turmoil. In the maritime environment today with long hours of work, short turn around of vessels and the many security restrictions on the port, the visit on board of a chaplain or the transport to the Center for a telephone call or a moment of relaxation are essential.

Today we would like to pay tribute and express our gratitude to all the chaplains, volunteers and supporters that through years have worked with dedication and commitment to make the Seafarers' Center of Lake Charles functioning and effective in its mission.

Our thanks go also to Bishop Glen Provost who value and support this ministry in his Diocese, to the actual Center's Director Deacon Patrick Lapoint and the Port Chaplain Fr. Rommel Toletino. It is their responsibility that the Lake Charles Center be "a home away from home" for many seafarers.

We pray that Mary, *Star of the Sea*, extends her maternal and protective cloak upon all the seafarers visiting the Center, assuring the continuation of this great service for many more years to come.

Sincerely yours,

Antonio Maria Card. Vegliò, President

✠ Joseph Kalathiparambil, Secretary

NEWS FROM CONGO-BRAZZAVILLE

Fr. Lelo, AOS chaplain of Pointe Noire, writes to us

We would like to set the scene for these few lines about our pastoral work with seafarers over the last quarters by evoking some of what was expressed in the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Africae Munus* of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI on the Church in Africa in service to reconciliation, justice and peace, delivered in Ouidah, Benin on November 19, 2011:

“Millions of migrants, displaced persons and refugees are searching for a homeland and a peaceful country in Africa or elsewhere. The scale of this movement, which affects every country, reveals the hidden magnitude of the different types of poverty produced by deficiencies in public administration. Thousands of people have tried and continue trying to cross deserts and seas, searching for an oasis of peace and prosperity, better education and greater freedom. (...) The Church remembers that Africa offered a place of refuge for the Holy Family when they were fleeing the murderous political power of Herod, in search of a land that could offer them security and peace. The Church will continue to make her voice heard and to campaign for the defence of all people.” (AM, 84-85)

What have we done?

Our report of the last three quarters is divided into six parts: Ship Arrivals, Mr Kabore-Nazi's Visit, World Sea Day, the Current Situation of the New Seafarers' Office, Challenges Faced, and Future Prospects.

Ships visit

The prime moment of our work with seafarers was made into a festive encounter where “culture shock” gave us the opportunity to create a sense of brotherhood out of each encounter. Here are the statistics related to our visits:

MONTH:	Number of ships:	Number of seafarers:
APRIL	22	167
MAY	18	143
JUNE	12	121
JULY	32	102
AUGUST	21	98
SEPTEMBER	13	114
OCTOBER	08	67
NOVEMBER	14	102
DECEMBER	05	98
TOTAL		



Fr. Lelo and Msgr. Miguel Olaveri, Apostolic Administrator of Pointe-Noire Diocese

Mr. Kaboré Nazi's visit:

Mr Kabore-Nazi came to Pointe-Noire from 21-24 May 2011. It proved an opportunity to reestablish our bonds of friendship and pastoral work among seafarers. We met the President of the National Committee for the Welfare of Seafarers and his team, artisanal fishers, airport, port and railway union leaders and visited the new Seafarers' Office. During the same period, we also had

the joy of welcoming the National Chaplain of the Apostleship of the Sea from Angola, Fr Roberto Cubola. This was a great opportunity to share experiences on pastoral care for seafarers in Angola and Congo.

World Maritime Day

We had time for reflection and sharing on the theme: “The Seafarer’s Vocation and Mission”, organising spaces for sharing and reflection on this theme over two days. This sharing discussed the need to witness Christ in our daily life and for us to feel truly involved in the exercise of our baptismal mission on board (priest, prophet and king).

Current situation of the new seafarers’ centre

The future of our office is an issue that saddens the hearts of our committee members. It was a project funded by the ITF-Seafarers Trust for USD 113,442 on 26 January 2004. This sum was well and truly used respecting the intentions of the donor: on 14 October 2005, the Minister for Maritime Transport and Markets laid the cornerstone for our new office. Construction was finished in 2006. Then, something strange happened, in that the supposed owner of the land appeared, verbally threatening us, saying that the land belonged to him and we had no right to build there. At that point, we undertook proceedings with the competent authorities, which led to the local courts. Given that the port allocated land to us, we wrote to the port authority, which we thought was the right body to resolve the case with the supposed land owner. Up to this day, the case has languished in the court system and, given the length of time it has taken, we have once again encouraged the port authority to reactivate their efforts. We still need to prepare the financial report for the construction of our centre.

Challenges faced

There are still difficulties that we encounter: no IT equipment (computer, photocopier, scanner, Internet connection) has forced us to spend much time in cyber cafes. We don't have literature dealing with the lives of seafarers nor communications with other AOS Centres. We really need English language training. There is limited attention to concerns we have made known at your level (specifically AOS Pointe Noire. The maintenance and insurance for the bus are the chaplain's responsibility but how can he do this alone? Artisanal fishers are in need of certain equipment such as compasses, lifesavers, etc. and they come to us complaining. How can we help them?

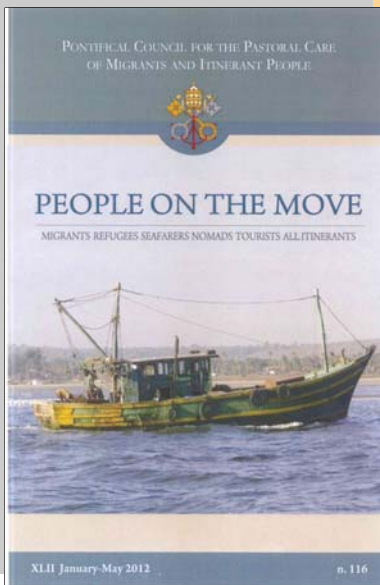
Future prospective:

- Set up a meeting with the leaders of the AOS in a neighbouring diocese (Cabinda, Angola) and Matadi in DRC in order to exchange experiences.
- Renew dialogue with the Port Authority about the new seafarers office, a case which was one of the major points of the general policy of the Ministry of Maritime Transport and Markets in mid-2006
- Continue to provide special care to all the seafarers who call into our port.
- Support artisanal fishers to maintain their dignity despite the enormous difficulties they encounter and work for the establishment of a national association of artisanal fishers in Congo.



Fr. Lelo, Mr. Kaboré, Fr. Roberto (AOS Chaplain, Angola)

The Review "People on the Move" largely devoted to the maritime industry



No. 116 (XLII January-May 2012), of "People on the Move", review published by the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, aside from the information regarding our daily activities, presents some papers on the pastoral care of seafarers, also in view of the XXIII World Congress of the Apostleship of the Sea, which will take place in the Vatican, November 19 to 23 of this year.

In preparation for that event, the voice of St. Augustine as always supports and encourages the Christian's journey, with the use of an image borrowed from the maritime world: "We are sailors, when we look at the waves and storms of this earthly world. But we do not sink, because we are carried by the wood of the cross" (Tract. in Me. 27.7). the following is a summary of the articles.

PRIESTS ON BOARD OF THE TITANIC, by Deacon **Ricardo Rodriguez-Martos**, AOS-Barcelona. "The Titanic tragedy became, from the same night she sank, into a real myth of the twentieth century. It is a story that meant a before and an after in maritime safety. Some years ago, it gained new relevance with the discovery and

filming of the wreck in the seabed, by el Dr. Robert D. Ballard. There have been several films and many books have been written about it. There are several protagonist of this story, who are familiar for everybody interested on it. However, none of the usual stories usually refers to the priests who were aboard the Titanic, people whose behavior was heroic, according to several testimonies. It is another dimension of this story, rarely told, but rich in heroism and involvement. There were three Catholic priests and five Protestants. None of them survived".

LA FAMILIA MARINERA. **María Cristina de Castro García**, Coordinator for the "Rosa dos ventos" and President of the "APROAR" Federation, presents a detailed and interesting analysis of the situation of the maritime family in Spain, with a special relation to the European legislation. "Trying to report on the realities facing the seafarers families, alter so many years of closeness with their wives, their children and themselves on their return, or in times of their training to be professional into the work of the sea, is a challenge that involves us to transmit these origins, its continued status as well as its relevance and consequences".

A BIBLICAL CALL FOR RESPONSIBLE FISHING? "In the Manual for chaplains and pastoral agents of the Apostleship of the Sea—Fr. **Dirk Demaeght**, Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, Sea Fisheries in Flemish government (Belgium), says—belong fishers and fishing communities to sectors "in need of special attention". Indeed! Following the considerations surrounding the effects of globalization, they have to deal now with the ecological problems and their interaction with nature. The fishermen are constantly faced with new challenges on which the chaplain must find pastoral answers. Our main question in this article is: can we use the Bible as a valuable instrument in the ecological debate."

THE MINISTRY OF WELCOME TO SEAFARERS AND CARITAS IN VERITATE

by Fr. **Otfried Chen**, Secretary General of the Chinese Regional Bishops' Conference of Taiwan. "The encyclical letter of the Holy Father is already very rich in content, which can be discussed in forums and studied at universities over weeks, whereas saying something relevant on seafarer ministry requires practical experience of it, and I am not an AOS chaplain. However, to my consolation, the main theme of this AOS East and South East Asia Regional Conference is 'Fan the Flame of Faith'. This talk is divided into three parts. Firstly, the author makes a summary of the encyclical letter. Secondly, he outlines the theological background behind it and, thirdly, he offers some elementary advice for consideration and discussion.

Copies may be obtained from:
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