

Apostolatus Maris

The Church in the Maritime World

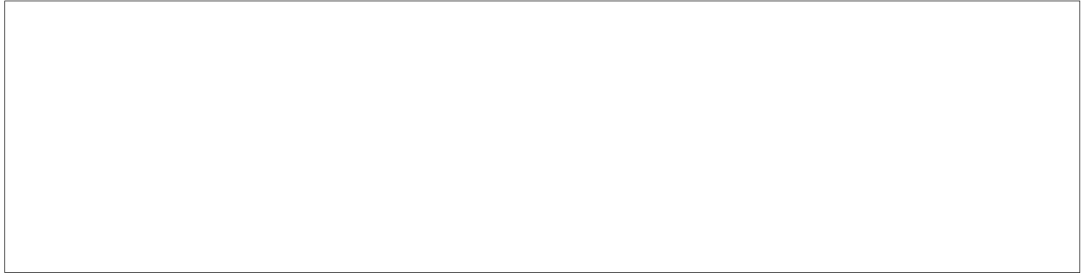
Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, Vatican City



N. 80, 2003/II

Inside...

Going Fishing in the Apostleship of the Sea	Page 3
Only 10% of large Ocean Fish remain ...	6
Mission to Cuba	9
A Growth in Commitment	11



“Andare a pesca nell’Apostolato del Mare”

We reproduce wide excerpts from a presentation given by Rev. Fr. Sinclair Oubre, President of AOS-USA, during the Fishers Workshop of NAMMC, on June 23, 1999, Seattle, Wa.

Nel Golfo del Texas, la pesca è vecchia quanto le città lungo la costa. Per decenni, persone di ogni etnia uscivano in mare per raccogliere gamberetti e altre specie di pesci. Il mare procurava loro il cibo per la famiglia, ed era fonte di reddito per vivere. Ciò nonostante, di solito viene dimenticata gran parte della storia dei pescatori Cajuns, Ispanici e Vietnamiti, la cui pesca costituisce una percentuale significativa del nostro consumo di pesce.

Port Arthur, Texas, è la città più a nord-est del Golfo del Texas. È anche la città più ad est dello Stato. Fondata nel 1898, essa è stata il capolinea della ferrovia meridionale di Kansas City. Il sogno di Arthur Stillwell era quello di avere una via diretta tra i cereali del Midwest e un porto nel Golfo del Messico. Port Arthur divenne quel porto.



La pesca era l'occupazione naturale degli abitanti di Port Arthur, che è stata costruita lungo gli argini

del lago Sabine, salato e poco profondo. Questo lago, che produceva una risorsa inesauribile di pesci e gamberetti, si getta nel Golfo del Messico fornendo così un facile accesso alla pesca d'alto mare nel Golfo. Per molto tempo della nostra storia, le comunità Cajuns costituivano il gruppo dominante di pescatori di pesci e gamberetti della Louisiana francese. La situazione tuttavia ha cominciato a cambiare radicalmente a partire dalla fine degli anni '70.

Come risultato di una migliore educazione, di una maggiore scelta di opportunità d'impiego, e dell'aumento del reddito familiare, i figli di molti di questi pescatori hanno scelto di non seguire la strada dei loro genitori. Ciò ha avuto tre effetti significativi: anzitutto, i pescatori di gamberetti Cajuns hanno dovuto cercare i membri di equipaggio al di fuori della propria famiglia. Secondo, quando il padre si ritirava dalla pesca, vendeva la propria barca ad una compagnia di lavorazione del pesce, o a qualche nuovo immigrato, in particolare a famiglie vietnamite che hanno utilizzato le barche “in famiglia”, e reinvestito i loro profitti nell'acquisto di altre imbarcazioni.

In meno di quindici anni, i

pescatori di gamberetti Cajuns sono praticamente spariti da Port Arthur. Mentre una volta erano oltre 300 le barche registrate, quasi totalmente di proprietà e con equipaggi Cajuns, ora esse sono per il 95% di proprietà della comunità vietnamita, che le gestisce direttamente.

Gli effetti della competizione internazionale, le fluttuazioni dei limiti della cattura degli stocks di pesce imposti dalla legge federale o dello Stato, hanno avuto gravi ripercussioni economiche sui pescatori di Port Arthur e sulle loro famiglie. Benché il grande pubblico non si preoccupi affatto di questi pescatori, un eventuale crollo dell'industria potrebbe voler dire la perdita di oltre 100.000 impieghi nella pesca, e di circa 600 impieghi indirettamente legati alla conservazione, all'imballaggio, alla spedizione, alla fabbricazione, alla riparazione delle navi, alla distribuzione del pescato e ad altre industrie collegate. La situazione di Port Arthur si ripete tutto lungo la costa del Golfo.

Abbiamo visto anche svilupparsi un conflitto tra i pescatori e l'ufficio del turismo sull'utilizzo di una banchina nel porto. I

(to be continued on page 4)

(continued from page 3)

pescatori hanno una locazione a lungo termine con l'intesa che, in caso di presenza occasionale di barche da diporto, le loro imbarcazioni sarebbero state spostate, per qualche giorno, su un'altra banchina. Ciò che era cominciato però come una cosa casuale, ora è diventato un servizio regolare, e la difficoltà di spostare le barche da diporto quando i proprietari sono fuori città, ha stato oggetto di una disputa in una riunione del Consiglio comunale. Secondo un consigliere municipale, non si può permettere ai pescatori di ostacolare lo sviluppo economico di cui la città potrebbe beneficiare attraverso il turismo. Tale dichiarazione, però, dimostra una mancanza totale di conoscenza da parte di molti leader locali sull'impatto dell'industria dei gamberetti sull'economia locale. Nel caso di Port Arthur, la situazione è stata fortunatamente risolta.

Non è avvenuto altrettanto, però, per un'altra località lungo la costa, Kemeh, nel Texas, che, per decine di anni, è stato un piccolo villaggio di pescatori sulla baia di Galveston. In questi ultimi tempi, con l'eccezionale sviluppo della zona attorno al Centro Spaziale di Johnson, la marina e le proprietà del lungomare sono aumentate di valore per i residenti della regione più benestanti. Se si visita Kemeth oggi, si può constatare come il lungomare sia stato invaso

dai ristoranti e dalle boutiques di alto livello, mentre una sola banchina è riservata ai pescatori di gamberetti.

Terminare questa esposizione con una breve descrizione di alcune delle sfide e delle difficoltà alle quali devono far fronte oggi i pescatori, vorrebbe dire dimenticare il loro ruolo e la loro responsabilità nel dominio del proprio destino. Vorrei ricordare qui le parole del P. Reinhold: "questi marittimi non sono dei 'poveracci', come alcuni vorrebbero far credere; essi sono dei cristiani, con dignità ed orgoglio maschile".

Certamente ai pescatori succedono molte cose che rendono la loro vita e quella della loro famiglia difficile. Tuttavia, ritenere questi uomini e donne le vittime infantili di forze troppo sofisticate e potenti per potere fare qualcosa, vorrebbe dire cadere nella trappola contro la quale il P. Reinhold ha lottato. Se i pescatori sono dei "cristiani con dignità e orgoglio maschile", allora essi sono capaci di sbagliare e di commettere peccato, e devono quindi accettare la loro responsabilità per le condizioni dell'industria, e la capacità di questa di riformare se stessa in modo significativo.

In un recente rapporto della Guardia Costiera degli USA, dal titolo "Morire per la pesca, vivere per la pesca", un studio commissionato al Comitato sugli Incidenti della Pesca, dichiarava che: "la pesca

commerciale continua ad essere la prima, o tra le prime occupazioni più rischiose negli Stati Uniti. Le norme di sicurezza delle navi sono al di sotto degli standard internazionali".

Sulla terra, noi come c a p p e l l a n i considereremmo un industriale colpevole di peccato grave se, consapevolmente e intenzionalmente, sottoponesse i suoi lavoratori a condizioni di lavoro pericolose e mortali. Inoltre, in caso di incidente sul lavoro in cui gli operai restano uccisi o feriti, egli sarebbe responsabile della loro



morte e delle loro ferite.

Poiché desiderava Betsabea, la donna del suo generale, Uria l'Hittita, il Re Davide lo pose alla testa del suo esercito e comandò a Ioab di ritirare le truppe, causando così la morte di Uria. Penso che un proprietario o un industriale che costringa i propri operai, sapendolo, a lavorare in un ambiente pericoloso e mortale, pecchi in un modo simile. Non uccide direttamente i suoi operai ma, certamente, crea consapevolmente l'ambiente propizio perché questo accada.

Se ciò è vero in terra, allora lo è certamente in

(to be continued on page 5)

(continued from page 4)

mare. Se il proprietario di una barca o il capitano di una nave lascia il porto su una imbarcazione in cattivo stato, se il capitano non ha la necessaria **f o r m a z i o n e**, se l'attrezzatura di emergenza e la radio non sono in buone condizioni, allora la barca affonda, e se ci sono feriti e morti, egli non può difendersi dicendo che si tratta di "un atto di Dio" o

di qualcosa che fa semplicemente parte dell'industria della pesca. Come il Re David peccò contro il Signore creando un ambiente che condusse Uria alla morte, così il proprietario o il capitano della nave, alla ricerca di sempre più denaro, peccano contro il Signore quando mettono in pericolo la propria vita e quella dell'equipaggio prendendo il mare su una nave in

cattivo stato. Noi, a Port Arthur, abbiamo visto avvenire numerosi incidenti durante l'ultima campagna di pesca. In quasi ogni caso, migliori conoscenze e pratiche lavorative li avrebbe impediti. Al termine della mia esposizione, vorrei ricordare che quando accade un incidente, esso non si ripercuote solo



In Spain

National Congress

“For the Labor and Social Protection of Seafarers’ Families”

Last November 28th, a Congress “**For the Labor and Social Protection of Seafarers’ Families**” took place in Vigo in the Maritime Fishing Polytechnic Institute.

This was the start of an Awareness-Building Campaign for humanizing work on the sea. After presenting the situation in which fishers and their families live, the continuation of this campaign was announced in which an effort is being made to win the solidarity of our society by collecting signatures in support of the proposals presented at the opening ceremonies.

It was made known at the Congress that more than 20,000 backers had been obtained previously, before the beginning of the campaign. The communications media – TV, radio and written press – covered the Congress.

We believe that this Congress, which was planned as the beginning of the Awareness-Building Campaign “**For the Labor and Social Protection of Seafarers’ Families**”, has accomplished its task of making known **what we are trying to do**.

The response of solidarity from a society that has already shown signs of its sensitivity towards the slavery endured by the workers of the sea and their families is an incentive that encourages and spurs us to continue our work.

“*Rosa dos Ventos*” Association, Vigo

National Delegation Apostolate of the Sea for Fishing Spain



(CNN, May 2003—*excerpts*)

“Only 10% of large ocean fish remain ...”

A new global study concludes that 90 percent of all large fish have disappeared from the world's oceans in the past half century, the devastating result of industrial fishing.

The study, which took 10 years to complete and was published in the international journal *Nature* this week, paints a grim picture of the Earth's current populations of such species as sharks, sword-fish, tuna and marlin. The authors used data going back 47 years from nine oceanic and four continental shelf systems, ranging from the tropics to the Antarctic. Whether off the coast of Newfoundland, Canada, or in the Gulf of Thailand, the findings were dire, say the authors.

“I think the point is there is nowhere left in the ocean not overfished,” said Ransom Myers, a fisheries biologist at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia and lead author of the study.

Some in the fishing industry took issue with the tone of the report.

“I'm sure there are areas of the world with that level of depletion, but other areas are in good shape”, said Lorne Clayton, with the Canadian Highly Migratory Species Foundation, that supports the sustainable development of the tuna industry. He said some abuses of the past have ended: long drift nets are illegal, untended longlines are illegal, and many countries adhere to elaborate systems of licensing, quotas and third party observers working on

boats.

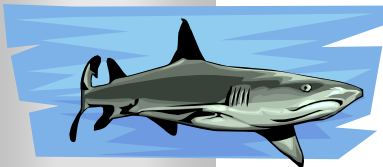
According to the report, the big declines in the numbers of large fish began when industrial fishing started in the early 1950s. Co-author Boris Worm, a marine ecologist with the Institute for Marine Science in Kiel, Germany, said the losses are having major impacts on the ocean ecosystems.

“The changes that will occur due to the decline of these species are hard to predict and difficult to understand. However, they will occur on a global scale, and I think this is the real reason for concern”. A few decades ago, longline fishing would catch about 10 big fish per 100 hooks. Now the norm is one fish per 100, with fish about half the weight of earlier years.

While the numbers are alarming, Worm said there are solutions. In the past when certain fishing areas

have been declared off limits and fishing restrictions have been enforced, certain fish and shellfish populations rebounded amazingly quickly. But with numbers down so dramatically in every part of the world, the situation cannot be ignored for long” he said.

Clayton said that technological advances were already responsible for improvements. Hi-tech equipment on fleets from many developed countries reduce the by-catch, the fish and other animals caught as by-products of the target fish. But a huge technological gap still exists between the fishing fleets of rich and poor nations, he said. He said it makes economic sense for the fishing industry to adhere to conservation measures, and to look at the expansion of aquaculture (fish farming) as part of the answer to dwindling.



Goodbye to irresponsible fishing?

The new fisheries partnership agreements being advocated by the European Union may eliminate irresponsible fishing practices

In December 2002, after a lengthy and gruelling process of review, consultation and negotiation, the European Union (EU) put the finishing touches to a package of long overdue fishery reforms. The previous year, in its analysis of the European Common Fisheries Policy (UP), the European Commission (EC) had acknowledged that, after 20 years, the CFP “has not delivered sustainable exploitation of fisheries resources”. In particular, it noted that:

(to be continued on page 7)

- available fishing capacity of the Community fleets far exceeds that required to harvest fish in a sustainable manner; - the overcapacity in EU fleets has resulted in overexploitation of target stocks and excessive pressure on non-target species; and the fishing industry is economically fragile as a result of over-investment, rapidly rising costs and a shrinking resource base.

The reforms were announced on 23 December 2002, following a five-day meeting of the Council of Fisheries Ministers from the 15 EU Member States. According to the press release issued by them, the reforms would place more emphasis on "the sustainable exploitation of living aquatic resources, based on sound scientific advice and on the precautionary approach to fisheries management, on the one hand, and on sustainable aquaculture, on the other. The CFP has now been firmly integrated within the Community's policy on sustainable development, taking account of environmental, economic and social aspects in a balanced manner."

Fine sounding words these may well be, but there is a highly uncompromising underlying message: if Europe wishes to maintain a healthy fishing sector in the long term, drastic short-term reductions in fishing capacity are needed. Without fish stocks, there can be no fisheries. And if European fish stocks are collapsing, then either the fishery sector has to follow suit or find alternative resources outside Europe. Likewise, fish consumers will have to depend increasingly on fish caught outside Europe, or face up to eating less wild-caught fish. Much greater emphasis will, therefore, have to be placed on Europe's international policy if the balance between supply and demand (for fishing opportunities and fishery products) is to be maintained.

The package of reforms for Europe's international fishing policy is to consist of 3 main elements:

- an action plan to eradicate illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing;
- an integrated framework for fisheries partnership agreements with third countries; and
- a research initiative towards assessments of resources in external waters.

(Samudra, March 2003)

From the Australia National Director's Report

National Initiatives

Mr. Ted Richardson, March 2003

Since returning from the World Congress in Rio, I have been encouraged to look at the Fishing Industry within Australia. Many years ago, the AOS had an **Association of Australian Coastal Seafarers and Fishers**, which was created for membership support for the apostolate. It never really succeeded in getting off the ground. In reading previous documents, there appeared to be no reason for members to join and those who did join, were already volunteers in the Seafarers' Centres.

But times change. I think a new approach may benefit the apostolate and the wider maritime community, with a special focus on the fishing commu-

nities. The concept of an association would be to develop membership by all those in the industry. Members would have access to Seafarers' Centre throughout Australia. We are in the development stage of a Maritime Industry Newsletter and we would form representatives of the industry to put forward submissions to State and Federal Governments when governments are contemplating changes to the industry.

There is no central organisation that fishermen belong to. There are no unions or associations to give them any sort of protection or speak on their behalf.

From the membership,

we would wish to be able to provide emergency financial support to the families of those members who lose their life at sea. I have been in touch with the National Coordinator for the St. Vincent De Paul Society, who has agreed to help co-ordinate this relief to these families throughout Australia.

I have also been in contact with Mr. Russ Neal of the Australian Seafood Industry Council, who has also been very supportive.

Since I started this project, over 20 seafarers have now perished along the Australian Coast and in many cases, the families have been left destitute. It is these families who we need to help most of all and the AOS as a creditable Welfare Agency, and our structure within the Church would allow us to utilise the services and networks of other agencies, such as the St. Vin-

Renewed edition of the Apostolic Letter Motu Proprio “Stella Maris”

Last May 26th, the President of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People sent the Holy Father a gift through the good offices of His Eminence the Cardinal Secretary of State: a bound copy of the text in seven languages of the Apostolic Letter Motu Proprio “Stella Maris” on the maritime apostolate, published in 1997.

His Eminence Cardinal Angelo Sodano answered as follows:

Vatican City, June 3, 2003

His Excellency
Archbishop Stephen Fumio Hamao
President of the Pontifical Council for the
Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People
Piazza S. Calisto 16
00153 Rome

Your Excellency:

In the letter N. 68000/2003/AM, dated May 26, 2003, you, together with His Excellency Agostino Marchetto, presented the Holy Father with the recent publication of the Apostolic Letter Motu Proprio “*Stella Maris*” on the maritime apostolate, which this Dicastery has translated and published in seven languages.

His Holiness sincerely thanks you for your kind gesture and for the generous commitment to deepening and disseminating this significant Document. He hopes that this valuable initiative will give rise to an ever more attentive human and pastoral care for the great family of the people of the sea.

With these wishes, as the Supreme Pontiff invokes the heavenly protection of the Virgin Mary, the Star of the Sea and Mother of seafarers, he imparts his heartfelt Apostolic Blessing to you, to His Excellency the Secretary, and to all your collaborators.

In reciprocating the greetings extended to me, I have the honor to be, Your Excellency,

Sincerely yours in the Lord,

Angelo Cardinal Sodano
Secretary of State

A report on the visit of Fr. Gérard Tronche in Cuba (May 19-28, 2003)

Mission to Cuba

On June 24, 1999, in front of all its Members who had come to Rome for the XIV^o Plenary Meeting of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, the President, H. E. Mgr Stephen Fumio Hamao, pledged in his Report on the activities of the Pontifical Council, that “*particular attention [would] be given to continuing the work of promoting the Apostleship of the Sea in the maritime countries where it is not present yet, particularly in Eastern Europe countries and in Cuba*”.

Two years later, the first seminar of Apostolatus Maris ever was held in Odessa, Ukraine, from 15 to 18 May 2001, under the auspices of His Eminence Cardinal Lubomyr Husar, Archbishop Major of Lviv.

May 2003, again two years later, I came back from a ten days visit in Cuba with a letter to our President, informing him that the Archbishops of La Habana and Santiago de Cuba, as well as the Bishop of Cienfuegos, had decided to launch the Apostleship of the Sea in the ports of their respective dioceses, and that they had appointed for maritime ministry Permanent Deacon Juan Rios in La Havana, Fr John Jairo Sierra in Cienfuegos and Fr Valentin Sanz, c.m., in Santiago de Cuba.

In fact things had really started moving with the

Catholic Bishops Conference of Cuba sending a delegate to the XXI^o World Congress of the Apostleship of the Sea in Rio de Janeiro (Oct. 2002).

This delegate, Dr Rolando Suarez Cobián, Executive Secretary of the Episcopal Commission for Human Mobility, came back to Cuba an ardent promoter of the AOS. Without him this mission would not have been possible. He prepared a comprehensive programme, having arranged all necessary appointments during which he often acted also as interpreter.

I landed in La Havana on Monday evening May 19. Our first appointment was already at 9 a.m. on the following day with Sr. Ing. Joaquin León, Head of the Pastoral Department and later with Msgr. José Félix Riera, Executive Secretary of the Conference of Catholic Bishops of Cuba (COCC). H.E. Cardinal Jaime L. Ortega y Alamino, Archbishop of La Habana and President of the COCC received us that afternoon

for a long, fraternal and very informative conversation. The Permanent Deacon Juan Rios, recently appointed for the AOS by the Cardinal, had joined us for this visit. Between these two visits I had gladly answered the invitation for lunch by H.E. Msgr José Luis Robles, the Apostolic Nuncio in Cuba who kindly offered us a driver and a Toyota for going, the following day to Cienfuegos, across the Island.

A meeting with H. E. Msgr. Carlos Baladrón Valdés, Bishop of Guantanamo-Baracoa and President of the Episcopal Commission for Human Mobility, was planned for Thursday, during our visit to Santiago de Cuba.

Wednesday was Cienfuegos' day. We were cordially received by H.E. Msgr. Emilio Aranguren Echeverria, who is also the Secretary of the COCC, and Fr John Jairo Sierra, the Parish Priest of the Cathedral. Thursday and Friday we were in Santiago de Cuba, hosts of the Archbishop, H.E. Mgr Pe-

(to be continued on page 10)



(continued from page 9)

dro Meurice Estiú, where we met also Fr Valentin Sanz, c.m., the Director of the Church of San Francisco de Asís, close to the Port, and Miss Mercedes Ferreiro, i/c of the pastoral programmes in the Archdiocese. She organised for us a visit – on board a Plymouth vintage 1949! - of the Bay, the Cathedral and the historical City. We also visited the Sanctuary of Nuestra Señora de la Caridad del Cobre.

Last but not least, on Wednesday 28, we made a courtesy visit to the person in charge of the Office of Religious Affairs at the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba, the assistant for the Catholic Church being present.

In order to make known this ministry to the public, the logo of the AOS will be put on the notice boards of all three Cathedrals, in the Churches of Nuestra Señora del Carmen en Casablanca (La Habana) and of San Francisco de Asís (Santiago de Cuba), where the ministry will start.

Rolando, as Executive Secretary of the Commission on Human Mobility of the COCC will establish contacts with the AOS ministries in various ports in the world where ships in Cuba come from to exchange information and to facilitate the orientation of the professionals of the sea, once they are on these shores. Our colleagues of the Apostleship of the Sea in Barcelona, Marseilles, Vigo, Rotterdam, Tampico, Veracruz, Puerto Cabello and Haina can therefore expect to hear from him.

In La Havana, the “Historiador” of the City will be approached in view of exploring the possibility of creating a Stella Maris Seafarers’ Centre in La Habana Vieja. In the Cienfuegos Diocese, cruise ships visit the port and some merchant ships too whose crews start to go and visit the Cathedral. At Santiago de Cuba, Fr Valentin Sanz, c.m., has already visited cruise ships in the past (the *Mistral* is a regular visitor on Wednesdays and another smaller ship on Sundays); and he has celebrated Mass on board, although each time after long negotiations... He would appreciate the gift of missals in English and in French; for now he can only ‘borrow’ one in English.

They are looking forward to welcome, in the name of the local church and society, seafarers and professionals of the sea arriving in their ports, and offering them pastoral ministry including the sacraments and spiritual counselling as needed, some information on the city, its inhabitants and its services of interest, and eventually the possibility, if conditions are fulfilled, to be able to communicate with their families or be given access to periodicals from or information concerning their own country. Captains should not be afraid of asking the maritime and party authorities to allow the celebration of Holy Mass on board their

ships. Starting with the creation of a minimum service they hope to be able to develop Stella Maris Centres which will be someday either independent or part of some existing port facilities where seafarers may be welcomed, offered means of communication with home, snacks, a place to rest or to sleep.

Transportation from and to the port will be needed everywhere. It is understood that the main argument for any request for help from any sponsor is in quoting the relative number of seafarers who will profit by the services offered by the Apostleship of the Sea in that Port.

We pray that the Spirit of Pentecost will strengthen the network of the Apostleship of the Sea in the Caribbean area, where, we are convinced of it, the Church in Cuba will play an important role. Nuestra Señora de la Regla, Nuestra Señora del Carmen, Nuestra Señora de la Caridad del Cobre, *ruega por nosotros*, pray for us.



Don Giacomo Martino, National Director, Italy

A Growth in Commitment

From the Annual Report of the Italian Apostleship of the Sea, 2002

The new National Board of Directors has been created: it is the first AMI executive body made of priests committed in the field and laypersons like Admiral Pollastrini and Dr. Ivo Guidi, who represent respectively the port authorities and shipping agents in Italy. The maritime world is evolving very rapidly, making it necessary to invent new pastoral approaches.

This year particular consideration was given to the fact that:

- In the conventional ports, the use of containers is increasing and speeding up the operations of loading and unloading goods. This results in less and less time for the crews to make contact with the civil and ecclesial society, and thus fewer chances to make

contact with their own families too.

- The scourge of flags of convenience continues that allows unscrupulous ship owners to embark persons who have no certainty they will get a fair salary. Up to 15% of the seafarers who embark live in a real situation of slavery: uncertainty about salary, the lack of health care, the absence of laws that protect workers, and dangerous conditions due to the lack of safety on board.

- The phenomenon continues of ships retained or "sequestered" in ports because of ship owners' insolvency. Entire crews stay for months and years away from their families, without food, clothing, salary or heating. In 1999 and 2000, in Italy alone, no

less than 40 ships and crews were put under judicial restraint with various, usually grave consequences for the people of the sea, but especially for their families who are left without the support and affection of their loved ones "kidnapped" in a foreign land.

- On cargo ships, at least 50% of the crews are Filipinos. Both from the visits on board and in the hospitality centers, it appears that 75% of them are Catholic and 85% Christian. All of them greet the priests and lay volunteers with great joy and often ask for Mass on board and the sacraments of Confession and Communion, which is also distributed by the Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist. The ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue is excellent.

(to be continued on page 12)



With this book, the Authors want to help seafarers aboard many types of vessels to identify the work-related difficulties they may encounter, inform them of the regulations that apply, and advise them of the best way to secure their rights in various situations.

Cornell Maritime Press Centreville,
Maryland 21617, USA, US\$ 14,00

Handbook of Rights and Concerns for Mariners



**Roberto Tiangco
Russ Jackson**

(Continued from page 11)

Based on these indications, efforts were made to:

- publish a book of photos to awaken public opinion to the major themes and emergencies of the sea, especially arrested ships;

- provide “newspapers” in various languages regarding the different geographical areas to all the centers welcoming seafarers around the world, by preparing and disseminating them on the Internet;

- prepare an internet formation programme for the volunteers in order to make an Internet and e-mail service available in all the centers;

- promote and encourage the creation of new hospitality centers, tying them definitively to an already existing parish church so that maritime pastoral care will be part of ordinary pastoral care by full right;

- create an atmosphere of new relations with the civil authorities and shipping agencies. In particular, a new, officially sanctioned relation with the port authorities is emphasized.

The AMI, office of the Migrants Foundation, has made efforts to create some national and regional **task forces** to tackle the grave emergencies of arrested ships and stowaways on board ships. In Italy, more than 20 ships, along with their crews, are currently blocked in the ports.

A task force of maritime lawyers will focus on providing free assistance for the rapid repatriation of the

crews, and helping them to get their honestly earned salaries. They will also deal with the cases of stowaways who remain on boardship for years, stateless and hopeless, and at times even risk being thrown into the sea.

Another task force will be dedicated to doctors, psychologists and specialists for free assistance regarding any kind of disturbance related to the demands of maritime navigation (distance from home, brief stops in ports, scarce economic means). On the other hand, the regional centers will get ready to collect food, clothing and equipment for the hundreds of seafarers who are “prisoners” on the arrested ships and in need of the bare essentials. Moreover, it is planned to promote welfare committees for seafarers in the Italian ports by contacting all the public and private actors in the maritime port world, the coordination of projects to give rise to structures and reinforce the Stella Maris in the ports, and legal assistance to the AM structures by the ITF structure in Italy.

Chaplains On Board

The unique experience of the Italian Church encourages intensifying this missionary generosity, which is also a choice of sharing and solidarity. To date, a dozen priests are regularly involved in the difficult but fruitful pastoral task of regularly assisting the crews and passengers on eight ships. Every day more than 6,000 seafarers and 14,000 passengers receive the Church’s pastoral care.

Their presence is essential for the people of the sea with long contracts of 8-12 months away from their families. Until today about 30 priests, of whom only 8 are full time, are regularly involved in this service. However, it is becoming more and more difficult to find priests who understand the need for this apostolate in support of seafarers and, at the same time, their families who are waiting for them at home. In this regard, two formation and awareness-building courses (also for seminarians) have been organized. These occasions have given a new pastoral impulse with a sizeable group of young people currently involved in this ministry in a regular way.

Fishers. The decrease in



what was once a strong area of commitment is due above all to the fishers’ changed living conditions, which are no longer grave. Today Italian fishing does not oblige them to stay away from home for long periods of time, nor is it subject to serious accidents on the job. Moreover, particular contracts ensure at least a minimum wage for these fishers who once lived on the precariousness of the more or less abundant catch.

Alongside, Issue 1, Easter 2003

“Alongside”
is the new
newsletter of
AOS Eng-
land and
Wales. It will
be published
4 times per
year, with
each edition
focussing on
Mission,
Solidarity,
Welfare,
Hospitality.

“Anchor”
has now be-
come the in-
ternal news-
letter, for all
who are in-
volved in the
work in the
ports – chap-
lains, ships
visitors, driv-
ers and cen-
tre volun-
teers, etc.

Building Global Solidarity AOS Campaigns

ILO Convention 163 and Recommendation 173 are both concerned with seafarers' welfare. They are both important, yet they have not yet been ratified by the UK government.

Ratification is crucial. Why?

- To ensure that the UK plays and is seen to be playing its part in promoting human rights on the international scene, in a global industry which the UK is particularly reliant upon, being an island.
- To strengthen the preparation for the ILO Geneva Convention in 2005, so that the UK can negotiate from a position of strength having led by example. It rings hollow if we are asking other to fulfil obligation towards seafarers if we fail to ratify conventions such as 163 and 173.

Looking towards 2005

All current ILO maritime conventions and recommendations will be consolidated and updated into a single framework convention in 2005, with the aim to making easier to ratify and enforce than the plethora of conventions that exists at present. Nonetheless, ratification of 163 and 173 is too important to ignore.

What to do?

Contact AOS for an Action Sheet on ILO 163 § 173.

Leadership and teamwork

The Future Leaders project of the Nautical Institute

As a major contribution towards the 'Future Leaders' project, part of the Institute's strategic plans, Glasgow hosted a major seminar on leadership and teamwork in the shipping industry.

Delegates from many shipping sectors, most with strong ship management serving master experience, took part in the event and contributed to the lively debate.

The positive outcome is the formation of a working group under the chairmanship of the N.I. West of Scotland Branch Chairman and comprising representatives of all the Glasgow based ship management and shipowning companies plus serving masters. They are tasked to:

1. Draw up and agree a specification of best practices as regards leadership and teamworking training. It is likely that this will incorporate at least some management training due to the inter-relationship of these subjects.
2. Assess what training is already available internationally and estimate usage of that training so as to estimate need for a new training scheme.
3. Fund the NI to develop a training scheme based on the specification in 1. above.
4. NI Diploma Scheme to be linked to promotion selection and preferably providing credits towards a degree.

This working group will require input from the international shipping community and they will be able to get some of this from their worldwide network offices. However, NI branches in all parts of the world are invited to organise workshops on particular aspects of leadership and teamworking training from their national perspective and to feed the results of these workshops to the working group via NIHQ.

(Seaways, June 2003)

(Le Monde, Tuesday, March 25, 2003)

With Malta and Cyprus, the European Union becomes the first Merchant Marine in the world

The entry of Malta and Cyprus into the EU does not simply extend the Community to 25 in a southerly direction; this will also open it up a little more to the high seas. These countries are in fact great maritime powers both in commercial and financial terms. The weight of these two island-States is going to make the EU the first merchant marine in the world, thereby deposing Panama. Moreover, if we look from the Baltic coast, Poland and the three Baltic States will bring the "old" Europe an additional, significant naval dimension in the concert of nations.

The maritime constituent of membership negotiations between the authorities of the two Mediterranean States and the Commission has been delicate because both Malta and Cyprus (in fifth and sixth places worldwide in terms of tonnage) have long had a reputation – confirmed to a great extent – of harboring some disreputable operators under their flags.

Their social, fiscal and ownership laws, and their requirements on the subject of the safety and control of ships were known for their liberalism, or even laxity. This was the reason for the influx of offshore companies, intermediaries, and lawyers, but also wheeler-dealers specialized in creating screen companies and fictitious licenses. Cyprus and Malta are among the

"least well thought of" flags of convenience and the surest ones for hiding income or making it disappear.

Today Brussels has been assured that both Nicosia and La Valetta have accepted to comply, without any delay or requests for dispensation, with all the rules in force – the "community attainments" – at the moment of

their entry, especially with regard to the sensitive matter of maritime safety.

The shipwreck of the old Maltese oil tanker, *Erika*, off the coast of Brittany in December 1999, which caused a dramatic oil slick, and all the irregularities revealed at that time surely played a part in accelerating this awareness building.

The EU is looking for professionals for maritime transport

Yesterday the Ministers for Transportation of the EU officially adopted a series of measures to improve the image of transportation in view of the scarcity of professionals in a key sector involved in exporting 90% of the community goods.

As the Commissioner for Transportation and Vice-President of the European Commission, Loyola de Palacio, explained in a press conference, these proposals will be presented for official approval at the next EU Council of Ministers for Transportation in Luxembourg from June 5-6. In an informal ministerial meeting held on board a vessel anchored in the Greek locality of Santorini (Aegean Sea), the representatives of the 15 countries expressed their agreement on the need to achieve a quality maritime sector that will make it possible to attract the new generations.

The participants also agreed that the recent maritime accidents should not tarnish the image of this means of transportation, which is the most effective, inexpensive and respectful of the environment. Moreover, the request for maritime services will grow in the next decade, and by the year 2010 there will be a deficit of 46,000 officers around the world: i.e., 12% of the labor force in this sector, with one-third of its total capacity corresponding to the EU. For this reason, interest must be promoted among young people in the maritime professions given that the segment of the population between 15 and 25 years of age rarely achieves a 40% employment rate, and in some countries, scarcely 30%.

As Loyola de Palacio stated, this current disinterest on the part of young people in the maritime professions "will have very grave effects in the mid-term". She pointed out the need to improve working conditions in all the EU countries in order to facilitate the entry of new professionals because the coastal population, from which these workers traditionally came, is not supplying enough candidates to replace the current ones. The promotional campaigns ought to reach citizens of other areas that do not have working in the maritime sector among their possibilities.

(From "El faro de

News from Canada

*This little phrase was on a poster given to me by one of the staff at the Diocesan Centre where I work. There have been many times over the past few years, being involved with the AOS and the Seaman's Mission, that this had come to mind frequently.

There is no point in dwelling on the past but, in regards to the Mission, there were numerous issues of power, changing times, and openness. The Seaman's Mission in St John had its roots in a very old club, which was established in the late 1800s. In recent times, they've merged with the Catholic Seafarers' Chaplaincy. Difficulties from this merger did not arise in the context of the ecumenical effort and work-

ing together, or the lack of physical resources as they were provided by ITF. It was the gradual loss of key volunteers and supportive groups which, due to age or death, left very few of us behind to face all the turmoil of current changes in sea transportation practice.

Prayer was plentiful but the need was to reach into our community for the type of faith-filled persons willing to share their skills and abilities. The port CEO was the first to come on board. He had always been a friend to the Mission and had been a seafarer himself. He spoke of the value of the Missions during his days at sea. Bridges began to be built with the long-shoremen, security guards, service personnel, and others.

This has brought a harmony and sense of fraternity, not only for those from the sea, but also those they encounter in port.

We have a long way to go but there is renewed hope and purpose. The addition of a new staff chaplain, a retired Presbyterian minister, who relates well to all faith perspectives and liaises well with us, is a tremendous asset. We have been able to raise support for a Mission manager. She is the glue and pulse-taker for all of us.

Easter is just past and the Resurrection image comes strongly to mind. We only have to lift our gaze to see and recognize the gifts and giftedness within our own sight. The Holy Spirit does the rest.

*"When you come to the end of your rope, tie a knot in it and hang on"**

All the Nations of the World are on Board together for the same Expedition

The change from the centrally steered system of economy to the free market economy has caused some phenomena not experienced in Poland so far. Some of them are the painful processes of collapse of shipping firms. The impoverished seamen's community is facing problems concerning difficulties with working under foreign flags, as there are only few ships flying the Polish flag.

Once a seafarer starts working for a foreign shipowner, he is made to accept the conditions offered by the employer, such as mixed crews, consisting of representatives of different nationalities, faith and culture. It is undoubtedly a chance for deepening one's personality and enriching one's vision of the world. Nevertheless, we must also see the disadvantages, which cause depression, the feeling of uncertainty, and quite often the necessity of bearing the consequences resulting from not receiving pay for the work done, working the posts not demanding such high qualifications and many other inconveniences. Normal life at sea is quite often made difficult due to a language barrier which results in stresses and tensions among the crew.

The majority of the Polish seafarers are believers. In the existing situation, there are many opportunities of deepening one's view of the world in a religious sense and many opportunities to be witnesses of one's religious beliefs. Love for the other, respect, understanding and trust are necessary elements of common life on board.

Our faith cannot be hidden: we have to share it with others in good and in bad times. It must also mean a warm-hearted bond among people, among friends, and on board among crewmembers. Human beings are not able to love God with their own power, so due to grace, they were given love. Love for others is the sign of real love for God. Jesus even calls us to love our enemies: "... love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven," (Mt 5,44-45).

Faith in God as the Creator is the essence of Catholicism, and it is from this faith that faith in the unity of all people and equal dignity of every human being stems. I quote the poem by Ingrid Hagerup: *"All nations are on board together for the same expedition, We cannot stay on land and stare as you set sail for a voyage, our little Earth. We sail on rough sea, willing to reach the port safely. Lonely, we must sail together, in the name of friendship among people."* Let the words that the Holy Father said on a 'Migration Day', "Embrace one another, for Christ has embraced you", accompany the People of the sea all over the world, wherever they happen to be on the seas and oceans of the world. The sea, which is a vast Church of the world and a place of deepening faith, will give us strength to overcome the crises which have affected the People of the Sea.

(From a reflection of **Joanna Rylko**, AOS Gdynia, Poland)

ARGENTINA

Fr. Costanzo Tessari, c.s., has been appointed National Director of the Apostleship of the Sea, replacing Fr. P. Aloys Knečick, now in Uruguay.

We send him our best wishes for a renewed commitment in the maritime apostolate in his country. copuntrymarittima in quel Paese.

CUBA

(new addresses)

LA HABANA - Diacono Juan Ríos
Iglesia Nuestra Señora del Carmen
Casablanca, Ciudad de La Habana, Tel. 830 1230

CIENFUEGOS - Fr. John Jairo Sierra
Parroco de la S.M.I.Catedral de Cienfuegos

SANTIAGO DE CUBA - Fr. Valentin Sanz, c.m.
Convento San Francisco, Sagarra 121
tel/fax 622 812 valentin@cocc.co.cu

VENEZUELA

PUERTO CABELLO *(new address)*

Stella Maris, Zona 1, Muelles, by the Fire Station
Tel +58 (242) 4152 176 puertocabello@stellamaris.net
Director: G. Irving Vierma L. Chaplain: Fr. Luis Parada

A decision that counts

Last March 5th, the February 11, 2002 decision made by the Naples court became final regarding recognition of social security benefits for 43 workers of the sea from Procida who had been exposed to asbestos for a period of over ten years.

These benefits provide that the social security contributions accrued during the period of exposure to asbestos will be multiplied up to a maximum of 40 years. In other words, for the seafarers embarked on ships where the presence of asbestos in the rooms and equipment on board has been proven, 50% of the period of navigation carried out in addition to what was accrued was recognized. This was the first decision of its kind ever made in Italy.

(“Vita e Mare”. Anno XXXX, no. 34, March-April 2003)

Acronyms & abbreviations *(to be continued)*

A mariners' instant guide to some of the acronyms and abbreviations in use at sea and ashore.

Compiled by The Nautical Institute

LEO — low earth orbit (satellite configuration)	LST — local standard time
LF —summer fresh water load line (timber)	LW — low water, winter load line (timber)
LLA — Local Lighthouse Authority	LWL — length on water line, low water line
LMT —local mean time	MAIB — Marine Accident Investigation Board
LNG — liquified natural gas	MAIIF —Marine Accident Investigators' Int. Forum
LO —lubricating oil	Marisat — maritime satellite system
LOA — length over all	Marpol 73/78 — International Convention for the
LOC — letter of credit, letter of compliance	Prevention of Pollution from Ships, IMO
LOL — limitation of owner's liability, loss of life	Mb — megabyte
LOP — line of position	MEO — medium earth orbit (satellite configuration)
LOR — letter of readiness	MEPC — Marine Environment Protection Committee,IMO
LOS — line of site, Law of the Sea	MERSAR — Merchant Ship Search and Rescue Manual
LP — liquid petroleum, low pressure	MIS — management information system
LSA — life saving appliance	MNI — Member of The Nautical Institute

**Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care
of Migrants and Itinerant People**
Palazzo San Calisto - Vatican City
Tel. +39-06-6988 7131
Fax +39-06-6988 7111
e-mail: office@migrants.va
<http://www.stellamaris.net>
[www.vatican.va/Roman Curia/Pontifical Councils ...](http://www.vatican.va/Roman_Curia/Pontifical_Councils ...)

