

Apostolatus Maris

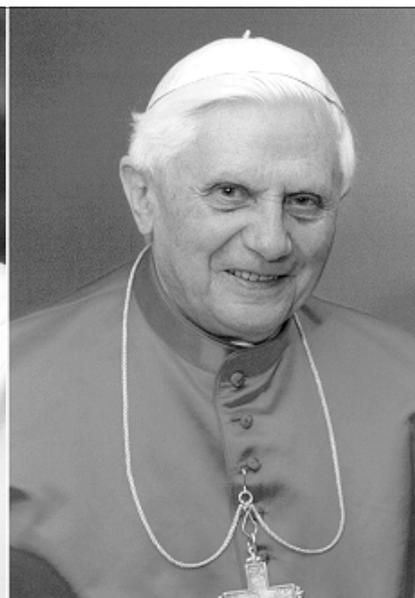
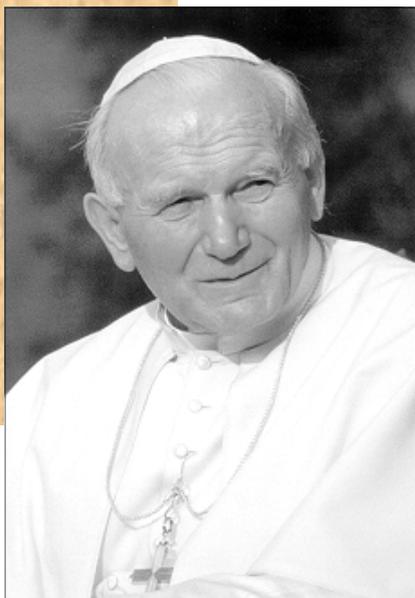
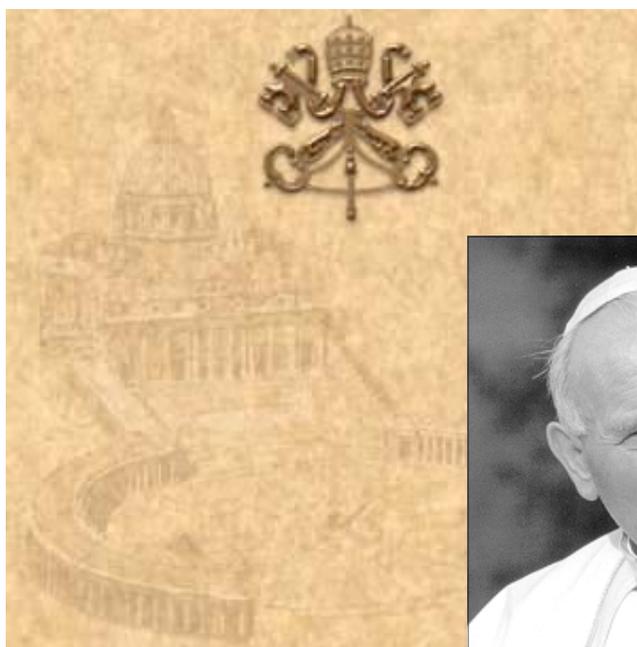
The Church in the Maritime World

Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People



N. 87, 2005/II

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF JOHN PAUL II



« **BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD** »

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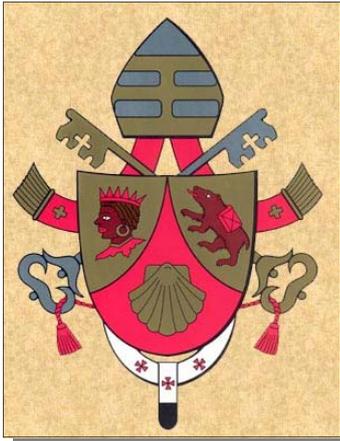
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I seem to feel his strong hand clasp mine; I seem to see his smiling eyes and hear his words, at this moment addressed specifically to me,

"Do not be afraid!".

*First Message of His Holiness Benedict XVI
at the end of the Eucharistic Concelebration with the
members of the College of Cardinals in the Sistine
Chapel*

Wednesday, 20 April 2005

THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL BEST WISHES TO BENEDICT XVI

AFTER RESUMING THE RHYTHM OF DAILY WORK, I TURN TO YOUR HOLINESS WITH MY THOUGHTS AND AFFECTION TO EXPRESS TO YOUR PERSON THE DEEPEST SUPPORT OF THE SUPERIORS AND OFFICIALS OF THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL OVER WHICH I PRESIDE ON THE OCCASION OF THE BEGINNING OF YOUR PETRINE MINISTRY.

WE EXPRESS OUR DEVOTION TO YOUR HOLINESS AND THE ASSURANCE OF OUR COMPLETE AND HUMBLE COLLABORATION AS WELL AS OUR CONSTANT PRAYERS FOR THE REALIZATION OF THE GREAT CAUSE OF THE GOSPEL AND THE TRUE GOOD OF HUMANITY.

WE ASK YOU FOR YOUR BLESSING, HOLY FATHER.

YOURS DEVOTEDLY , GRATEFULLY AND OBEDIENTLY,



STEPHEN FUMIO CARDINAL HAMA
PRESIDENT

On the side the explanation of the new Pontiff's coat of arm

IN REMEMBRANCE OF JOHN PAUL II

The Apostleship of the Sea lived John Paul II's last moments with deep sadness. But as the new Pontiff Benedict XVI said, they were extraordinary days "of grace for the Church and for the entire world". We who have had the privilege to serve him, were witnesses to the people's fervor and exceptional solidarity that we will never forget.

All those—like us—who were in Rome were profoundly struck by the serenity and great faith which animated the immense crowds of pilgrims that came from all over Italy and the world to gather together around the beloved Pontiff in a kind of last embrace.

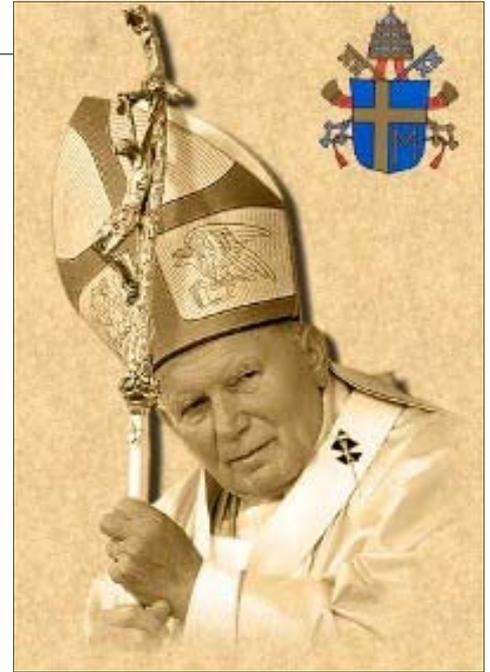
Our words, which are too poor for such a great man, want to express our gratitude for the love He always showed to the Apostleship of the Sea, in particular through the Apostolic Letter *Motu Proprio Stella Maris*, which he gave us as a gift in 1997.

John Paul II never lost an opportunity to express his solidarity and show his interest in our ministry. His devotion to the *Stella Maris* was well-known. He liked to say that the title of Star of the Sea was attributed to Mary because she shows us the right direction to reach the port and not get lost, especially at night and in a storm.

On the day of his funeral in St. Peter's Square, the cry rang out, "Santo subito!" (declare him a saint immediately). We too ask him to continue to intercede with the Father for us, and to him we say:

Thank you, Holy Father!

From these pages, we send our heartfelt thanks to all the members of the Apostleship of the Sea around the world for their expressions of solidarity and nearness, in word and in prayer, on the occasion of John Paul II's death



Pope Benedict XVI's coat of arms (in red and gold) incorporates symbols which he had already introduced into his heraldic device when he was Archbishop of Munich and

Freising and later Cardinal. The shell is meant to recall the legend attributed to Saint Augustine about his encounter with a small boy on the beach who was trying to use a shell to pour all the water from the sea into a sand hole. The Saint asked him what he was doing and explained that his attempt was futile, but Augustine also understood the reference to his own futile efforts to try and contain God's infinity within the limited human mind. The bear's head is the ancient symbol of the Diocese of Freising which became a Metropolitan Archdiocese with the name of Munich and Freising in 1818.

The brown bear with a pack on its back represents an ancient tradition about the first Bishop of Freising, Saint Corbinian (who was born around 680 in Châtres, France, and died on September 8, 730). After setting off for Rome on horseback, he was attacked by a bear that mauled his horse. However, the bishop not only managed to tame the bear, but he also made it carry his load and accompany him to Rome.

An entirely new symbol in Pope Benedict XVI's coat of arms is the pallium, which indicates the charge entrusted to him by Christ to be the pastor of the flock.

Lastly, the absence of a motto in the Pope's coat of arms signifies openness without any exclusion to all the ideals derived from faith, hope and charity.

THE EMBRACE OF OUR CHRISTIAN BROTHERS AND SISTERS



On behalf of the Chairman and the Executive Committee of **ICMA** I would like to offer you our condolences upon the death of Pope John Paul II.

We admired the great efforts the Pope made to be close to his people, travelling world-wide to be with them despite his personal suffering. We also deeply respected his energy in bridging the divides between people, between churches and between religions. Even to those of us who only knew him through the television the Pope's humanity and integrity shone through.

Our sadness at the passing of Pope John Paul II is tempered by our confidence that his successor will endeavour to further strengthen ecumenical co-operation between all Christians.

**Juergen R.A. Kanz,
Secretary General of ICMA**

I never had the privilege of meeting John Paul II but I shall miss him. Because I am among the many millions who have grown to love him. May the legacy of his life continue to radiate the unconditional love of Christ in a world which never need it more!

Roald Kverndal, Int. President of IASMM

Be assured that my thoughts and prayers are with you and your community at this time of great loss. I trust that your hopes for the church and maritime ministry in particular will lead you through the sense of grief and encourage you to continuing witness of the gospel, with the same fervour as the late Holy Father witnessed to his faith in his leadership.

The prayers of The Mission to Seafarers are with you at this time.

**Ken Peter
Justice & Welfare Secretary
Mission to Seafarers**

On behalf of the Directors and staff of **BISS** I would like to offer to you and all the members of the AOS, our most sincere and heartfelt condolences upon the death of Pope John Paul II.

The loss of such an outstanding and long serving leader will be felt by you all, but we know that the strength of the Church will be undimmed and we are confident that the new Pope will continue to foster a spirit of ecumenical co-operation which will enable our two Societies to work ever more closely.

**Alan Smith
British & International Sailors Society**

On behalf of the board of the **German Seamen's Mission** and our staff I would like to offer to you and all members of the Apostleship of the Sea, our most sincere and heartfelt condolences upon the death of Pope Jean Paul II.

I realise the great and overwhelming mourning all over the world upon the death of this very popular and close the people feeling leader of your church.

What Pope John Paul II has been in the world I find it expresses in the daily bible reading in 1st Thes 5,16 ff. "Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus". He has been a enthused witness of our Lord.

**Hero Feenders,
General Secretary
German Seamen's Mission**

SEA SUNDAY—JULY 10, 2005

A message from the Pontifical Council

As we celebrate Sea Sunday, our hearts and thoughts go to all seafarers, fishers, cruise ships personnel and passengers, port workers, sail competitions and yachting people, and their families. On this occasion we are reminded of the debt our society owes to these workers, as “we depend on them” to ensure the transportation of almost everything we use or consume, to receive food from the sea than 90% of the trade and commerce done by sea. Achieving this demand a great amount of courage, sacrifice and professional expertise, and yet the great majority of seafarers feel that their contribution to world economy is neither recognized nor justly rewarded.

Thus, in spite of the efforts of agencies such as the IMO, ILO and the FAO and of the protests of many Unions and NGOs, there are still many unresolved situations affecting the life and dignity especially of fishers and seafarers. Sufferings, specifically of people on the move, are caused in great part by the violation of human rights, notwithstanding the fact that society has an obligation to create the conditions, also for all of them, to live peacefully and decently.

Evermore, recently, we have been witnesses of increasing and unjustified detention and criminalisation of seafarers. There have also been many reports from our chaplains and pastoral agents complaining that access to the crew of the ships is becoming more and more difficult, even for moral reasons. Last year there were widespread protests also on the restriction to seafarers shore leave, but so far there have been no immediate significant improvements of such situation.

We are evermore all aware that HIV/AIDS represents a human catastrophe of large scale and we must admit that seafarers and fishers, and other categories alike, who travel all over the world as a community face grave risks. Therefore, as far as this pandemic is concerned, it is our duty to be aware of the problem and to combat it. Thus I encourage AOS around the world to resolutely engage itself, in conformity with the moral teaching of the Church, in the formation of the people concerned and to challenge discrimination and marginalisation, wherever it exists, towards those living with HIV/AIDS. In fact we must show them unwavering solidarity. Pope John Paul II spoke several times against any discriminatory treatment of people suffering from HIV/AIDS, and once he declared: “God loves you all without distinction, without limit. He loves those of you who are sick, those suffering from AIDS. He loves the friends and relatives of the sick and those who care for them. He loves all with an unconditional and everlasting love” (Address given at “Mission Dolores” Basilica, San Francisco, 17th September 1987).

Among other things, may we remember that the concept of “fair trade” is progressing slowly but surely in many parts of the world. A growing number of consumers are being sensitized to it. So, because sea transport is an essential part of international trade, has the time not come to extend the notion of “fair trade” to maritime transport, fishing and other categories alike?

On this auspicious day I would like to say again to the People of the Sea the resolute commitment and solidarity of the Church with them and their families. I commend the chaplains, pastoral agents and volunteers for their commitment. Let us always be guided by these words of the Apostle Paul: “Don’t let evil defeat you, but defeat evil with good” (Romans 12:21). It was a passage of the Holy Scripture repeated frequently by Pope John Paul II.

May Our Lady, the “Stella Maris”, be always our model and our “compass”, may She intercede for us so that we may be protected from every risk and danger.

God bless you and protect you all!

Stephen Fumio Cardinal Hamao, President

+ Archbishop Agostino Marchetto, Secretary



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Stephen Fumio Cardinal Hamao, President

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THE FATIGUE ON WORK AT SEA

by Cristina Castro Garcia, A.M. Vigo, Spain

Fishing labors, which are carried out in the far-off silence of the sea, set in motion the workers' exploitation under the command of the fishing boss, the direct employer on board. We call this situation "the silent slavery of the 21st century".

If we reflect on the working day of industrial fishing workers, which can be as long as 20 or even 24 hours without any rest, we can deduce the situation in which these workers are trapped for the five or seven months that a sea tour of duty can last, far from their families, in difficult living conditions with reduced quarters, no privacy, always with the same persons and without the necessary socio-psychological preparation to withstand this, whereas some of their stays on land last 20 days or a month.

A proposal from the "Rosa dos Ventos" Association, AM Vigo, Spain

The fishers' primary role attracts attention when their work takes on the rhythm of the catches and causes **fatigue**.

Following the observations of the WHO (STW Committee) about this situation, fatigue can be caused by the following factors:

- Prolonged periods of mental or physical activity;
- Inadequate or insufficient rest;
- Psychological factors;
- Situations of stress, tension or similar.

With the following consequences:

- Decrease in human performance;
- Slowdown of physical and mental reflexes;
- Deterioration of the ability to make rational judgments.



For all this we can ask ourselves: Which one of these factors and consequences is not produced in fishing work? And with what effectiveness can the formation be applied—which is required in order to embark after taking courses on Safety, Fire Prevention and Survival—in this situation of physical and mental deterioration which the crews suffer, with grave repercussions for safety and the risk of accidents or death?

All of this is the result of the business structure in which there is only one objective: **to fill the holds in the least time possible**, without getting involved with relief crews because the salary will be "apart" or have a hidden percentage that hides an insult to social justice. Some businessmen are protected by the Administration not only for the lack of legal protection of the workers, but also for the economic aid they get to restructure the fleet in collusion with the UE. **The fishers are required to put economic interests before the humanization of labor.**

In view of this lack of protection, our commitment was born "For the labor and social protection of the seafarer's family" through an awareness-building campaign and by gathering signatures.

The campaign denounces:

- The situation of fatigue and
- The prolonged family separation.

The proposal calls for:

- The installation of web cameras in the fish pounds of ships;
- Sea tours of 4 months and 2 months of rest on land.

To support these demands, a Project co-financed with European Social Funds is proposed.

THE 93RD INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE

FAILS TO ADOPT NEW FISHING CONVENTION FOR WORLD'S FISHERS

**Excerpts from the address of Archbishop Silvano Tomasi,
Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the Office of the U.N.
and Specialized Institutions in Geneva,
on the occasion of the 93rd International Labor Conference (June 7, 2005)**

An important sign of the continued dynamism of the ILO is its persevering commitment to focus on forced labor as well as on all segments of the world of work that are most emarginated. The workers of the sea have not been forgotten. For fishermen, a much needed instrument that holds the potential for improving the life of 90% of these most forgotten people, is the convention hopefully to be approved and opened for ratification at this Conference.

It is difficult, and therefore a greater achievement, to produce a convention that will take into consideration in a balanced way very different situations that go from the small fisher, that fishes with a net, from his wooden boat for sustenance, to the commercial fishing vessels, some so sophisticated to be a processing factory on the waves of the sea. Fishing is a complex and also dangerous profession with high occupational accidents, deaths and injuries. The proposed convention "Work in the fishing sector", and its Recommendations, can make all kind of professional fishing safer and a decent workplace.

As over 3,000 government, employer and worker delegates concluded the 93rd annual Conference of the International Labour Organization on Thursday 16 June 2005, disappointment was in store for the 15 million or so fishers who would have benefited from the proposed Work in Fishing Convention, which failed to be adopted for a single vote for the needed two-thirds quorum.

The pact would have replaced seven outdated ILO conventions - adopted between 1920 and 1966 - that cover only 10 per cent of the industry's 15 million fishers. If voted, the new fishing convention would have thus covered more than 90 per cent of fishers employed in the fishing industry around the world.

The proposed convention aimed to improve conditions, especially on small vessels in developing countries, home to most of the

world's fishermen, many of whom are self-employed and earn only a share of the catch instead of a regular wage.

The proposed convention would have covered hours of rest, social security, and provisions on minimum wage, apart from recommending written agreements between fishers and vessel owners.

According to Reuters, the proposed pact fell through after employers got together to abstain from voting at the annual International Labour Conference. At the last minute, reports Reuters, employers objected to some of the highly detailed requirements of the new pact - which covers such things as the length of bunks as well as minimum rest periods on larger vessels.

While 49 developing countries voted for the proposed Convention, four countries voted against

and 25 developing countries abstained from voting. They included major fish producing countries like China, India, Indonesia, Philippines and Sri Lanka.

The International Labour Conference has now asked the Governing Body to place a corresponding item on the agenda of the Conference in 2007, and that the report submitted to the Conference plenary be used for further consideration.



THE PEOPLE OF THE SEA ARE CALLING ON US: *LET US SET OUT INTO THE DEEP*

Statement of the Latin America and Caribbean AOS Meeting, CELAM

We, the men and women representatives of AM from Peru, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Honduras, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Venezuela, Brazil, Uruguay, Chile, Colombia and the Dominican Republic, convened by the Human Mobility Section, Department of Justice and Solidarity of the Latin American Episcopal Council (CELAM) in El Callao, Peru, from May 22-25, 2005, after analyzing the real situation of the people of the sea from our countries, and inspired by John Paul II's Letter *Stella Maris*, **noted:**

The development of valid efforts and the implementation of significant initiatives in favor of the AM in some Dioceses of Latin America, such as integral attention to the merchant marine and the fishing sector, and the establishment of *Stella Maris* centers. However, together with this, we have also noted that in the past decades the lack of spiritual, psycho-social, economic and legal attention has become more and more evident for one very special human conglomerate, described in the Apostolic Letter of the late beloved Pope John Paul II as the People of the Sea. Due to the fact that this situation has worsened because of the socio-economic phenomenon of globalization, we, the undersigned, following the teaching of the Gospel and thanks to the initiative of the Human Mobility Section of the Latin American Episcopal Council (CELAM), considered it useful and necessary to present to the Bishops' Conferences, the Military Bishops, the Particular Churches with coastal parishes, governmental and non-governmental organizations, institutions related to the People of the Sea, and all the People of the Sea

the following aspects which are taking on worrisome proportions that affect the dignity, sustainable development and life expectation of this important group:

1. The exploitation suffered by men and women workers in the maritime fishing industry and transportation which affects their stability and health and that of their families.
2. The precarious working conditions in work on the sea that constantly violate the security norms by some ship owners and contractors in maritime transport and the fishing industry.
3. The conditions of the marine environment, hostile by nature, which affect the stability and quality of the navigators' lives.
4. The family breakdown due to the long periods of absence and the loss of contact with their loved ones.
5. The tendency to give in to dangers such as promiscuity, alcoholism, drug addiction, etc., which are used as escape mechanisms from their reality of loneliness and distance from home.
6. The situation of vulnerability due to the lack of knowledge and/or the indifference regarding the People of the Sea's reality on the part of the authorities and society in general.

By virtue of what has been mentioned, **we propose** the following:

- a. An urgent call to the governments of the region to ratify and observe Conventions 147 and 163 and Recommendation 173 of the ILO related to the Welfare of the People of the Sea.
- b. Respect for nature and the ra-

tional, equitable and balanced use of the sea's fish resources, as well as prevention to avoid serious ecological damage to the environment produced in the ports and related industries through maritime activity.

c. The creation of Tripartite Committees (Governments-Workers-Employer) for the Welfare of the People of the Sea.

d. Expansion of the network of "Stella Maris" centers in the Latin American and Caribbean region in order to offer spiritual attention and integral support to the People of the Sea and strengthen ecumenical work in those centers.

e. Awareness-building, formation and motivation of the pastoral workers and lay persons from the coastal area so that within an overall pastoral care program the formation and training plans will be drawn up in coordination with the leaders of the Apostleship of the Sea.

On the occasion of this Meeting, the men and women participants that have signed below ask the Latin American Episcopate that in the Fifth General Conference of the Latin American and Caribbean Episcopate the theme will be taken up again with emphasis on the mission of the Apostleship of the Sea and its challenges in a globalized world, recalling the First Conference (Rio de Janeiro, July-August 1955) when this pastoral care received the first words of orientation and encouragement.

To Jesus, the "Lord of the Sea", Patron of El Callao, and to the "Star of the Sea", the Virgin Mary, we entrust the Peoples of the Sea, the needs described, and the fruitfulness of this Apostolate.

STELLA MARIS ICON UNVEILED

at Apostleship of the Sea (Great Britain) Conference

Our Lady, Star of the Sea, Pray for Seafarers, Pray for us

O Mary, Star of the Sea, light of every ocean, guide seafarers across all dark and stormy seas that they may reach the haven of peace and light prepared in Him who calmed the sea. As we set forth upon the oceans of the world and cross the deserts of our time, show us, O Mary, the fruit of your womb, for without your Son we are lost. Pray that we will never fail on life's journey, that in heart and mind, word and deed, in days of turmoil and in days of calm, we will always look to Christ and say, "Who is this that even wind and sea obey him?"

Our Lady of Peace, pray for us! Bright Star of the Sea, guide us!

Seafarers now have a new icon of their patroness, Stella Maris, unveiled at the annual conference of the Apostleship of the Sea (Great Britain). Cardinal Stephen F. Hamao, President of the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Itinerant People, blessed the icon of Our Lady Star of the Sea ("Stella Maris" in Latin), during Mass on Tuesday in London.

Cardinal Hamao said in his homily that there is a good reason for identifying seafarers with the Stella Maris. "All those who know a little about the history of navigation know how important the star is for a navigator," he said.

"The star is the beacon that gives the right direction and allows the ship to continue on its route and reach port safely; and also in our lives Mary is the star that guides us, protects us and intervenes in our favour", the Cardinal said.

Cardinal Hamao continued: "All over the world, seafarers and fishermen have a special devotion to Our Lady Star of the Sea as they daily confront the dangers of the sea and confide in her protection." The new icon was painted in the neo-Coptic style by internationally renowned iconographer Stephane Ren, and was unveiled last Saturday at a special Mass in Glasgow.

In his address to the delegates, Cardinal Hamao also spoke about Pope Benedict XVI's con-

cern for itinerant workers such as seafarers.

Remembering the day of the new Pope's election, Cardinal Hamao said that when he approached the Holy Father to pledge his obedience, Benedict XVI said: "We shall work together for the people on the move! "

The Cardinal said: "To me it was a great joy as I felt it was a great encouragement for all those who have left their houses, family and country to know that they have a place in the heart and prayers of the Holy Father, and of the Church".

London, June 10, 2005
(Zenit.org)



Great Britain: the Apostleship of the Sea returns home

On Saturday, June 4th, in the Church of St. Aloysius in Glasgow (Scotland) where everything began 83 years ago, the Apostleship of the Sea (in Scotland) was launched again with its mission to offer spiritual assistance to seamen, especially in these times of globalization and in the changed conditions of maritime navigation. The Mass was presided by the Most Rev. Mario Conti, Archbishop of the city. The personalities present included the Most Rev. Peter Moral, Bishop of Aberdeen, and the Hon. Michael Martin, MP, Speaker of the House of Commons, the son of a merchant marine officer.

(Agenzia Fides 6/6/2005)

ICMA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Welcoming Address by Cardinal Stephen F. Hamao (Rome 29TH- 30TH April 2005) (Excerpts)

I would like to reiterate my thanks for your message of spiritual solidarity and sympathy on the occasion of the death of Pope John Paul II. But as our new Pope has put it in his first public address “*The days that followed John Paul II's death were a time of extraordinary grace for the Church and for the entire world*”, and we are thankful to God for that.

In this same first public address on the 20th April, Pope Benedict XVI expressed very strongly and clearly his commitment “*to work without sparing energies for the reconstitution of the full and visible unity of all the followers of Christ*”. He also proclaimed to be “*fully determined to cultivate every initiative that might seem appropriate to promote contacts and understanding with representatives of the diverse churches and ecclesial communities*”.

During the holy mass on 24th April, for the beginning of his petrine ministry, Christian unity was a repeated theme of his homily. While he deplored the division of all those who have been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: “*Alas, beloved Lord, - he exclaimed - with sorrow we must now acknowledge that the net has been torn!*”. He also expressed a deep hope, in these terms: “*But no – we must not be sad! Let us rejoice because of your promise, which does not disappoint, and let us do all we can to pursue the path towards the unity you have promised. Let us remember it in our prayer to the Lord, as we plead with him: yes, Lord, remember your promise. Grant that we may be one flock and one shepherd! Do not allow your net to be torn, help us to be servants of unity!*”

Pope Benedict XVI has also stated that in the field of ecumenism “*there must be concrete gestures that penetrate spirits and move consciences.*” We can safely say that ICMA is one of these concrete gestures wished by the new Pope. We, at the Pontifical Council, are happy to have been associated, again because of AOS, one of the founder members of ICMA, to that most enduring of ecumenical initiatives.

We know that ICMA is at an important juncture in its history and that you already made important decisions when you opted to renew your structures in continuity with the past. I feel it is important for ICMA to retain its support role in the ecumenical field and also, to a lesser extent, its *de facto* regulatory and coordinating character through its Code of Conduct and its international and regional meetings. A greater participation of the “smaller members” and more transparency are justified and welcome, but, at the same time, it seems also reasonable that the founder members retain a permanent seat on the Executive Committee.

I would also like to put on record our appreciation of ICMA's role and involvement with ILO, IMO, ISF, ITF and ICSW. Over the years they have become valued and trusted partners. I believe that assuring a Christian presence in these policy making bodies, in spite of the many difficulties, is of the utmost importance. The Church is “expert in humanity”, and by our presence we are a constant

reminder that the human element, opened to the grace of the Lord, must be our guiding principle and be at the heart of every economic and social decision, project or legislation.

At the last audience which John Paul II granted to our Council, on the 18th May last year, on the occasion of our Pontifical Council's General Assembly, he told us: “Love and welcome are the first and most effective forms of evangelization”. As we accompany, serve and defend the seafarers, fishers and their families, especially those who are forgotten and do not attract international attention and publicity, we recommit ourselves to be faithful to God's mission, and we rely on Him and His grace, praying that he accompanies us and guides us al-

Archbishop Marchetto's concluding words as he presents a meaningful souvenir to the participants in the meeting at the end of their work

It is a joy for me to greet you at the conclusion of your efforts here in our offices that have hosted you with pleasure, and to present you with a small gift-souvenir. On this occasion, please allow me to express two thoughts, both of which have to do with ecumenism.

The first concerns today. We have been led to state in these past years that ecumenism is in a weak phase. And yet we have to rightly emphasize its vitality, of which the ICMA is certainly an example.

The second thought has to do with the future, and I am referring to the well-known ecumenical principle whereby Christians should do everything together that is not impeded by reasons inherent in their faith denominations. Here I believe we still have to make progress in the desired direction. Best wishes!

EAST ASIA AOS REGIONAL MEETING

Kaohsiung, Taiwan, 7-12 March 2005

THE REGIONAL MEETING

The AOS Regional Meeting for the Far East Region was held at the Stella Maris International Seamen's Center in Kaohsiung (March 11, 2005), soon after the ICMA Regional Conference (March 7-11, 2005). It was one of the most attended with a total of 22 representatives of different AOS Centers (Philippines, Japan, Taiwan, Thailand, Hong Kong, Singapore, Indonesia), 2 representatives from Australia and Msgr. Jacques Harel from the Pontifical Council.

The meeting started with a presentation of Msgr. Harel bringing the greetings of Card. Hamao and Archbishop Marchetto and highlighting some important issues to take in consideration during the meeting, that is:

- the system of reporting, identifying the strengths and weaknesses of each port;
- the new international website as instrument for networking and communication;
- the plan for the 2007 AOS World Congress;
- the activities of the AOS International Fishing Committee.

Fr. Bruno Ciceri, C.S., Regional Coordinator, did a brief presentation trying to identify some challenges that the Region was facing and these were discussed in the workshops in which everyone had the opportunity to express his/her point of view.

Each National Director did a brief presentation of his country with ample time for clarification and questions.

The most Rev. Bosco Lin, AOS Bishop Promoter of Taiwan, celebrated the Eucharistic during which a special mention was done to the victims of the tsunami that tragically have affected the region.

VISIT TO THAILAND (March 13-15, 2005)

One of the dominant issues in the region is the plight of migrant workers, most of the time undocumented and illegal (Burmese/Filipino/Vietnamese/Cambodians/ citizens of PNG who work on board of Taiwanese and Thai fishing vessels). They are badly treated and ex-

ploited, and have absolutely no security. Also many women work ashore on fish selection and cleaning to supplement the family income. Young foreign girls work in Karaoke and Bars to entertain single men.

In Thailand, Msgr. Harel and Fr. Ciceri had the opportunity to visit the "houses" of migrant Burmese and Filipino which are "slums/shacks" rented from local Thai citizens, with no sanitation or any hygienic amenities. It is the women and children who suffer the most as the husbands go out to sea (for weeks and sometimes months) and they have to stay ashore and fend for themselves.

The children and women suffer from ethnic prejudices and since many do not have any Identification Card they are often

ICMA REGIONAL CONFERENCE (March 7-11, 2005)

The ICMA Regional Conference was attended by 42 chaplains, lay pastoral agents and volunteers of whom 25 were AOS members, namely priests, sisters, lay missionaries and volunteers. There were 17 other participants belonging to other Christian/Protestant denominations. The AOS is very present and active in the region, but the needs are huge and the means are modest.

The principle behind having the ICMA Regional conference in Taiwan was to focus:

1. On Chinese seafarers;
2. On the situation of fishers. In Taiwan the fishing sector is one of the more important industries and it involves huge economic interests.

This is why in the ICMA Conference out of nine presentations, six were on fishers, and two dwelt on seafarers. All the conferences had a mission/pastoral-related approach, and were followed by questions, discussions and sharing.

The ICMA conference was also the occasion for the delegates to vote for a new regional ICMA coordinator, Fr. Bruno Ciceri was elected .

(Continued from page 11)

harassed by the Police's frequent raids on their poor dwellings and in order to avoid capture must flee by secret escape routes and hide in mangroves and marshy, polluted waters.

There are no day-care centres or schools for infants/children; any initiative in this field would greatly help the families, as children would learn to read and write and the women would be freer to look for decent work.

These workers, who are not all fishers, might number up to 120,000 and some of them have been there for quite a number of years. After the Tsunami, they face an even more uncertain future. Prejudices run high against them, there have been a deportation campaign that was caused by rumors that illegal migrant workers were looting damaged houses in Tsunami hit areas.

While in Bangkok, Msgr. Harel and Fr. Ciceri met with the Director of COERR, which is the coordinating body for the Church charitable activities in Thailand. There seems to be enough money, all the funds are managed by the different dioceses and not centrally. The need seems to be more technical in order to empower the people so that they might help themselves. The people themselves must own the project. It is recommended to work with small groups. The need to work with children and to organize English language courses was mentioned. This should be done in coordination with local Church organizations.

IN CONCLUSION

It can be said that the meeting and the subsequent visit to Phuket were well organized and went very well.

We thank Fr. Ciceri, who was also the convener of the ICMA meeting. The fact that many chaplains from AOS and other denominations attended the meeting resulted in good sharing and developed more convivial ecumenical relations.

This confirms our conviction that a lot depend of the coordinators in the Regions, and that the role of the Regional Coordinator is of the utmost importance for the future development of the AOS.

Although the AOS maritime ministry network is the more extensive in the Region, the lack of finance and personnel is a serious obstacle to our mission. Except for Japan and the Philippines, the lack of involvement of the local clergy in the AOS is a source of concern.

TSUNAMI: *six months after the catastrophe*

FAO: Coordinated interventions are needed

The reconstruction of the areas hit by the tsunami paradoxically risks upsetting the economic and social system of the villages that existed before the seaquake last December 26th. The alarm--which is not new in these days when the reconstruction is being assessed six months after the catastrophe--comes from FAO and stresses the need for coordination with the non-governmental organizations working in the areas affected by the tsunami.

"Inappropriate aid that also lacks coordination brings more harm than advantages", said R. China, the Rome coordinator of the reconstruction activities. "We are working with the ministries and the local authorities in order to try and achieve the broadest consensus among the NGOs regarding what must be done, by whom and in what way, while also providing specific technologies to avoid any useless duplications, fragmented activity and the adoption of unsustainable practices".

...Among the possible risks run in this crucial phase, the international organization hypothesizes the destruction of the local ecosystems resulting from an improvised kind of reconstruction. "Care must be taken so that new problems will not be created for these people who have already been so sorely tried", explained the leader of the emergency operation service. There is already the risk that many more boats have been ordered than those that were lost, and that nets and equipment are being provided which are unsuitable for fishing in these regions. This could create a fishing capacity much greater than the capacity before the tsunami, with the dangerous heightening of the already existing problem of excessive exploitation of the resources.

O.R. June 25, 2005

A TSUNAMI OF HOPE AND GOODNESS

by Dr. Belinda Vaz, Mumbai, India

It was thanks to Fr. Xavier Pinto, C.Ss.R of the Apostleship of the Sea, (he visits our parish and stays in our Presbytery sometimes) who fished me out of Dadar and sent me to a fishing village called Koottapulli, 12 kms from Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu that I witnessed a tsunami of a different kind!

More than half of the 4000 inhabitants of the entirely Catholic, fishing village of Koottapulli were affected by the tsunami. An NGO called MUHIL (Movement for Universal Health, Integration and Liberation), under the directorship of Fr. Dr. Clement Joseph C.Ss.R. has been working towards the re-housing and rehabilitation of the affected people. Fr Clement has been using innovative ways to make sure that the aid the fishermen receive is well utilized in helping them stand on their own feet with dignity rather than fall victims of a debt trap or remain needy and dependent on aid.

The village does not have any doctor. As part of an endeavor to make the local inhabitants self-reliant, some of the young women from each Basic Christian Community were being trained in holistic healing techniques. My 5 day workshop on using the Bach Flower remedies to treat stress related ailments and emotions like shock, fear, despair, loss of hope, etc., kick-started their programme.

These simple Tamil speaking girls quickly grasped the intricacies of the system and realized

that they could help many with these flower remedies. The gratitude that they expressed on the last day was very touching. I also attended the medical clinic run by Sr. Dr Roslin who was part of the MUHIL team. Many of the patients who attended had problems related to the shock and stress of the tsunami. People are still in fear of another sea related tragedy.

It is difficult to imagine that the tranquil and serene sea could cause so much havoc. But seeing the evidence of destruction first hand, like broken boats, wrecked houses, a huge decapitated bridge, a church split in half and much more, made me realize the power of the elements. During my stay, I met many people, both religious and lay persons who are involved with the rehabilitation work. Some have toiled day and night for weeks after the tragedy to bring relief to the affected.

This they did as part of being concerned persons and Christians rather than a result of any great mission plan. Many need to be commended on their dogged persistence in the face of numerous hurdles and even sometimes a lack of gratitude on the part of their beneficiaries. It was a very heartening sight to see many fishermen back at sea, sailing happily in their brand new or repaired boats.

There is still a great deal of rehabilitation needed especially in the area of building new

homes. Natural catastrophes like the tsunami have occurred in the past on the planet and will continue to occur in the future. What is unique this time is the tidal wave of compassion, generosity and service that it has evoked in millions around the world. Witnessing a small part of this in Tamil Nadu has been a humbling experience and has made me realize that there is still a lot of innate goodness in people and there is still hope left in the world.

A week of healing in Koottapulli of tsunami

*Fr. Xavier Pinto, C.Ss.R., AOS Coordinator,
South Asia and India*

In all probability many of you will say, "what's that?" when you for the first time hear of "Bach flower Remedies"(BFR). I too asked the same question.... and the people of Koottapulli, a Tsunami affected town in Trirunelveli District of Tamil Nadu also asked the same question....till Dr. Ms. Belinda Vaz from O.L. Salvation Parish, Dadar, Mumbai India arrived there on the 21st of May 2005.

Believe me, the heat was searing! It is the fourth week of May when in Tamil Nadu you can fry the proverbial egg on the bare road!! In most of the places, especially where Dr. Belinda conducted her sessions for girls and women in BFR, there are no fans swirling. Mumbai is

(to be continued on page 14)

blessed.

We most often don't realize the sufferings of people in the tsunami areas. Together with an interpreter and with a spattering of English that the girls knew Dr. Belinda was able to make herself understood and loved. While Classes on BFR were conducted for a batch of girls/women in the mornings, Dr. Belinda helped see patients in a temporary set up like an OPD (out patient department) in the evenings.

I accepted the offer of Dr. Belinda to go to a Tsunami affected village precisely because of the nature of BFR: they address the inner feelings of a person.... in trauma, in doubt, in uncertainty, in a feeling of helplessness and hopelessness; in a time when one thinks that one cannot cope with a given situation. All this and more is the position of Tsunami affected people in not only Koottapulli but in all the Tsunami affected areas. I do think people of the Sea will profit from BFR in the long run.

This visit and exposure of Dr. Belinda in Koottapulli happened since I too went through similar feelings when I visited the areas of the Tsunami disaster in the first weeks of January 2005. During Lent, March 2005, I shared with the Konkani speakers of the Parish my heart-rending journey in those areas. I too went through trauma and a sense of helplessness.

Talking with Dr. Belinda her BFR helped me! I knew that apart from all the money poured into the Tsunami areas (much is

still to reach them!) BFR would be most welcome. Something new, something different, something with no side effects on the person would be rightly accepted by victims and helpers alike in the Tsunami areas and through Dr. Belinda BFR was indeed!

Dr. Belinda was introduced to the Village at the Morning Parish Mass on the 22nd May and began her sessions on the 23rd. Koottapulli is a totally Catholic village on the coast. With +950 families the population touches around 4000 people, including children.

Tsunami affected the houses of some but the fishing business of all. There were no deaths. MUHIL (Movement for Universal Health Integration and Liberation) an NGO's (non-



government organization) from Madurai has taken up rehabilitation work in this village.

Fr. Clement Joseph, C.Ss.R., heads the group with professionals like Dr. Fatima Rani, Dr. Sr. Roslin, and Fr. Michael Jeyaraj, S.J. on the team. Their task is colossal. Their determination is rock solid. Their hope is based on the Gospels that indeed the humble will be exalted!

There are times when Fr. Clement has to stand up to difficulties: like people selling their nets to other villages for huge sums. People selling the provision packets they receive to the local grocer. People who owned boats and hired other men to work on them don't see the position of poverty and deprivation of these "coolies" as they know.

Victims who sit idling away and gambling and drinking away their money even before they can be properly rehabilitated. In a disaster situation it is always difficult to convince those who get something little that there may be people who have nothing at all as yet. That if you get something from the government then let the government reach those who don't have anything so far; before you line up for your second share!

Thank you Dr. Belinda for joining in this process! Thank you for sparing a week of your life for affected people, thank you parish of O.L of Salvation that Dr. Belinda came from your parish.

Thank you Mrs. Vaz, mother of Belinda, for agreeing to have relatives

stay with you while you were home alone and Belinda did a magnanimous job in Koottapulli.

Thank you Dr. Sr. Roslin for accompanying Dr. Belinda during her sojourn there. Finally thank you Redemptorist Fr. Clement Joseph, & people of Koottapulli for making her welcome and letting her share your life and times for a week.

SMALL ISLANDS (SUCH AS MAURITIUS) FACE UNIQUE ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC ISSUES ON THE PATH TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The tsunami of December last year is just one of many natural disasters that have rocked the Indian Ocean region in recent years.

Coupled with the constant concerns including rising sea levels, coastal and marine resources, freshwater resources

and waste management, the Mauritius government is under pressure to balance the aims for economic development with the protection of the island's unique and vulnerable environment.

Like most of the island states of the Indian Ocean, Mauritius relies almost exclusively on shipping for its import and export needs. With future plans including the promotion of Mauritius as a world-class seafood hub and the desire to increase its share of the growing Indian Ocean cruise market, there has never been a more crucial time in the island's environmental strategy.

It is estimated that a typical cruise-ship with 3,000 passengers gener-

Norwegian Cruise Lines partners with AOS USA

In February of this year, Norwegian Cruise Lines became the third cruise line to partner with the Apostleship of the Sea through OS USA's Cruise Ship Priest program, to supply priests for NCL cruises.

"We're tremendously thrilled they've come on board" said AOS USA President Fr. Sinclair Oubre. "Norwegian does a lot of work already with Catholic organizations in offering cruises for parish retreats and fundraisers. We hope our partnership with them will also improve the programs they offer to Catholics".

Norwegian Cruise Lines operates the only U.S. flagged cruise ships in the industry, the *Pride of Aloha*, which is crewed by the Seafarers International Union. A second U.S. flagged ship, the *Pride of America*, is currently being completed in Germany and should be in service early this summer.

(Catholic Maritime News, Vol. 62, No. 4)

ates between 400 and 1,200 cubic metres of watery waste each day from showers, laundry and dishwashers. An average cruise ship produces an estimated 50 tons of sewage per week. Other cruiseship waste products include plastics, grease, medical and dental waste, photo chemicals, paints, solvents, laser printer cartridges and dry cleaning fluids.

While the government is keen to pursue the burgeoning cruise market, master Jean Patrick Rault of the Mauritius Shipping Company believes planning is the key. "The welcoming capacity in terms of cruise vessels should be set prior to launching initiatives to attract more cruise vessels".

However, pollution and natural disasters are not the only environmental issues to be faced. Mr Narad Dawoodary from the Mauritius Port Authority believes that "the introduction of invasive marine species is now considered by the international scientific community to be one of the greatest threats to the marine environment."

The use of ballast water together with other vectors translocates coastal species from one part of the world to the other. Discarded containers also pose a real threat as they hold stagnant water, a breeding ground for disease-carrying insects. In a meeting held in Mauritius in January 2005, only weeks after the Tsunami, the Small Island Development States (SIDS) meeting laid a framework of action that called for the international community to play a greater role in offering aid and partnerships to small islands in terms of resources, technologies and trade agreements.

Mr Om Pradhan, chief of the U.N. Office of the High Representative's policy development and co-ordination unit, believes that special and differential treatment for SIDS products in the international markets is called for in view of the limited range of exportable commodities, high dependence on external energy sources and transport problems arising from isolation. "Whether the international community and especially the donor countries will provide the resources and technologies needed will be a major challenge", says Mr Pradhan.

Master Francois De Gersigny of Ireland Blyth comments that "except for certain regional groupings, which can come closer to attaining critical mass size, there is no solution for the others but to enter into bilateral or multi-lateral partnership agreements with larger countries."

He adds: "Strategic alliances are warranted, if only the larger shipping lines could be prepared to take on board local or regional partners" — for example, container feeder ships.

There is no doubt that the need to find solutions is an urgent one.

THE WELFARE OF SEA WORKERS

National Congress of the Apostleship of the Sea of Italy



Volunteer associations and maritime institutions met together for the first time in a national congress on the theme, **The Welfare of Sea Workers**. The congress took place last May 10-21 at the initiative of the National Office for the Pastoral Care of Seafarers of the Migrantes Foundation in Rocca di Papa located at the gates of Rome.

On the eve of the Congress, the Migrants Office for the AM directed by Rev. Giacomo Martino, organized a series of meetings to create Local Committees for maritime welfare. Volunteer associations, port authorities, international labor unions and the mayors of the port cities adhered to this initiative and together formed work groups based on the experiences of the individual port communities. As Rev. Martino explained, "These committees will have to put the people of the sea at the center of their attention and recognize associationism as an integral part of the port structures themselves for welcoming and aiding seafarers in transit".

In opening the Congress, Bishop Lino Belotti, President of the CEI Commission for Migrations, said, "Sailors make up one of the few categories of persons, together with the sick and prisoners, who cannot come to Church, and for this reason we should feel called in a special way to go to them". He continued, "Today it would be scandalous if a Bishop denied a

chaplain for a hospital or a prison. For the sailors, on the other hand, the opposite takes place: the scandal, or quasi scandal is to waste a priest on them, to waste time on these globetrotters who are here today and who knows where tomorrow!", whereas these people are "calling on" the Church for a human promotion and evangelizing presence. Even though they are far from land, they are "part of the Universal Church".

In a message sent by the Minister of Transportation, Claudio Scajola, we read that in the absence of a law and an international control force there are two roads on which we have to move. On the one hand, to get all the competent, interested subjects involved in order to obtain within a brief period of time the ratification, by Italy also, of the ILO Convention 163 on improving the people of the sea's condition and related recommendations. The other "very concrete" road is to aid the seafarers by providing vital services. As Minister Scajola said, it is on this level that "the Migrantes Foundation is working in an admirable way in the on-going pastoral mission dedicated to maritime navigation workers".

Admiral Raimondo Pollastrini of the Port Authority Command in Italy, "guaranteed the complete and unconditional availability of the port authorities with their 300 places of presence in Italy". He also emphasized the personal and institutional availability of many of the eleven thousand youths in voluntary service in the Italian ports. On behalf of the international labor unions, Commander Remo di Fiore, General Inspector of the ITF international maritime

labor unions, gave his contribution to the congress. He assured "full support for the initiative and the intention to bring action soon against the ship owners at the Ministry of Labor". This is a task, as Rev. Giacomo Martino said, that must have as its "departure and arrival point" the well-being of man, the "viator", towards whom laws and economic structures and dynamics should be "oriented in order to provide him with services and not the opposite".

Cardinal Stephen Fumio Hamao concluded the congress and stated that tackling the theme of "welfare" by the Church means "knowing how to confront oneself on the same level with the other workers and seafarers with the attitude of someone who is capable of giving but also of receiving, and the humility of those who really know how to put themselves at the service of others". "In the oblivion of a world that continues its race and upsets the weakest and those who live the phenomenon of mobility", Card. Hamao said, "the Gospel and the Church teach us that the essential value to be respected must be first of all the dignity of man, and that the economy is for man and not man for the economy".

The poverty that "is derived from uncontrolled globalization is in fact one of the worst violations of human dignity". Therefore, the AM is called to give "a human face to the globalization of the maritime world, and to contribute to drawing up the rules of a new world order, based on ethical principles, solidarity and the inviolability of human dignity".

(Migranti-press)

AM World Directory

BELGIUM

After nine years, Fr. **Geert Bamelis** leaves Antwerp as port chaplain and national director of AOS, for a new mission on the belgian coast, as pastor from the federation Oostende-Bredene, with four parishes. We thank him for the work done among us and wish him success in his new ministry.

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MADAGASCAR

(new Bishop Promoter)

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The **International Committee on Seafarers' Welfare**
has moved to another address:

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77 Clarendon Road
Watford, Hertfordshire WD17 1DS (U.K.)
icsw@icsw.org.uk

SPAIN

We mourn the loss of Fr. **Eufrasio Camayo** who had been for many years port chaplain in Malaga (where he worked very hard helping fishers) and in the last 3 years in Alicante.

May he rest in peace.



**Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care
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