

Logo of the XXII World Congress of the Apostleship of the Sea
(Gdynia, Poland, 24th—29th June 2007)

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XXII WORLD CONGRESS OF THE APOSTLESHIP OF THE SEA

The logo on the front page has been proposed and designed by AOS-Australia.

Their project has been selected among several others which were sent by various Regions and it will be our official logo for the XXII World Congress.

We thank all the Regions for their contributions and suggestions.

Unfortunately, we cannot reproduce the colours on the Bulletin but you will find them on the AOS International Website.

+ Archbishop Agositno Marchetto
Secretary

Explanation of the logo:

- The Logo is centred around the Cross. The circle in the logo represents our world with seafarers coming from the deepest darkest blue of the ocean into the lighter shades, which ends with the Church as the brilliant part of the Cross.
- At the foot of the Cross is the red, which represents the great sacrifice of Christ for us all.
- The solid block on the right top corner, not only represents the national colours of Poland, but also the four corners of the Compass.
- The box behind this, also with the national colours of Poland, encompasses everything and symbolises solidarity.
- The anchor, the maritime symbol par excellence and also the symbol of our faith and hope, reaches around the world embracing all nations, races and creeds.



From the Letter to the Hebrews (6, 17-20)

!When God wanted to give the heirs of his promise an even clearer demonstration of the immutability of his purpose, he intervened with an oath, so that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge might be strongly encouraged to hold fast to the hope that lies before us. This we have as an anchor of the soul, sure and firm, which reaches into the interior behind the veil, where Jesus has entered on our behalf as forerunner, becoming high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

XXII WORLD CONGRESS OF THE APOSTLESHIP OF THE SEA

Gdynia, Poland, 24th - 29th June 2007

Gdynia Hotel Orbis, ul. Armii Krajowej 22, 81-372 Gdynia (www. orbis.pl)

PROCEDURES

• **NATIONAL DELEGATIONS:** The responsibility to form the delegation of each country rests with the Episcopal Promoter and the National Director. The delegation should not comprise chaplains only, but include active AOS members chosen from among seafarers on merchant, fishing or passenger vessels, oil platforms, port or maritime agencies personnel, delegates of associations of wives or families of seafarers, volunteers in seafarers centres. The members of a national delegation should attend all the sessions of the Congress. **The National Director will be responsible for sending the registrations forms, as well as the payment for the whole delegation, to the local Organising Committee, with copies to the Pontifical Council.** A list with the names of delegates should be sent also to the Regional Coordinator for information.

• **REGISTRATION:** National Directors will request the members of their delegations to fill the **registration forms** and will forward them either by fax or by e-mail, before **31st March 2007**, to the Coordinator of the local Organising Committee in Gdynia, that is:

Rev. Fr. Edward Pracz, C.Ss.R., Ul. Portowa 2, 81-350 Gdynia, Poland
tel+48-58-620 8741 Fax +48-58-620 4266 Mobile +48-604203527 e-mail: stellam@am.gdynia.pl

• **Copy of the registration forms** must be also sent by fax or e-mail to the Pontifical Council in Rome
(Fax +39 06 6988 7111; e-mail: office@migrants.va)

• **OBSERVERS:** It is the responsibility of the Pontifical Council to invite the representatives of Christian maritime Organisations members of I.C.M.A., as well as others who have a particular association with AOS International or the theme of the Congress.

Simultaneous translation will be provided in English, French, Spanish and Polish. All documents will be translated in English, French and Spanish.

HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?

Payments must accompany the registration and be made before 31st March 2007. National Directors are kindly requested to make one single payment for the whole delegation.

The payment can be made **only by bank transfer or by cheque.** There is no possibility to pay for the Congress directly to the bank by credit card.

We encourage you to pay by bank transfer, as it is fast and charges are low. If absolutely necessary, you may pay by cheque which, however, can be drawn only after a few weeks. This is not true for American Express cheques which cost much more, though, than a bank transfer.

Bank transfer are to be made to:

Beneficiary: Duszpasterstwo Ludzi Morza Centrum Stella Maris

Beneficiary address: 81-350 Gdynia, ul. Portowa 2

Beneficiary bank: Kredyt Bank S.A.

Branch: 1700 Oddzial KB S.A. w Sopocie

Beneficiary bank address: ul. 1 Maja 7, 81-807 SOPOT (Poland)

BIC code: KRDBPLPW

Beneficiary account:

PL 87 1500 1706 1217 0005 4503 0000 **(for EURO)**

PL 32 1500 1706 1217 0005 4516 0000 **(for USD)**

Details of payment: XXII World Congress of the Apostleship of the Sea



(continued from page 3)

Cheques are to be made to: “Duszpasterstwo Ludzi Morza Centrum Stella Maris”
and sent to Rev. Fr. Edward Pracz, C.Ss.R., ul. Portowa 2, 81-350 Gdynia, Poland

Normally all accounts and payments will be in Euros. However, to facilitate our members who are in the US dollars zone, the payment of Congress cost can also be effected in US dollars and the exchange rate of the day will apply.

Full board from dinner of Sunday afternoon 24th June to breakfast of Saturday morning 30th June (6 days) in

single occupancy: € 587 * **double: € 419 ****

(* € 66 per day x 6 days + meals € 141 + registration fee € 50)

(** € 38 per day x 6 days + meals € 141 + registration fee € 50)

Please note that the registration fee per person is to cover part of the expenses of the meeting (excursion, reports, information services and complete documentation). Any other expense (e.g. telephone, laundry, minibar, etc.) will be charged directly to the individual participant.

● **EXTRA DAYS: (bed and breakfast per day, per person):** in single occupancy: € 66; in double: € 38

Booking of hotel rooms will be done by the local Organising Committee when registration forms have been sent and payments made. Delegates arriving before Sunday 24th or staying after Saturday 30th at the Hotel Orbis will have to pay personally for these extra days. **They are kindly requested to inform the local Organising Committee accordingly if they want to book for extra days.**

Please note that since all Bishop Promoters, Regional Coordinators and National Directors are invited to attend a meeting on Sunday morning 24th June 2007, they will have to reach Gdynia by Saturday evening 23rd June. This will automatically entail an extra night + meals for which they will be charged:

single occupancy: € 95

double occupancy: € 67

● **TRAVELLING to Gdynia:** The nearest airport to Gdynia is Gdansk which serves both cities. There are direct flights from some European cities but usually international flights go to Warsaw and connect there to Gdansk. There is also a regular train service between Warsaw and Gdynia.

● **VISAS:** All delegates should ascertain whether they need a visa to enter Poland. If a letter of invitation to obtain a visa is necessary, the local Organising Committee will provide it on request. Please be aware that this procedure can be lengthy.

● **TRANSPORT** from and to the airport will be provided by the Local Committee. In case of emergency while arriving to Poland, please contact this phone number: +48-604203527.

● Vestments for **EUCCHARISTIC CONCELEBRATIONS** will be provided.

● **WORKSHOPS:** Participants will enter their names for the workshops of their choice during the Congress.

● **COMPUTERS.** Participants planning to use computers during the Congress, are kindly advised to bring their laptops.

● **POWER POINT.** It is recommended to speakers and workshop leaders wishing to use Power Point for their presentations to make sure that the programme/systems are compatible and to plan accordingly. At this stage it is envisaged to have Power Point only in the main Conference Hall.

● **INTERNET:** Participants can use Internet from their room:

- by purchasing, at the hotel reception, a hot spot card which costs 29 PLN (€ 7.54) and can be used as many times as they wish within 24 hours;

- by purchasing another card, which costs 9 PNL (€ 2,35), and can be used only once for 2 hours; they can connect their computer to the telephone and use their Internet link at the rate of 0.65 PLN (€ 0,17) per minute.

Catholic Bishops' Conference of Japan (CBCJ) Catholic Commission of Japan for Migrants, Refugees and People on the Move

Annual report 2005 (April 2005-March 2006)

The AOS National meeting was held in October 25-26, 2005 in Shiomi. There were 19 participants who presented the situation in the various Dioceses. Their sharing included the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT Analysis).

***Strengths:** financial support from the Dioceses; existence of the Seamen's Centers; good number of volunteers; regular ship visit; understanding of port procedures; meeting with seafarers in a good atmosphere; Masses on board and prayer meetings; ecumenical solidarity.

***Weaknesses:** shortage of priests to accompany laity (there are things which laypeople cannot do); too much demands from seafarers; no managing committees; limited access to ships because of strict security measures; loneliness; no public telephones available; lack of resources to respond adequately to the needs of the seafarers; lack of knowledge of ship visit; lack of personnel; short turn around; movement of goods is encouraged but movement of people is denied; shortage of time; lack of priests; lack of coordination between ports where the ships are anchored; difficulty to respond to the internationalization of seafarers; evangelization of the seafarers and pastoral care, etc.

***Opportunities:** international networking; consciousness that the port is also under the pastoral care of the parish; good relationship with the port officials; training in maritime pastoral care; cooperation with medical clinic; chance to evangelize; networking of parishes close to the port; importance of women's role; dialogue with other religions and cultures; cooperation with local people for fund-raising and welcome, etc.

***Threats:** risk of contamination of bird flu; increasing membership; the specific pastoral approach of AOS is sometimes put aside; lack of training and stability of staff members; lack of understanding from the local community; difficulty with foreign languages; globalization; finding successors to ensure continuity; influence and activities of new religious sects; negative feelings of seafarers (boredom, tiredness, loss of spirituality).

This year the AOS National Director was nominated by the CBCJ for the first time. It was intended that the activities of the AOS be organized and spread out at national level.

The chair parson of the Commission, Bishop Tani, appointed 4 members for the AOS Core Group in order to strengthen the activities and organize them systematically.

- **Tasks:** Clarification of the objectives of ship visiting; importance of systematic work (ex. identification, as there are many religious sects wishing to visit ships); learning to dialogue with Muslim, Chinese, Russian and other foreign seafarers; distribution of Bible and other religious material; personnel training; provision of resources in order to render the work more effective.

- **C.A.O.S. (Core Group of AOS):** November 29, 2005 in Shiomi. After 9/11 access to the Port has become even more difficult. To help volunteers enter the Port more easily, pamphlets were provided thus enabling the custom officers to become aware of AOS work and to recognize the ship visitors.

- In March 11-12, 2006 the first formation seminar of AOS was held in Shiomi and Yokohama. There were 19 participants from Hokkaido, Yokohama, Kobe and Fukuoka. There were also a ship captain and pilots. Since they have been working for a long time as seafarers, they were asked to share their experiences and present the concrete situation and condition of the seafarers and the Port. Each participant was also asked to share his motivation or reason for dedicating himself to this work. It was a deep faith sharing. On the second day of the seminar, the participants went to Yokohama Port to experience ship visitation. The seafarers of the ship they visited were coming from the Philippines, including the captain. Some of them happened to have been met already by the participants coming from Tomakomai or Kobe. The Yokohama Seamen's Center gave us the feeling of "antique" atmosphere and it looked like so many seamen from different countries had a good rest here and had refilled their energy from this place.



Fr. Raymond Desrochers,
AOS National Director

REPORT TO THE PLENARY ASSEMBLY OF THE CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF CANADA

October 2006

Presentation

The Apostleship of the Sea in Canada continues to develop and provide a strong presence in many of the country's ports. The chaplains and their volunteers have been able to reach 60% of the ships that shored in their ports. Masses, prayer celebrations with communion and Bible study groups are offered regularly to the people of the sea. The AOS-Canada has made active efforts to defend the rights of seafarers and to provide them with personalized counseling, as well as an adapted pastoral care. There is a significant level of collaboration with the other Christian denominations involved in this apostolate. The seafarers are directed to the "Seafarers' House" where they can take advantage of different services: communication (Internet and phone), sports and amusements, coffee and breakfast; they are given used clothing and toiletries free of charge.

This year there has been an 18% decrease in the number of ships that moored on the East coast compared to a 12% increase on the West coast. But taking into consideration the growth in activities and the number of volunteers and friends, and the gifts given to the AOS-Canada, we can speak about significant growth and considerable improvement.

I would like to repeat what my last report already stressed: namely, the Apostleship of the Sea in Canada always has a great need for full-time chaplains. We have several places to fill in important ports. We have chaplains who have passed retirement age and are no longer in a condition to go and meet the seafarers on board the ships. Others already have a heavy work load (not only in their parishes, but also in connection with other ministries, in the hospitals and schools). There is so much to do that we fall behind and are not in a position to respond to the seafarers who stop in our ports. The commitment and active participation of the laity help us very much, but it is not enough to allow us to rebuild the AOS-Canada.

Our quarterly magazine, *Morning Star*, continues to earn praise all around the world and we receive requests for subscriptions and distribution regularly. But our limited circulation has prompted other bodies to photocopy our magazine in order to distribute it to the seafarers.

From August 2005 to July 2006, the AOS-Canada webpage received no less than 5,061 visitors, an unprecedented figure. The international community, as well as the chaplains of the Apostleship of the Sea, has expressed its appreciation for the efficacy and quality of our website's presentation. Most of the chaplains from Europe and North America print copies of the *Morning Star* to distribute it to the people of the sea.



The chaplains would need cars and computers for their ministry. There is still a lot of work to be done with the fishing boats, cruise ships, coasters and pleasure boats that are found in almost all the ports of Canada. The Canadian port authorities point out that since China is now the turntable of world trade, the ports of Prince Rupert, Victoria and Vancouver will become receiving centers for merchandise destined to Europe and the United States. This means that it will be necessary to increase our resources in these ports in view of the greater number of ships and seafarers that will be present there.

The difficulties that I foresee have to do with a lack of resources (on the national and the local levels), and with the fact that some dioceses do not see the urgency of the AOS or do not give it any support.

Challenges

1. Need for full-time chaplains and assistants who are approved and supported by the local churches.
2. Need to train the chaplains, volunteers and personnel for pastoral care, for the work of advocacy, and with regard to the needs of the people of the sea.
3. The worldwide security problem of limits the chaplains' access on board ships, or makes it more difficult for the seafarers to leave their ship to visit the local community or to go to the "Seafarers' House".
4. Our limited resources—cars, computers and cell phones which the chaplains need to be at the service of the seafarers.
5. The shorter mooring time that impedes verifying allegations of violence and injustice.
6. The increase in the number of ships sailing under a flag of convenience (Cyprus, Malta, Bahamas) and ships that evade international laws.

Objectives for 2007

1. To have chaplains appointed in all the major ports of Canada.
2. To develop local formation/a workshop for the chaplains and volunteers in coordination with the Anglican Mission to Seafarers and the Reformed Christian Church of Canada.
3. To build up a strong core of lay volunteers who can help the chaplains with the visits on board and take care of transporting the seafarers between the ship and the "Seafarers' House" or a local church.
4. To visit the ports of the East Coast and the West Coast and take part in the regional congress of the national directors of the Apostleship of the Sea.
5. To sensitize the ecclesiastical leaders more to the activities and expansion of this apostolate.
6. To keep up an on-going dialogue with the port authorities, the port welfare committees (governmental), maritime agents, labor union representatives and leaders, and others who intervene with regard to security norms.



AOS Bishop Promoter, H.E. Msgr. Martin Villette, with National Director, Deacon Albert Decanay

THE AOS ACTIVITY IN KARACHI, PAKISTAN

On the 1st Sept. 2006, Fr. Thomas Gulfam has finished his term as Port Chaplain of Karachi.

The Bishop Promoter, Most Rev. Evarist Pinto, is very supportive of the apostolate and guides it to the best of his ability; with the



assistance of the Vicar General Fr. Arthur Charles. The latter attended the Regional South Asia AOS conference in Chennai November 2005.

In 2005, the most significant contribution of AOS Karachi in the Region has been the collaboration with AOS India in the release of fishermen prisoners in their jails. Fr. Gulfam also was in collaboration with other fishermen organizations and NGO's in South India.

He visited the prisoners regularly, supplied them with small per-

sonal items of toiletries and stationery to write letters to their loved ones.

Even though a Port pass is available, the Chaplain is not permitted to visit ships on which Indian seafarers work.

Fr. Gulfam is now appointed to a parish where there is a large population of fishers. He will continue to be involved with them in a different capacity.

A new Port Chaplain will soon be appointed by the Archbishop.

PANAMA VOTERS APPROVE CANAL EXPANSION PROJECT

(Information taken from news reports, from www.pancanal.com and from ACP brochure on canal expansion project) In a historic vote with widespread ramifications for the international shipping community, the Panamanian electorate has overwhelmingly backed the expansion of the Panama Canal*.

After the historic struggle that culminated in its recovery, and given the efficient, profitable, safe and transparent way that the Panamanian administration has managed the Canal after its turnover on December 31, 1999, today the Canal is a source of pride for all Panamanians.

The expansion will be the largest project at the Canal since its original construction. A Panama Canal expansion will double capacity and allow more traffic. The project will create a new lane of traffic along the Canal through the construction of a new set of locks. The Canal's entrances at the Atlantic and Pacific channel will be widened and deepened, as well as the navigational channel at Gatun Lake. One lock complex will be located on the Pacific side to the southwest of the existing Miraflores Locks. The other complex will be located to the east of the existing Gatun Locks. Construction for the project is slated to conclude by 2014. During the construction process, no current lanes will be closed, and since all construction sites are outside of existing channels and operating areas, the ACP is confident that there will be no delays of transits.

The expansion program is in response to the booming demand anticipated for the next 20 years. It is anticipated that expansion will double Canal capacity to more than 600 million Panama Canal tons.

The project is estimated to cost \$5.25 billion and will be paid entirely by users of the Canal through a graduated system of tolls.

In keeping with sustainable development principles and environmental management best practices, the expansion will use unique water-saving basins to help preserve the freshwater resources along the waterway, reutilizing water from the basins into the locks. This technology eliminates the need for constructing dams, flooding and displacing communities along the Canal's Watershed.

(from Catholic Maritime News, November 2006)

* On the matter, Archbishop Marchetto gave an interview to Vatican Radio (cfr. Apostolatus Maris Bulletin no. 92, now published on "People on the Move")



43% OF THE FISH CONSUMED AROUND THE WORLD COMES FROM FISH FACTORIES

The demand for fish around the world continues to go, especially in the rich and developed countries. However, the level of catches has practically been at a standstill since the mid-80s and it does not look like these levels will increase since 25% of the most commercial species are at their survival limit and 52% are fully exploited.

The FAO raises the question if aquaculture will be able to respond to this growing demand in the next decades, despite the great increase in production in this sector. World aquaculture appears to be lively in order to match the ever growing demand for fish in view of the standstill in extractive fishing and its very unlikely growth. In the last FAO report, world aquaculture production is estimated at more than 45 million tons, for a total value of approximately 63,000 million dollars. On the contrary, the total catches amount to 95 million tons,

of which 60 million are for human consumption. This industry is established all over the world, except in sub-Saharan Africa where it only represents 0.13% of world aquaculture.

The report mentioned above estimates that 40 million additional tons of fish will be needed for 2030 and the only way to obtain them will be through production in fish factories, as indicated by Rohana Subasinghe from the FAO Fisheries Department and Secretary of the Aquaculture Subcommittee. The question is to know whether or not this can be done. The FAO points out that “aquaculture could cover the difference between the supply and the demand, but other factors exist that could push production in the opposite direction and make it sufficient to cover the demand in the next decades”.

Among the concerns of the United Nations organization, as we

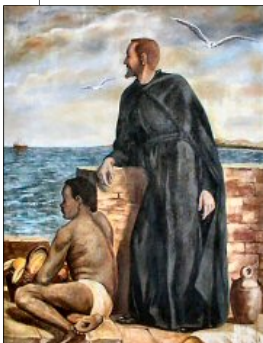


note in the document, there may be a decrease in the impulse given to this industry if governments and development agencies do not adjust their policies to respond to the growing difficulties that threaten the future development of the sector: the lack of investments suffered by producers in the developing countries, the rise in energy costs, the environmental impact, and the innocuousness of this industry.

(“Mar”, No. 454, November 2006)

AN ACCOUNT OF A SHIP VISIT

FROM A LETTER BY SAINT PETER CLAVER



“Yesterday, May 30, 1627, on the feast of the Most Holy Trinity, numerous people, brought from the rivers of Africa, disembarked from a large ship. Carrying two baskets of oranges, lemons, sweet biscuits, we hurried toward them. We had to force our way through the crowd until we reached the sick. Large numbers of the sick were lying on the wet ground or rather in puddles of mud. To prevent excessive dampness, someone had thought of building up a mound from broken pieces of bricks. This, then, was their couch, a very uncomfortable one not only for that reason, but especially because they were naked, without any clothing to protect them.

We laid aside our cloaks, therefore, and brought from a warehouse whatever was handy to build a platform. There were two Africans, nearer death than life, already cold, whose pulse could scarcely be detected. We pulled some live coals together and placed them in the middle near the dying men. Into this fire we tossed aromatics. Then, using our own cloaks, for they had nothing of the sort, and to ask the owners for others would have been a waste of words, we provided for them a smoke treatment, by which they seemed to recover their warmth, and the breath of life. The joy in their eyes as they looked at us was something to see.

This was how we spoke to them, not with words but with our hands and our actions.

(to be continued on page 12)

300 years ago St Peter Claver, who ministered in the port of Cartagena and whose feast day is the 9th September, cared for the thousands of slaves who made the horrific sea journey from West Africa to Columbia. One third of those making the journey died because of the conditions on board. Those who survived were afraid of what might await them in port. St Peter Claver was God's surprise for them; he looked after the sick and calmed the frightened. Today he is an inspiration to all those who welcome seafarers. He also looks down from heaven in a special way on all those at sea.

THE PASTORAL CARE OF THE PEOPLE OF THE SEA IN THE DIOCESE OF PANGKALPINANG(INDONESIA)*

The diocese of Pangkalpinang is an archipelago made up of thousands of little islands on which, according to 2003 data, about 1,900,000 people live. The inhabitants belong to various cultures: most of them are *Malaya*, followed by Chinese (in 1722 the Dutch used them in the tin mines), Flores, Batak and Java. Some communities of "People of the Sea" (*Suku Laut*) also live among them.

The religions present in the diocese are: Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Animism, and Kong Hu Tsu. There are more than 35,000 Catholics.

The islands of Tarempa, Batam, Natura, Bangka and Lingga are inhabited by fishers. Industrial globalization has brought many problems into their lives.

The *Suku Laut* live mainly on boats and for this reason they are also called "men of the boat" (*manusia perahu*). They come from Hoabinh (Indochina) and descend from the tribe of the Proto Malayu, dating back to the Neolithic and megalithic period (2500-1500 B.C.), which was chased out to sea by another tribe.

They are born, grow up, get married and work on the sea on a small boat called *perahu kajang* with which they move around, according to the sea. Dry land is only a place where they go to buy rice, salt and other basic commodities. So it is easy to imagine how this situation creates problems for the children's education, health, etc.

The *Suki Laut* are great fishers, but they also have a negative

reputation for committing robberies at sea. In these past years, a good number of *Suku Laut* have begun to live in a house, but always built on the sea, following marriages to persons from different cultures. However, they continue to fish.

In the Lingga Archipelago, the quasi-parish of St. Charles Borromeo is located, to which 12 Christian communities belong that are scattered over just as many islands, far from information and from school. It takes two to three hours of navigation to move from one island to another. When the rainy season comes, the children do not go to school because, according to them, this is equivalent to throwing money away.

On the island of Beting, in the Lingga archipelago, we have created a pastoral center, a kind of quasi-parish, with an elementary school and a boarding school for children. The fact that they stay in a boarding school, however, can create difficulties for the growth of these children who in fact live far from their parents.

Regarding the economic area, the people of the sea who inhabit these islands are slaves to an entrepreneur (*tauke*). He provides them with the instruments and means to fish, but on the condition that what is fished is sold to him. When the rainy season comes (which last about six months), they cannot work, and so to survive they have to turn to the entrepreneur who gives them something to eat in the form of a debt. During the dry season, when fishing is possible,

the debts have to be paid back in fish. It is understandable that in this situation there is no way for them to improve their life, including that of their children.

The diocese also tries to offer help in the socio-economic area by encouraging them to create their own work. It provides the means to fish and creates a kind of basic community among them for mutual aid. We have also begun to make them understand the importance of saving by creating bank deposits. However, many community projects have not been successful because of conflicts that arose among them.

The complex problems that concern our pastoral care in these areas require us to start again from an integral pastoral care that develops the basic Christian community, like an experience of the Christian community of the first century (Acts 2). We are thinking both of pastoral care in the spiritual area (life of communion-fraternity) and in the socio-economic, educational and health care areas.

Rev. Bernardus Somi Balun



* Extract from the report presented to the Meeting on *Guidelines for the Pastoral Care of Gypsies* Rome, 11-12 December 2006

THE APOSTLESHIP OF THE SEA IN GIBRALTAR



Two years ago Father Charles Bruzon and a group of volunteers established the Gibraltar branch of the Apostleship of the Sea. The Gibraltar branch of AOS is affiliated to the United Kingdom organisation from whom help was sought to set up locally.

The Port of Gibraltar has become increasingly busy over the past few years, with many merchant ships arriving for bunkering and Cruise Liners bringing in thousands of tourists. The crews of such vessels are often unseen and unheard. Since its inception two years ago the Gibraltar branch of AOS has gone from strength to strength. To date the following has been achieved:

- A fully insured team of eight volunteers has been trained for ship visiting.
- Contact has been established with our Church of England counterparts, the Mediterranean Mission to Seafarers (Mts).
- A joint leaflet advertising the services of both organisations (AOS & Mts) and including a map of Gibraltar depicting the location of our Churches has been printed and is available at strategic points at our Port including the Cruise Liner Terminal.
- A joint board displaying important information has been produced and placed outside the Flying Angel Club.
- A new Port Welfare Committee to look into the needs of Seafarers has been set up under the auspices of the Merchant Navy Welfare Board, UK.
- Over 150 ships have been visited by the Chaplain and volunteers.
- A team of ladies from Saint Bernard's Church regularly knit woolly hats for Seafarers who often work exposed to the elements in very cold conditions.
- Prayer cards, rosaries, sweaters, bibles and other items distributed to Catholic Seafarers on board vessels.

Mass has been celebrated by Father Charles on several ships for devout Catholic crews who have not seen a priest for months. The Sacrament of Confession has also been offered.

Plans for the future include:

- The setting up of Telephone facilities for crews at the Commercial Port and Cammell Laird.
- The provision of low cost Telephone cards for Seafarers to phone home.
- The setting up of e-mail facilities.
- The provision of a storage facility at Saint Bernard's Church for the use of AOS volunteers.

Further liaising with Shipping Agents to enable easier access to certain vessels.

For this important pastoral activity to continue succeeding we need your prayers.

(Continued from page 9)

And in fact, convinced as they were that they had been brought here to be eaten, any other language would have proved utterly useless. We made every effort to encourage them with friendly gestures and displayed in their presence the emotions which somehow naturally tend to hearten the sick.

After this we began an elementary instruction about baptism, that is, the wonderful effects of the sacrament on body and soul. When by their answers to our questions they showed they had sufficiently understood this, we went on to a more extensive instruction, namely, about the one God, who rewards and punishes each one according to his merit, and the rest. Finally, when they appeared sufficiently prepared, we told them the mysteries of the Trinity, the Incarnation and the Passion. Showing them Christ fastened to the cross, as he is depicted on the baptismal font on which streams of blood flow down from his wounds, we led them in reciting an act of contrition in their own language.

AM WORLD DIRECTORY

AUSTRALIA

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GIBRALTAR

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GREAT BRITAIN

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NETHERLANDS

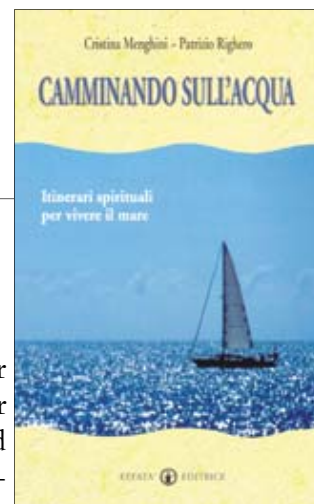
(*new e-mail for Rotterdam*)
apostolatusmaris.nl@xs4all.nl

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The authors are Cristina Meneghini and Patrizio Righero, a young married couple that has always been involved in pastoral activity in Pinerolo, Turin.

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