

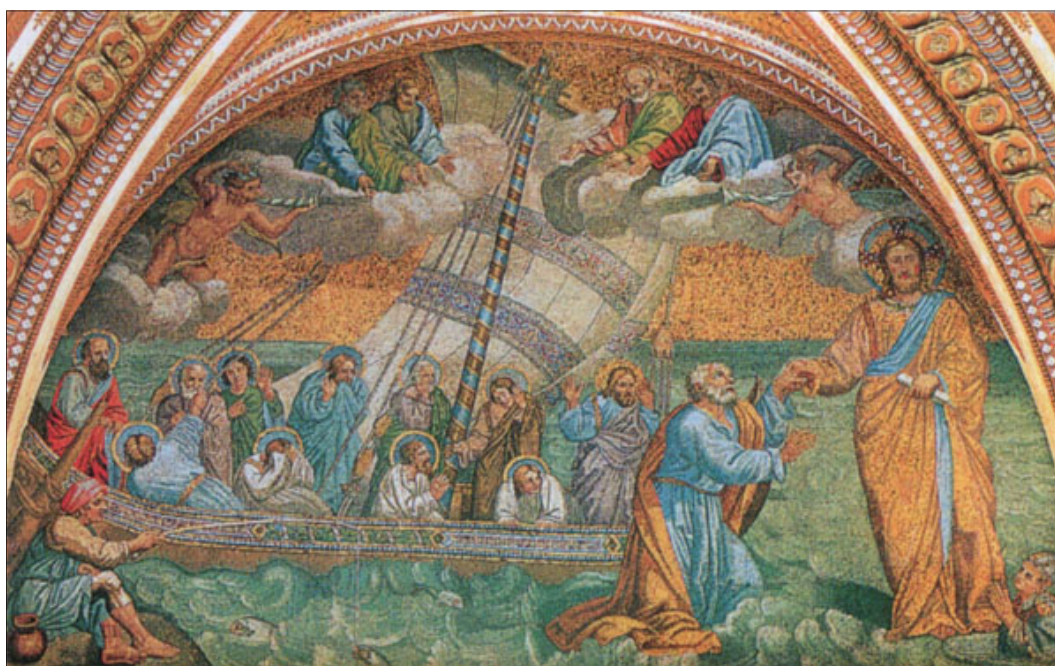
Apostolatus Maris

The Church in the Maritime World

Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People



N. 98, 2008/II



(*La Navicella*, Giotto, St. Peter's Basilica, Rome)

On the occasion of *Sea Sunday* we ask Mary,
Port of Salvation,
to pray for all the People of the Sea

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SEA SUNDAY

In the context of the celebration of "Sea Sunday", we are reporting for your reflection the words spoken by the Holy Father Benedict XVI on Sunday, June 15, 2008 to the crowd gathered in the port of Brindisi, Italy, before reciting the Angelus.

"The place where we are - the port - is charged with a eloquent symbolic significance. Every port speaks of welcome, of shelter, of safety; it speaks of a longed-for haven after what may have been a long and difficult navigation. It also speaks of departures, of plans and aspirations, of the future.



From this corner of Europe which juts into the Mediterranean between East and West, let us turn once again to Mary, the Mother who "shows us the way" - *Odegitria* -, giving us Jesus, the Way of peace.

Let us invoke her in spirit with all the titles by which she is venerated in the Shrines of Apulia and especially here, from this ancient port, let us pray to her as the "Port of salvation" for every person and for the whole of humanity.

May her maternal protection always defend this city of yours, the Region, Italy, Europe and the whole world from the storms that threaten the faith and true values; may she enable the young generations to put out into the deep without fear, to face the journey of life with Christian hope. Mary, Port of Salvation, pray for us! "

Sea Sunday Message from the Pontifical Council

Sea Sunday is annually a day set aside for the remembrance and prayer for all those who are mariners, fishers, port workers together with their families and dependents. This is therefore an opportunity for us to remember the issues that seafarers daily confront in undertaking their professional and seafaring life in the context of the pastoral care of the Apostleship of the Sea throughout the world, which is characterized also by our support for human rights, fair trade and the defence of the environment.

Coming one year after the XXII AOS World Congress, which was held in Gdynia (Poland) in 2007, this celebration will certainly give new impetus to our pledge to remain in solidarity – as stated by the theme of the Congress – with the People of the Sea as witnesses of Hope, through the Proclamation of the Word, Liturgy and Diakonia, and to promote in the maritime world a humanism inspired by Christian hope. Its introduction in the maritime environment means first and foremost the creation of a climate of respect and fairness for all seafarers.

Towards this end, the AOS has welcomed the adoption by the ILO of the *Maritime Labour Convention 2006* and the *Work in Fishing Convention 2007*. Now that these two Conventions have been adopted, the work of all national AOS continue in order to ensure that they are ratified and implemented as

quickly as possible so that they may make a genuine improvement to the lives of millions of seafarers and fishers.

However, there is one area of maritime activity which is of particular concern all over the world, that of the fishing profession. The fishing communities in fact are battling against the more negative aspects of globalisation and are confronted with economic, social and ecological problems of international proportion. Everywhere AOS has to manifest solidarity with them and intensify its pastoral mission in this area, as these next years will be decisive if we want the oceans to live, the fishing communities to survive and to continue harvesting fish, on which more than one billion people rely, till now, as their main source of protein.

In this perspective Pope Benedict XVI has spoken about “the great challenge of today [that] is to 'globalise,' not just economic and commercial interests, but also the call for solidarity.” This will be possible only if “the person, created in the image of God and loved by him, [is] at the centre of every economic plan to protect and administer the immense resources of creation” (Speech to ‘*Centesimus Annus-Pro Pontifice*’ Foundation, May 31, 2008).

Another sad and emerging phenomenon, which must be mentioned, is piracy. In some parts of the world, this is prevalent and presents a real threat to the security of vessels and their crews. AOS therefore must support every move by the International Community and local Authorities to address this problem.

Our world celebration also gives us this year the opportunity to thank again all chaplains, pastoral agents and volunteers who are active in the AOS and who extend pastoral and practical assistance together with hospitality to all seafarers regardless of race, creed or political opinion. One of our great strengths is the number of laity who work in a voluntary capacity for the AOS in chaplaincies, together with the ongoing formation and training in so many places that continue to bear fruit.

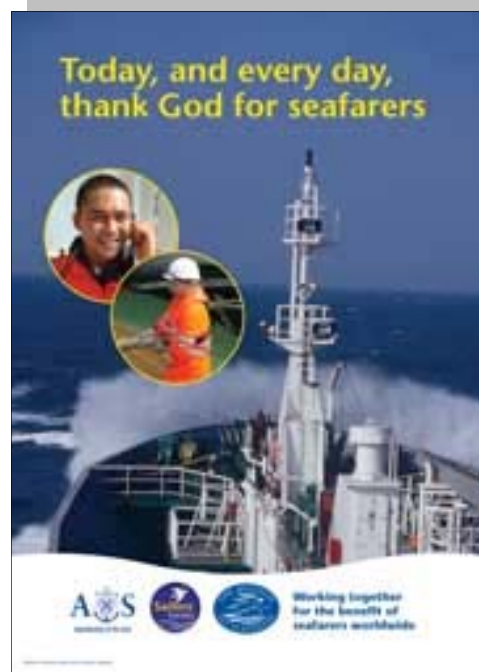
In this respect we would like to recommend that our new ‘*Manual for Chaplains and Pastoral Agents of the Apostleship of the Sea*’ be translated if possible in local languages under the authority of the respective national AOS. In this way this pastoral instrument, which has already proved to be an excellent guide, will benefit to an ever greater number of people.

We rejoice too – as it was stressed in Gdynia – for the ecumenical collaboration and interreligious dialogue taking place aboard ships, in the ports and in seafarers’ centres. Our presence and witness express the solicitude and proximity of the Church to all those who are involved in the maritime environment, especially to the poorest and those most in need.

We pray that this celebration of Sea Sunday will enable us to renew our commitment to human promotion and evangelisation. May Mary, *Stella Maris*, intercede for us in asking for God’s grace, so that AOS may ever more remain committed to the building up of God’s Kingdom in the maritime world.

Cardinal Renato Raffaele Martino
President

+ Archbishop Agostino Marchetto
Secretary



XVIII PLENARY SESSION OF THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL

(Roma, 13th - 15th May 2008)

The family of seafarers and fishers

by Cristina de Castro Garcia



The reality which I will speak about regarding the life of seafarers families and of fishers is based on my many years of work within the Apostleship of the Sea. The numer-

ous and lengthy experiences I have lived with the families, and the organised groups for seafarers' wives, have created an association entitled "**Rosa dos Ventos**" ("Windrose"), where I am in charge of the national and international relations.

We only have the strength of words in front of the people who are in power, that is those who are responsible, who generate, know about and permit this situation. Nevertheless, though we are aware of the difficulties we encounter, in front of a situation which does not duly respect the dignity of the human person as son/daughter of God, we will preserve and proceed in our action with hope as this is the only light that remains for us.

In the first place we need to distinguish the families of the mercantile marine from those of fishers. Among the latter then, we need to establish a difference between the families in artisanal fishing or coastal fishing, that lasts for a day or a week, from industrial fishing, which entails long periods at sea, on account of the real differences between each situation and of the consequences which ensue.

We need to take into account the two main work situations at sea: the conditions of work and of family live.

The XVIII Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People was held from the 13th to the 15th May 2008. There were 23 members (Cardinals, Archbishops and Bishops), assisted by 14 Consultors, all specialists in human mobility. The theme was *The Migrant and Itinerant Family*.

Among the testimonies of those who work directly with such families, Mrs Cristina de Castro, from AOS- Spain (Vigo), spoke for the Apostleship of the Sea, and her paper can be read below.

The high point of this meeting was the audience with the Holy Father Benedict XVI, on the 15th May, who stated in his speech stated that "One must not forget that the family, even the migrant family and the itinerant family, constitutes the original cell of society which must not be destroyed but rather defended with courage and patience. It represents the community in which from infancy the child has been taught to worship and love God, learning the grammar of human and moral values and learning to make good use of freedom in the truth".

The Merchant Marine

I. THE CONDITIONS OF WORK

The employment depends on maritime companies but it is evident that the crew coming from Countries of the Third World are not treated in the same manner as those coming from Europe. We

can say that they are considered as “inexpensive labour” and represent a high percentage of the crew. The situation worsens when it deals with ships that fly a flag of convenience, which yield taxation advantages for the entrepreneur and for the maritime companies, but avoid responsibilities and inspections, to the detriment of the conditions of life and work of the seafarers.

It is not easy to put up with the stress, related to the reduction of the crew who have to work for more than ten hours a day and, to life on board, where one’s private life and work is shared with persons of different nationalities, even when individual cabins are available.

There can be problems in the payment of the salary, on account of delays and uncertainty when the payments are due, especially when the ship owner is in difficulty. We find legal companies, but a certain number of them border on slavery when the worker has to ask for his salary in order to obtain it.

The length of vacations and the contributions paid out to social security are not the same in European companies and in developing countries, where the lack of social protection is very high.

But the most serious and frequent fact is the abandonment of the ship in any harbour, with a crew on board who do not have any kind of economic coverage, and on some occasions, with no



food for survival.

The **women** who work at sea, though having an adequate formation, neither benefit from the same working conditions, nor have the same possibility of promotion as men.

II. FAMILY LIFE

The situation of the family differs between European companies and third world companies

according to the length of time at sea. The long fishing cruises of developing world companies generally last from six to eight months, and can even be prolonged to ten months, whereas European ships never spend more than two months at sea. The vacation periods of European seafarers, according to convention tables, are five on every ten working days.

Europeans benefit from the possibility of embarking their own wives, in respect to the limit of persons on board for security reasons. Also the seafarers of the third world dispose of this option, but given the cost of an air ticket to reach the place of embarkation and their economic situation, they cannot afford it. Consequently, their prolonged stays at sea, as well as the facility of having their wives on board, has repercussions on the family situation, and do not allow them to exercise their own family and social rights.

The Industrial Fishing

I. THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENTERPRISE AND ITS IMPACT ON THE WORKER

The structure of the enterprise is evidently conceived with a materialistic point of reference. To gain the maximum profit from the opportunities of capture in the least possible time is imperative for these enterprises. The rest, that is the **fisherman’s hardship** on account of the work schedules endured, cannot be evaluated.

THE SHIP

The ship is the place where the workplace and the “home” of fishers are integrated. The very small cabins which are utilised for numerous functions, have to lodge more than two persons and do not guarantee adequate hygienic conditions. And these persons have to live together for months in such conditions, without any intimacy or psychological preparation to face up to this life in common.

THE CONDITIONS OF WORK

We need to underline various aspects of the

working conditions where the rare legal protection is skilfully ignored by those who violate it.

- **The contracts** often involve serious anomalies: fake days of work, without signature or signed blank, to emigrants thus worsening their conditions.

- **The contributions paid to social security** are not always rigorous and present irregularities. This is even more serious when it deals with mixed enterprises or convenience flags, with their relative consequences in case of illness, accidents at work or retirement.

- **The workday** is unlimited. The objective is to fill up the hold in the most rapid time possible. This means that the work day is protracted to more than 20 hours, with prolonged stays at sea that can reach seven months. Such a process involves fatigue, induces accidents, and in serious situations it is the cause of the worker's death.

- **The salary** never corresponds to the working hours, and does not take into consideration the supplementary hours or the weekends. There isn't any kind of danger or permanency "allowance".

- **Security on board.** One observes progress in terms of the need for formation on the part of fishers, however the working day is carried out in situations of fatigue which damage the capacity to react, and slows down the physical and mental reflexes.

On the other hand, the ships are lacking in the necessary means of security and rescue.

II. THE IMPACT ON THE FAMILY

The family, a community where the most intimate human relationships have to develop, is not compatible with the life of the seaman, to whom this possibility is refused on account of his long displacements at sea, and his short stays on land.

THE SEAFARER IN FAMILY LIFE

The industrial fishing seaman's separation from the family deteriorates the family dialogue. When the seaman returns home after a very long absence, which can even reach seven months at sea, he has to start a life in common which he has had to interrupt for a long time, and during whose absence, it had its own rhythm and assumed certain habits in which he did not take part. The few days at home do not interrupt the wife's task to carry out every-

thing on her own.

In a survey carried out by the AOS, the families were asked the following question: Which is the most important problem caused by the separation of the couple? And their answer was:

- lack of dialogue and of life in common, 39%
- difficulty in meeting again, 9.1%
- lack of marital relationships, 12.9%
- loneliness, 12%
- infidelity and doubts, 7.9%

THE SEAFARER'S WIFE IN THE FAMILY LIFE

She is a woman who courageously confronts the difficulties caused by her husband's absence: - it is necessary that she assumes the double role of father and mother in the education of her children during the whole developmental process. She continually asks herself how the father would have done.



- She considers her husband's life problems as more serious than hers. She is aware of his work conditions even though he does not speak about them, and she receives him with resignation as she is confronted by a situation that does not change.

- The seaman's short stay at home gives place to a restless life, where one wishes to fully live the short period of family life, in spite of all the adaptation difficulties created by the separation.

THE REPERCUSSIONS ON THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN

Here is another altered aspect of this family life, as it is impossible for the seaman to carry out the task of educating his children. We can say that he is excluded, as he is detached from the everyday life, and returning home he feels he is put on a secondary level in respect to the mother, as the children turn to her all the time.

The survey conducted by the AOS, gave this an-

swer to the following: If the father were to spend more time at home, would the children get a better education? 71.2% answered affirmatively.

SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

The **fisherman** does not have any say in society, he is impotent in enforcing his rights on account of his remoteness at sea. It is difficult to follow the way of solidarity, and any individual demand could be synonymous to losing one's job. He cannot but resign himself in front of a situation that does not change and where his dignity is not respected.

The **wife** needs to be integrated in society in what concerns the educational, civil and economic issues regarding the family. She does not feel marginalised and does not claim to be equivalent to the man, as her self esteem is strong owing to the work she carries out on her own.

The **children** integrate themselves in a different manner in the social life. They cannot refer to their father, as their classmates and their friends do. The

father is absent on important moments of their life: particular dates, success and difficulties at school, sports, etc., and they cannot benefit of the warmth of his company.

THE FISHER'S RETIREMENT

The re-entry into family life is not easy, neither for him who returns, nor for those who await him. These long stays at sea and the short time spent on land produce confusion in his life. Besides separation from the family, two other factors render his return difficult: the isolation experienced when the crew on board was reduced, and the social isolation in general. These two factors make a deep impression on him, and diminish his capacity to successfully resume the family relationships.

Another difficulty could arise from conflicts regarding the financial management of the house, as the pension can be inadequate on account of possible irregularities in the amounts paid to social Security.

The message I have conveyed, by means of this analysis, needs to be preceded by a phrase that reflects this reality: **"the silent slavery of the 21st century"**. All this is marginal and belongs to a mentality of Medieval Times. Only worldwide solidarity can save this situation and one needs to work tirelessly and in an intelligent manner so that, through the "AOS International Fishing Committee", a real liberation of the seafarers and their families could be realised.

Cristina de Castro Garcia

AOS-WORLD YOUTH DAY

Sydney, Australia, 15th-20th July 2008

The Apostleship of the Sea will have a stand at the Vocations EXPO at World Youth Day to inform and publicize the work of AOS. They are planning also to have catechesis workshops in relevant maritime topics that may impact young people.

WYD is the largest youth event in the world and will be held in Sydney from 15-20 July 2008. Organised by the Catholic Church, it gathers young people from around the world to build bridges of friendship and hope between continents, peoples and cultures.

In August 2005, Sydney was chosen to host the XXIII World Youth Day. The announcement was made by Pope Benedict XVI in Cologne at the conclusion of the XX WYD.

WYD08 will be the occasion of the first visit of His Holiness Benedict XVI to Australia and we very much look forward to welcoming him. Through the WYD08 experience, young people from throughout the world will make a pilgrimage in faith, will meet and experience the love of God. They will have an opportunity to share, grow and learn together.



AOS REGIONAL CONFERENCE

NORTH AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Baltimore, USA, April 1 – 4, 2008

From the report by **Deacon Albert Dacanay**
Regional Coordinator

The AOS North America and Caribbean Region held its Conference coinciding with the AOSUSA annual meeting. There were 32 participants from USA, Canada and the Caribbean, and the Under-Secretary of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrant and Itinerant People (PCPCMIP), Msgr. Novatus Rugambwa (cf. page 11).

The main theme was about Human Trafficking and the proper response in the Maritime Industry. Sr. Mary Ellen Doherty, from the Migration and Refugee Services – Office of Human Trafficking (USCCB), gave the presentation and handled Case Studies on the topic.

Msgr. Rugambwa and Deacon Dacanay mentioned the realignment of the Region which will now include the English, French and Dutch speaking countries of the Caribbean, Canada and the USA. The Spanish speaking countries of the Caribbean including Mexico are now under the Latin America Region.

The AOSUSA announced the recent appointment of their new Episcopal Promoter in the person of Bishop John Kevin Boland, from the Diocese of Savannah, Georgia. Bishop Boland has been a member of AOSUSA Cruise Ship Priest Program for many years and is familiar with the activities of the AOS. Fr. Allan Deck, S.J., the Director for Committee on Cultural Diversity in the Church, of which the AOSUSA falls under, discussed the restructuring of the USCCB. Participants were guided in reflecting over the regional initiatives of the AOS in North America and the Caribbean.

ON THE PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE XXII AOS WORLD CONGRESS

The AOS Port Chaplain must promote and make the local community aware of the existence of the ministry in the Diocese. Whenever or wherever possible all AOS Chaplains, staff and volunteers,

must share their ministry experiences to the local community. Quarterly and annual SWOT reports to the National Directors should also be sent to the local Ordinary to keep them updated on what is happening in the Port Area.

In Canada, AOS does liaison work with various Cultural Communities to be involved in being the welcome presence to their seafarer-countrymen who visit the Port. In the USA, with the new Cultural Diversity Diocesan leadership, AOS can use the particular ethnicity of seafarers that come to our ports in coordination with the heads of those departments who work in the chancery to get assistance from those particular communities. It is necessary to cultivate relationships with these people. ... Radios, in particular Sacred Heart radio, but even secular stations now seem more accommodating by advertising through Public Service Announcements. AOS should avail the use of Catholic newspapers for calendar events such as Catholic Register and Catholic Weekly Mailings (CWM). Volunteer Orientations can be very helpful. AOS should send invitations to Legion of Mary and Knights of Columbus to participate in this ministry of hospitality.

Too many of our AOS chaplains work in isolation. There is an urgent need to develop a strong volunteer base which will assist the chaplain and serve as friend, presence, guide and advocate to the seafarers who comes to our centers. Training and workshops should be regularly provided to constantly remind ourselves of who we are and what we are supposed to do in attending to the welfare of the seafarers. There is the need to develop good listening and pastoral interview skills to be able to care and attend to the situation of the seafarers.

The Episcopal Promoters of each country are the best means to gain cooperation and support in our local Church. Port Chaplains should, occasionally, invite their Bishop to celebrate mass with the seafarers on board the ship, to visit the seafarer center,

to do regular ship visitation and to host fundraising events. Relationships with the Episcopal Promoter and our local bishops will give us opportunities to voice our needs in ministry to those we serve.

Experience has shown that the Permanent Diaconate is particularly well suited to this apostolate work – this being a ministry of presence and service. In the exercise of their ordained ministry, by listening, sharing and empowering, they manifest the solicitude of the Church and are the signs of the presence of Jesus, the Servant. Vocation for the Diaconate is increasing and formation emphasis has always been geared towards service to the marginalized. There is likewise the difficulty by the Bishop to assign a priest in this ministry because most if not all of the priests are struggling in allocating their time while juggling their Parish, school, hospital, jail and other responsibilities.

There should always be an open invitation at the seminary for candidates involved in the Diaconate Formation to visit and be involved in the ministry to the seafarers and fishers. The National Director needs to promote the ministry as well to Diaconate Conferences and Assembly to make them aware of the Ministry and how suitable it is as a ministry base for the Permanent Deacon.

Even in the busiest ports of North America, not too many people of the diocese are aware of the existence and activities of the AOS. People can drive over a bridge and not even notice the huge cranes and cargo ships that dock daily or weekly in their city ... So obviously, the parishes that don't border on the docks will be far less aware. This brings back the need to promote AOS to the local community.

ON THE FISHING INDUSTRY

In our region, fishing activities are particularly intensive in the Caribbean area, in Canada and some parts of the United States (it is almost non-existent in San Pedro...and in New Orleans the industry is slowly making a comeback). Overall AOS has clearly in some ways remiss in this area.

AOS should make the fishing communities and

the maritime industry aware of its ministry and services – through special outreach and visitation as well as invitation to visit the Seafarer Centers. In New Orleans we have gathered the 4 other maritime churches (Greek Orthodox, Norwegian and German Lutheran and Baptist) on a regular basis to collaborate with our work with the fishers. This has fostered a relationship with them that encourages their interaction with those of other religions.

AOS must be cognizant of fishing issues and must be knowledgeable of ILO and FAO activities, International Treaties of the U.S. and Canada. AOS must endeavor to make their voices heard during forums and discussions on these issues. AOS endorses and supports International Conventions, i.e. Work in Fishing Convention 2007.

All the Chaplains, staff and volunteers of AOS in the Region are reminded of their mandate and are enjoined to engage in pastoral work with fishers and the fishing community at their respective ports. AOS should become a voice for the fishers and this culture and workforce must be brought back into the world.

ON THE CRUISE SHIPS PRIESTS' MINISTRY

The Cruise Ship Priest Program uses a critique form which passengers complete on-board at the end of the cruise. These forms are sent to AOSUSA for review and recording. There is also the report

that has to be submitted by the Cruise Chaplain, notations from the Cruise Director, and comments from the Cruise Line Representative.

AOSUSA General Secretary receives all the information and makes the necessary report/adjustments when the priest return to work on another cruise in the future.

Cruise Ship Chaplains can and should offer Mass for the crew. They should be available and present to the spiritual needs of the crew. They should also have good relationship and must cooperate with local AOS Chaplains who can be in a better position to handle issues of crew members on his/her treatment on the ship.

We need to keep in mind the language we use. In the adoption of our constitution and by-laws we



employed the language of “cruise ship ministry program.” This was an intentional change, to re-



move the priest himself as the focus of the program, and to re-focus the program on the ministry which the priest is to provide.

There is a cruise ship manual that is very helpful. Every member must be reminded that they have access to the yahoo.com discussion group concerning the ministry. The membership packet which each new member should receive would be helpful to the cruise chaplain. A DVD offering instruction or orientation to cruise ship chaplains may be helpful.

We need to get more companies on-board, especially Carnival and Royal Caribbean. Cruise Ship Priests and local AOS Chaplains must work cooperatively together. Same program can be adopted by AOS Canada.

ON THE “MANUAL FOR CHAPLAINS AND PASTORAL AGENTS OF THE AOS”

Most of us have read the materials thoroughly. One center discussed in detail during staff meetings about the Manual last December. It was a general consensus that the contents were comprehensive and useful. Guidelines are clear and objectives are well defined for the chaplains and pastoral agents to carry out their ministry. The Manual is at all times an excellent source of reference for our service to all maritime personnel and a handy reminder for continuous personal formation.

Different centers are using different materials as resource. Some often refer to the Apostolic Letter *Stella Maris* by Pope John Paul II, the books and materials received in Houston while the chaplain or the pastoral agents attended the Chaplaincy School. Others use the ‘Ship Visitors’ Handbook’ by ICMA.

Majority group agreed that the latest Manual should be produced in booklet form for ease of carry and making references. The Manual can also be downloaded from the National and International websites.

The consensus is that the Manual should be in English, French and Spanish in separate booklets.

Every chaplain or pastoral agent should have a copy of the Manual. It is suggested that the Bishop of the diocese where there is Port should also have a copy so that he will be kept abreast of the uniqueness of our ministry and hence support our needs and our activities.

ON THE AOS NEWSLETTER AND AOS WEBSITE

AOS North America and the Caribbean has released the 2nd edition of its quarterly newsletter ‘Star of the Sea’. It features updates and greetings from the PCPCM, the Regional Coordinator, the Episcopal Promoters and National Directors of this region. It was well received and everyone spoke well of the quality and content of the newsletter. An AOS Website for the region is under study.

AOS have a good starting point of developing the ministry in the Caribbean. There had been inquiries from Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago and Bahamas regarding the formal setup of AOS in that area. A representative from Jamaica who is in the Diaconate Program attended the conference and is eager to begin doing the ministry work.

CONCLUSION

The Conference opened up a number of opportunities where AOS can improve its service in the North America and Caribbean Region. It created an interest to look at the ministry on a broader perspective, to build better communication and dialogue further strengthened the network of Chaplains in USA, the Caribbean and Canada.

There is still a lot of work to be done and we have very few resources. Every little help, support and cooperation is needed from everyone to achieve concrete results. But I am confident, that our Blessed Mother, the Star of the Sea, will continue to be with us...and the Holy Spirit will guide us through our journey of caring for the people of the sea in North America and the Caribbean.

AOS REGIONAL CONFERENCE NORTH AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

ADDRESS BY MSGR. NOVATUS RUGAMBWA

Under-Secretary of the PCPCMIP

Introduction

I am happy and grateful for your invitation which gives me this opportunity to attend the AOS Regional Conference of the North-American and Caribbean Region and the AOS-USA National Conference. I bring to you all, the very cordial greetings of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, particularly of our President Cardinal Renato Raffaele Martino, of the Secretary H.E. Msgr. Agostino Marchetto and of the Officials of the maritime sector.

May I congratulate Deacon Albert Dacanay on his election and subsequent appointment to the important responsibility of Regional Coordinator. The responsibilities of a regional coordinator for such a vast area, which extends from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from the Caribbean Sea to the North Pole, is a challenging task and I am sure he can count on your support and on the collaboration of the whole regional network.

As you already know, during the recent XXII AOS World Congress that took place in Gdynia (Poland) in June last year and whose proceedings will be published soon, it was announced, so as to better take into account the existing cultural and pastoral realities, that from now on Mexico and Cuba will be part of the Latin American region and the English, French and Dutch speaking islands of the Caribbean will join the North American region. We can take this opportunity to thank Fr Lorenzo Mex for his commitment and tireless devotion in leading this region during the last 5 years and for having hosted so generously and successfully the last regional conference in Progreso (Mexico) in 2005.

I wish to thank all those who have organized this meeting, especially Rev. Fr. Sinclair Oubre and Ms. Doreen Badeaux, respectively President and Executive Secretary of AOS-USA, with the support of Sr. Myrna Tordillo, National Director of AOS-USA and of Deacon Dacanay. This year we shall miss Fr. James Keating, former AOS National Director for the USA. I know that he attended faithfully each year the National Conference and that until his last moments he kept his passion for this apostolate. May he and Msgr. Vincent Patrizi, former AOS Director for the Diocese of Corpus Christi who also died recently, rest in peace.

Allow me at this point, to express again the Pontifical Council's gratitude to the Callais family for their generous donation to AOS International. It was a great joy to receive Father Sinclair Oubre and the 11 members of the Callais family at our Pontifical Council in October in Rome and to arrange for their Audience with the Holy Father. Besides the financial donation, we also received two model ships: one destined personally to the Pope and the other to the Pontifical Council. The latter is now carefully kept in the Visitors' Room of our Offices in Palazzo San Calisto.

XXII AOS World Congress

Regional and National gatherings are always an important part of the Apostleship of the Sea's agenda. It is an occasion for all chaplains, ship visitors and volunteers to shape together a common vision and to learn to know each other and to work together as a team and as a network. Besides, coming so soon after the



XXII AOS World Congress, this meeting is particularly significant, as it will enable us to follow up on this momentous event.

The Congress, in its Final Document, has given us a rich collection of conclusions and recommendations, which is the fruit of the participants' reflections, sharing and deliberations. We are called in the next five years to implement them if we want the Congress to bear all its fruits. Now is the time for each country and each region to reflect and decide how the threefold responsibilities of proclaiming the Word of God, celebrating of the sacraments and "diakonia", can be better put into practice at every level of our pastoral activity: namely at the regional, national and local or port levels.

During the recent AOS Regional Coordinators' meeting which was held in Rome earlier this year, each region present proposed the more important measures to be implemented. It was also proposed that practical steps be taken in each region towards implementing a number of recommendations, which are to be found on p 12 in the Final Document of the XXII AOS World Congress under the heading "projects and initiatives". It was decided that in six months time (June 2008), a questionnaire be sent to all AOS coordinators and national directors to evaluate the ongoing implementation process of the World Congress. I suggest that you take some time during this conference to propose the priorities for your country/ region/ports and to consider together the resources necessary to put them into practice.

Pastoral Care for the Fishing Sector



I have brought with me the latest edition of our International bulletin *Apostolatus Maris*, which contains a full coverage of the recent Coordinators' meeting which I mentioned earlier. This meeting was followed by the AOS International Fishing Committee, which is also reported there. Knowing your interest and involvement in fishing issues, I would like to draw your attention to the recommendations, which were made after a discussion on *Work in Fishing Convention 2007*, by the participants including an expert from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and another from the International Labour Organization (ILO). These are the main suggestions on how AOS, as an organisation, could help in promoting this Convention: by giving first hand information about marine incidents; supporting and participating in awareness campaigns about the situation in the fishing sector; equipping the fishers and educating them about their rights; helping the fishermen to bargain collectively as in the shipping industry; promoting advocacy with the policy makers; contributing to the work of the ILO through ICMA.

The AOS is being asked to participate in this collective international effort to make this Convention a "global label" of decent working conditions and treatment for the fishers worldwide, so that it can become a powerful means towards formalising their rights and promoting their welfare.

Manual for Chaplains and Pastoral Agents

As you know the Manual for Chaplains and Pastoral Agents of the AOS, which was presented during the Congress has been in circulation since December 2007. It is an important instrument, which has taken into account the latest Church documents, maritime legislation, technological advances and also the experiences of a countless number of chaplains and volunteers. It can be used for training and everyday easy reference. At the moment it is available in electronic form, but a printed version in English, French and Spanish has been announced by the Pontifical Council. In fact after the Proceedings of the Congress, we will publish as "extracts" this document in the abovementioned three languages (*People on the Move*, no. 106, Suppl.). However this does not prevent National Directors or Regional Coordinators to decide whether to print their own edition. Translations in other languages are also possible, provided this is done under the supervision of the Bishop Promoter and National Director.

AOS in North America

The region may be vast and challenging but there are many encouraging signs and many efforts and generous initiatives have been made to improve AOS outreach and commitment to the people of the sea. In the USA: the regular holding of annual conferences; the positive participation of AOS- USA to the XXII AOS World Congress; the Cruise Ship ministry and chaplaincy project; the campaign and information regarding the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) requirements for maritime welfare personnel; the initiatives towards applying the concept of “fair trade” to the shipping industry; the networking and support given by the national Secretariat, especially in times of crisis and catastrophe, which has allowed the successful resolution of several difficult cases; the regular publication of national newsletter “Catholic Maritime News”; the good relations with all the partners in the industry.

In Canada

The support of the Bishop Promoter and the good relations with the Episcopal conference; the appointment of Chaplains in all the major ports and regular contacts with the National Director; the positive participation of AOS-Canada to the XXII AOS World Congress; good ecumenical relations; the regular publication of “Morning Star” and as from this year of a regional newsletter.

Appeal for the AOS in the Caribbean Islands

As for the AOS in the Caribbean Islands, the Pontifical Council encourages you concentrate and unite your efforts so as to re-launch AOS there. There may still be some remnants of a formerly active AOS network there and the Regional Coordinator has already reported about preliminary contacts with a Canadian Missionary Society present in the Caribbean. These are positive signs, we encourage you to pursue these efforts in order to set up a formal AOS structure in these islands which are home to intensive cruise, yachting and fishing activities.

The Apostleship of the Sea and the Fight against Human Trafficking

Before concluding this “Message”, we express appreciation of the fact that this Meeting will dedicate much of its time to the fight against one of the most shameful and shocking phenomena of our times, that is, human trafficking. Without entering into the details of the topic, I just want to remind all of you that the Holy See, particularly our Pontifical Council, is encouraging all suitable efforts and initiatives aiming at not only eradicating this appalling offence against human dignity but also at liberating the victims and promoting their integral wellbeing [cfr. The participation of Archbishop Agostino Marchetto, Secretary of the PCPCMIP, at the Wien Forum to *Fight against Human Trafficking*, 13-15 February 2008, *People on the Move*, 106, XXXX, April 2008).

We pray and hope that your study of this subject will benefit other AOS member Countries and Regions in finding and getting ways to suffocate the system of this horrible phenomenon and to address its root causes.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we wish you all the JOY and HOPE of Easter. Through the Intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, affectionately known as *Stella Maris*, may these gifts of the Risen Lord always stay with us, especially during these days of meeting and sharing, so that we can be faithful witnesses of the Good News of the Resurrection, in solidarity with thousands of fishers and seafarers who come daily to our ports as well as all those entrusted to our maritime pastoral care.

Have a very fruitful and pleasant meeting and I thank you very much for your attention.



Andrew Johnston Hunter Rector of this
wife Agnes Blanc he who died 18 Jan. 1925

FEAST OF SAINT FRANCIS OF PAOLA

(Genoa, 4th May 2008)

Homily of Msgr. **Jacques Harel**



I am very honoured and thank you very warmly for this kind invitation to participate in this joyful festivity. Genoa is noted for its great maritime tradition and in the course of history it has played a major role in maritime commerce and exploration. Is it not the birthplace of Christopher Columbus, one of the greatest explorers of all time? It is today the home port for so many famous shipping and cruise ship companies. Shipbuilding is its major industry and its university is renowned all over the world for its economic and maritime studies.

I bring to you all, the very cordial greetings of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, particularly those of our President Cardinal Renato Raffaele Martino, of the Secretary H.E. Msgr. Agostino Marchetto.

Today is the feast of St Francis of Paola (1416-1517), founder of the Order of Minims, proclaimed in 1943 by Pope Pius XII patron saint of the Italian seafarers, and he is also one of the patrons of AOS, the international Catholic Work dedicated to the ministry (apostolate) to the seafarers and their families throughout the world. St Francis of Paola is best known for the following miraculous event, which I am sure you all know very well. In 1464 Francis wanted to cross the Straits of Messina to reach Sicily, but a boatman refused to take him. So Francis laid his cloak on the water, tied one end to his staff to make a sail, and sailed across with his companions. From this time on he has been recognised by seafarers as one of theirs and one they can trust in times of need.

This year, for many seafarers, it was one of the hardest winter in the North-Atlantic in their sea-going careers. There has been reports from seafarers to chaplains, that the seas were so high that several times they feared for their lives. For us it is a reminder, should we need one, that shipping and fishing are one of the most dangerous professional occupations on earth, and that we owe a big debt of gratitude for those who nevertheless, accept to leave the safety of their homes and of their countries, to ensure that we get what we need for our development and prosperity. We thank them and pray that through the intervention of St Francis of Paola, but also by urging for safer ships and improved safety standards, the many hazards of the sea can be lessened, the seafarers and fishers be protected from all dangers and can return safely to their home and families.

We also know that physical dangers are not the only dangers to which the seafarer is exposed. By the very nature of their work, seafarers must stay away from their family and churches for months and sometimes for years at a time. This puts a heavy stress on family and on their spiritual life, the challenge for AOS is therefore to accompany them, support them and help them continue to lead a meaningful and Christian life. This is done principally, as we were reminded by the last AOS World Conference, by the proclamation of the Word of God, the celebration of the Sacraments, prayer and service (*diakonia*) by our chaplains, pastoral agents and volunteers. The vocation of Apostolatus Maris, is to be "leaven" in the

world and to witness in the maritime world of the love and compassion of Jesus, or as our last World Congress has expressed it *“by introducing a Christian humanism in the maritime world.”* (Message to Seafarers, 2007)

The maritime industry is a very dynamic one, which has succeeded in adapting itself to the considerable economic changes brought about by globalisation and its consequences. While the fishing industry is in crisis in many parts of the world, the shipping industry, including the cruise sector, has been enjoying, I am glad to say, a period of prosperity. The price to pay for this has been a technological revolution, with the results that today, ships are larger, crews are smaller and international ports are farther from city centres and turnaround times have been drastically reduced. Very often the seafarers have had to pay a high price to adapt themselves to these new conditions. This work related pressure and fatigue is putting the dignity and the health of the human persons involved in shipping and fishing under heavy strain. It is not acceptable that they should carry such a heavy share of the cost of the modernisation of the industry and in this connection we can quote Pope Benedict XVI, who wrote recently to Cardinal Martino, President of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace as well as President of our PCPCMIP, that *“development cannot be reduced to simple economic growth; it must include the moral and spiritual dimension. A truly integral humanism must, at the same time, also express solidarity”* (April 10, 2008).

In this changing environment, it is also necessary for the AOS to respond to the signs of the times and to review periodically our activities and services, to identify sectors where it would be necessary to expand in order to develop, while other activities have to be reviewed and possibly discontinued. This will demand from us a spirit of renewal and innovation, bearing in mind that fidelity, which certainly means continuity and stability, is not just a repetition of the past but requires creativity.

In this connection, I am able to say that AOS-Italy is one of the leading and more dynamic AOS national work. These recent years it has been growing in strength and visibility, and it has made its respected voice heard in the maritime world. With its 29 centres spread around the coasts of Italy and with its devoted team of port and sailing chaplains, its pastoral agents and volunteers, coordinated by the National Director Don Giacomo Martino, it reaches out from Genoa to all seafarers without distinction who come daily to the Italian ports or who sail on Italian ships. Along the years AOS-Italy has been at the forefront in the sector of maritime welfare, for example by supporting in the country the creation of Port Welfare Committees. It has also played an important international role by showing the way and supporting generously many initiatives of AOS International around the world to provide a safer and better work environment. For all this AOS-Italy and all its members must be thanked and commended.

As AOS members, we are often identified with the “Stella Maris” and we are also called “Stella Maris members”. The “Star of the Sea” is the beacon that gives the right direction and allows the ship to continue on its route and reach port safely. Also in our lives Mary is the star that guides us, protects us and intervenes in our favour. Let us now turn ourselves towards Mary as we listen to this beautiful prayer of St Bernard of Clairvaux:

*“With her for a guide, you will never go astray;
...under her protection, you have nothing to fear”*



MEETING OF THE NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE OF THE APOSTLESHIP OF THE SEA



On April 17, 2008, the National Steering Committee of the Apostleship of the Sea met in Rome in the offices of Migrantes (CEMI). In addition to the National Director, Rev. Giacomo Martino, and the National Coordinator, Deacon Renato Causa, the Steering Committee is made up by: Dr. Paolo Capanna, Costa Cruises; Dr. Bartolomeo Carini, Messina Firm; Admiral

Raimondo Pollastrini, General Commander of the Italian Port Authorities; Capt. Ivo Guidi, Maritime Agents, Commander Elio Eizzo, Confitarma; Rev. Giuseppe Mazzotta, in charge of Stella Maris Augusta; Rev. Luca Centurioni, Coordinator of chaplains on board, and Deacon Massimo Franzi, President of the National Federation of Stella Maris Associations.

After the meeting was opened, the Steering Committee analyzed the situation of the Stella Maris Centers. At this time, Stella Maris Centers are present in approximately 27 Italian ports, with very rapid growth in the past years (from the initial 6), and their function of religious and pastoral assistance in addition to charitable aid in emergencies has now become structural in the maritime world and the life of the People of the Sea. Today the contribution given to foreign seafarers is increasingly important, especially with regard to communication with their families. For seafarers, communication is everything: it is the only thread that ties them to their affections, roots and values. The Stella Maris Centers try to make up for these problems by proposing themselves more and more as "a home away from home".

The service of chaplains on board cruise ships also records its own defined structure now

through agreements with the shipping companies and also official recognition of the chaplain on board as an officer for the maritime personnel's welfare. This position gives our priests a way to share the life on board ship of seafarers of all nationalities and ranks.

Our sector is also present on the Welfare Committees. These committees are provided for on the international level by ILO and IMO provisions for aid to the people of the sea, and they have been created in Italy in the past years thanks precisely to the pressure exerted by the Italian Apostleship of the Sea together with the corps of the port authorities and the International Labor Union. The committees are present, as well as on the national level, in 7 ports and they are being established in 21 other ports. On the committees all the subjects of the maritime world and the local bodies are present and their work is aimed at coordinating welfare for the seafarers and finding the resources needed to support the activity of voluntary groups working in the ports (including almost all the Stella Maris Centers).

So relations with every sector of the maritime world are excellent today, including and above all through participation in the social life of the maritime sector, and in this framework we can also include attention to formation. The Italian Apostleship of the Sea is present in the Italian Academy of the Merchant Marine, which prepares young officers for the Italian fleet, as a teacher of ethics in the maritime world. The teaching position obtained in a public formation body makes it possible to promote Christian values among the young student officers who will be the commanders and officers of tomorrow's general staff and thus the persons in charge on board ships for the condition of the crews and the work.

At the end of the Steering Committee meeting, the members entrusted the Apostleship of the Sea's projects to the Lord, to Our Lady *Stella Maris* and to St. Francis of Paola.

Deacon Renato Causa

2008 NATIONAL MEETING OF THE MISSION OF THE SEA

Lisieux, May 4, 2008



Gauche-droite: P. Gaborit, P. Pasquier, Cap. Martin

«Living Together, A Challenge for Today»

FINAL DECLARATION

The Mission of the Sea held its national meeting in Lisieux on the Feast of the Ascension 2008. It made an assessment of its work on the theme for the year: «Living Together, A Challenge for Today». We realize that more broadly speaking our mission concerns the whole maritime community and the people of the sea and that we must show them our nearness in the name of the Gospel. One of these challenges is to build relations with the youngest people in schools and on the borderline.

Sailing and professional coastal activities are starting to find a place among us. A dialogue has begun that is going in the direction of «living together» in a better way. This dialogue has yet to be found with the scientists.

The Mission of the Sea pointed out the main difficulties confronting the seafarers. The fishers are confronted with the problems of fishing quotas in a context of the resource's rarefaction and the challenge of its conservation. They are disoriented by the imbalances noted in applying common European rules.

They are concerned about the future of their profession. In view of this situation, we are convinced that in order for them to get out of this, the professional solidarities among fishers need to be strengthened by going beyond local particularisms and cooperating with the women's associations that are very active regarding the ports.

Even if the merchant marines have seen their living conditions improve regarding some points (duration of contracts, salary levels, state of the ships,

crease the feeling of isolation.

This reinforces our conviction about the usefulness of visits on board and places for hospitality.

In Living Together the universal fraternity that ought to unite the men and women of these times is expressed in a practical way. We get this conviction from the Gospel and we try to give witness to it in the maritime world.

Appointments and Changes

Fr. Guy Pasquier from Le Havre, after 15 years as a sailing priest, has stopped his professional activities as an electrician aboard ships. He has now been appointed General Secretary of France's Mission de la Mer (AOS-France) in replacement of Fr. Robert Gaborit, who has accepted new parish responsibilities in addition to his duties as AOS Chaplain.

The President of AOS-France is Capt. Philippe Martin and Bishop Claude Schockert is the Liaison Bishop with the Episcopal Conference.

Our best wishes and prayers accompany them.

There is no church at sea, no temple, no mosque, no synagogue. Yet to consider time spent there, alone or in a crew, as a "void" in spiritual life would be candidly to ignore the depth of the seafarer's soul.

Fr François Le Gall

means of communication with their families, ...), they are confronted more and more by security code requirements and working conditions related to reduced manpower. It is becoming increasingly difficult for them to go on land during the ports of call. The multinational crews and the difficulty in mastering a common language in-

CHAPLAINCY OF THE MISSION OF THE SEA

Pointe-Noire, Congo

Activity Report: July 2007 - March 2008

In our pastoral work with the people of the sea, we have put emphasis during these past months on the resolutions and conclusions of the XXII AM World Congress held in Gdynia, Poland, from June 24-29, 2007, which spoke about the Apostleship of the Sea in its Final Message as «Maritime Humanism Invigorated by Christian Hope».

The visit to ships was a very intense moment for us in this pastoral action. It was the occasion for us to provide many services for the seafarers: transportation to the center of the city for shopping, changing money, bank transactions, Internet, buying phone cards, sending a package by DHL, health care assistance in a hospital, mail, participation in the Eucharistic celebrations at Christmas, and Friday prayer in the mosque.

It is interesting to note that the seafarers' major request continues to be access to Internet and telephones.

At the beginning of 2008, we signed up again in the register for visits to ships, an activity in which our apostolate takes on its full meaning. During this trimester we experienced a sad event: the death of a Ukrainian seafarer on February 3, 2008 at the age of 47, which occurred on the ship «Astra Sea» flying a Cypriot flag. The AM team was

presented in order to help them with the many procedures for



Port chaplain Fr. Lelo in the middle

repatriating his body to his country of origin and for the religious service. On March 22, 2008, we helped an Egyptian seafarer to return to his country for health reasons, and we also took part in settling some difficulties that the seafarers were experiencing on a ship flying the flag of St. Kitts and Nevis. These difficulties concerned in particular the question of the lack of water, unpaid salaries and various forms of mistreatment suffered by the seafarers. In this regard, a meeting was convened with the crew and the chaplain, and an overall solution was found to remedy these problems. Thank God!

The difficulties encountered during our apostolate are:

- The need for an AM structure of its own to receive the seafarers;
- The need for Internet and a

phone;

- The need for a recreation room or center;
- The lack of financial means to cope with some problems that we encounter;
- The lack of complete computer and information material for the chaplain;
- The need for an ITF antenna in the Congo

Conclusion

Regarding our difficulties, they are always the same: a lack of adequate means to cope with some situations that the seafarers experience when passing through our port. We do not have resources or revenues. Sometimes the chaplain is obliged to use his own retributions for the urgent cases. The lack of a hospitality structure for the seafarers always raises a problem.

We thank the Most Rev. Jean Claude Makaya, our Promoter Bishop, for his paternal attention and for his encouragement and aid in our pastoral action. ITF has also been of great help this year, especially in solving some difficult problems encountered by the seafarers.

*Father Joachim Lelo
Port Chaplain of Pointe-Noire*

THE FISHERS' PROTEST INFLAMES EUROPE

The main issue that is agitating the fishers is the cost of diesel fuel. In fact, at 0.80 Euro a liter for diesel fuel, fishing has become counterproductive. The sale of fish is almost not enough to cover the expenses and, if this situation continues, the risk of unleashing a grave crisis is very great. This would affect a sector fundamental for the economy that has always provided work and food for millions of people. So it is necessary to act as soon as possible to help this sector.

The fishers are asking for a decrease in the price of diesel fuel and a restructuring of the EFF (European Fisheries Fund). In France, Spain, Portugal and Italy, there have been all-out strikes that have also blocked some ports.

The fishers' dispute exploded on June 4th in Brussels where they had gone to ask for a solution to the crisis: for example, a green light to the States to grant sectorial aid tied to EU approval, loosening the fishing quotas, etc. "There is no immediate solution, even if the crisis is immediate. The solutions are for the mid-term and the European Commission encourages the State Members to intervene by having recourse to the European Fisheries Fund", said the spokesman of the Commissioner for Fishing, Joe Borg, to the delegation of fishers. The answer was not satisfactory, and, unfortunately, the discontent touched off clashes on "Rue de la Loi" with arrests and injuries.



The Church shares the anguish of the people of the sea. To respond to the problems of the fishing industry, in Spain the Bishops of the ecclesiastical Province of Santiago de Compostela, including the Most Rev. Luis Quinteiro Fiuza, the Bishop Promoter of the Apostleship of the Sea, wrote the following message to ask for a fair solution through negotiations:

"The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. Indeed, nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts" (Gaudium et Spes, 1).

These words of the Second Vatican Council encourage us to look around us at the People of the Sea who live in our diocese and who are experiencing a difficult situation. This has caused demonstrations of protest in various forms including an indefinite blockade in the ports of Galicia.

As shepherds of the People of God who make their pilgrimage in Galicia, we share the worries of the People of the Sea and we exhort them not to lose hope.

We ask that the government departments involved take their problems into account. We are confident that, if everyone is willing to co-operate, fair solutions can always be found if we take the route of dialogue and negotiation. The love that seafarers bear for Our Lady of Mount Carmel is, undoubtedly, a gift from God. It is the greatest inheritance which is passed from generation to generation in seafaring families. We turn to her in these moments of difficulty for the men and women of the sea. We trust that we can always count on her powerful intercession".

+ Julián Barrio Barrio, Archbishop of Santiago de Compostela
+ José Dieguez Reboredo, Bishop of Tui-Vigo
+ Luis Quinteiro Fiuza, Bishop of Ourense and AOS Episcopal Promoter
+ Manuel Sánchez Monge, Bishop of Mondoñedo-Ferrol
+ Alfonso Carrasco Rouco, Bishop of Lugo

Lugo, June 1, 2008

COD FISHING IN THE NEWFOUNDLAND SEAS

It is the first Sunday of April and I am traveling on the highway from La Coruña to Hío, Cangas, It looks like a beautiful day. The sky is deep blue and the sun is shining in all its splendor. Contemplating the landscape enraptures me.

As I pass near Pontevedra, the imposing tower stands out of the Basilica of Saint Mary Major. On the Marin highway a few kilometers further on, the beautiful island of Tambo appears, as if by enchantment, in the Pontevedra estuary near Combarro. The calm, transparent waters of this estuary are dressed in sky blue. At the background of the estuary in the distance I can make out the island of Ons.

I reach Hío and am warmly received by the seafarers who were dedicated to cod fishing in Newfoundland (Canada) in the 60s. The purpose of my trip was, at their invitation, to celebrate the Eucharist at the great annual meeting of these fishers. The church of Hío was bursting with seafarers' families. The Eucharist was deeply felt and followed devoutly. The notes of the "salve marinera" filled the participants' hearts with emotion and the solemn alleluias marked the rhythm of Easter.

At the end of the Mass, the seafarers offered a warm, heartfelt homage to the priest Josefa Beobide who lived with them for twenty-four years in St. Pierre Miquelon (Canada). His life sums up a whole era of service to the Church by accompanying the maritime world.



Agustín Romero, National Director

THE WORK OF THE APOSTLESHIP OF THE SEA IN CANADA



Fr. Joseba Beobide

The Apostleship of the Sea in Spain has carried out a great activity in the Spanish maritime world both in and out of our seas in the past 50 years. I will limit myself to the areas where its presence has become more visible: the national merchant fleet (oil tankers, merchant ships, passenger ships, etc.) and the fishing fleet.

Because of very limited space, I will focus on the fishing fleet. In this area, the Christian presence in the world of coastal fishing (the so-called small-scale fleet) has been, for reasons of geographic and social proximity, very present both in the ordinary parishes of the whole national coast and because of the special dedication of priests appointed as chaplains particularly dedicated to the people of the sea.

This world of coastal fishing is very broad but I will only refer to the world of deep sea fishing and within it, more specifically, to the cod fishing fleet, or as it is better known to us, "Terranova". This is where my work developed in particular and that of a good number of chaplains over the past 50 years.

To sum up AM's presence in Newfoundland, we can say that the first stable presence on land began in the early 60s. It was at that time that the Stella Maris was established in St. Pierre and Miquelon, the principal port of the small French archipelago located to the south of the island of Newfoundland, Canada.

The Stella Maris meant a great positive change in the social and spiritual care of the nearly 3,500 fishers who were fishing in those cold, rough waters. Through the steps begun and completed by the chaplain of that center, Father Javier Sanchez Erausquin, it was possible to have a Spanish doctor present and thus improve medical care substantially. The Stella Maris, because of the building and its efficient activity, has become until the present the most remarkable institution of the Apostleship of the Sea in the whole North-east Atlantic area. Here I cannot forget the long, self-sacrificing work of the subsequent chaplains in St. Pierre and Miquelon. This was all made possible by the unconditional and decisive support of the church of St. Pierre.

Until the free entrance of labor unions in the Spanish maritime labor world in the mid-70s, the AM fulfilled the task of being a dynamic, faithful spokesperson for the fishing world. Through this closeness to the fishers of Newfoundland (by this term I mean cod fishing), huge assemblies (of 400 and 600 men) were organized on the Galician and Basque coast in the 60s and 70s in which the fishers' social and human problems were discussed very actively and vociferously.

At the same time, the AM integrated the seafarers' families into its work: from organizations like "The Great Family of the Sea" for merchant marines from Bilbao in the 50s, to more recent associations that have been created in the fishing world, (some of) which have currently been set up separately from the Apostleship of the Sea.

Joseba Beobide



Illegal fishing costs billions to Africa

According to the report the first detailed quantitative analysis of the problem on a global scale and studies indicate that losses for sub-Saharan Africa total \$1 billion per year. Gareth Thomas, Britain's minister for Trade and Development, told that the scale of illegal fishing could be double earlier estimates with weak international governance hampering progress in tackling the problem.

The report, 'Global Extent of Illegal Fishing,' reveals that global annual losses from illegal fishing could be double earlier estimates at \$10 to \$23 billion annually. A recent study by the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) says that the scale of illegal fishing now threatens around 10 million African people who depend on fishing for an income. Currently the ISS is monitoring the level of destruction of fish stocks off the Kenyan and Tanzanian coasts in a research project which will be published soon.

The main reason of the devastation of African fishing stocks are large-scale commercial fishing companies most of whom originate in the European Union and Asia. Overfishing not only depleted fish stocks in African waters but also bring many fish species to the brink of extinction. Thomas told that due to illegal fishing many developing countries generate more revenue from fish exports than coffee, cocoa, sugar, bananas, rubber and tea combined.

Ghanaian fisherman, David Quaye, said illegal fishing has cost the fishermen a lot. Formerly they get fish, they get money, they send their children to school. But now they are not able to give to their family. According to ISS report part of the problem is that African governments often simply lack the necessary capacity and expertise and are, therefore, easy targets for predatory fishing vessels.

([http://www.nationmedia.com/dailynation/nmgcontententry.asp?category_id=38&newsid=122318:](http://www.nationmedia.com/dailynation/nmgcontententry.asp?category_id=38&newsid=122318;))

A MOVING PILGRIMAGE OF A SEAFARING FAMILY TO ROME



A dream came true for a family from Golden Meadow, Louisiana, when they traveled to Rome to meet the Pope in October 2007. Members of the Callais family, who own Abdon Callais Offshore, LLC, presented a ship model of the OSV "Pope John Paul II" to Pope Benedict XVI and of the "Mother Theresa" to the "AOS International" of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People. The two replicas are about three and a half feet long and enclosed in a glass case.

The Motor Vessels are two of eight 150-foot mini supply boats that the Callais family affectionately calls the "Holy Fleet." The other boats in the fleet are named after people or places that are in some way connected to the Callais family's strong Catholic faith.

Father Sinclair Oubre, J.C.L., President of the AOSUSA, in Port Arthur, TX, arranged the trip to Rome, with the cooperation of the "AOS International".

Peter's mother Gloria, who got to speak to the Pope Benedict XVI and shake his hand, as did her son Peter, says she cried when she got up close. "It was such an amazing experience. I just never dreamed that I would ever have the opportunity to do anything like that," she says. "He comes across as a very kind and compassionate person," added Peter.

Following their visit to the Pontifical Council, Cardinal Martino and Archbishop Marchetto wrote this letter to Peter Callais:

"We were particularly touched by your thoughtfulness in offering to our Pontifical Council a model of the "Mother Theresa", the sister ship of the "John Paul II" which you offered to the Holy Father. We realize the effort and energy, which you and your family and associates have put into making and carrying this gift from the USA. We have placed the "Mother Theresa" ship model in the waiting room of the Pontifical Council for all to see and admire.

We are glad that during the general audience both you and your mother were able to present personally to Pope Benedict XVI the donation and gift that you had brought and that the other members of the family were able to participate in a distinguished place".



Reminder

As we are presently updating the "AOS Directory" database, we wish to thank all those who have sent corrections to the entries corresponding to their country.

We urgently request those who have not yet done so to please send their changes as soon as possible.

Thank you.

PIRATES ARE BACK

ITF BACKS ACTION ON PIRACY

The ITF is supporting moves to address incidences of piracy and armed robbery that have plagued vessels sailing off the coast of Somalia.

The ITF has lent its full backing to a proposal to take the issue of piracy and armed robbery close to the Somali coast to the UN Security Council. The proposal, made by the IMO secretary general, was endorsed by the Council of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), which met for its 98th session from 25-29 June in London, UK.

It is hoped that this will lead to a request to the transitional federal government of Somalia to take action to prevent piracy and armed robbery. This includes allowing ships to enter its territorial waters when they are attempting to deal with acts of piracy or armed robbery which are putting the safety of crew members at risk. The proposal particularly refers to vessels bringing humanitarian aid to Somalia.

Renewed attacks on ships have been prompted by recent instability in Somalia, with a rising number of reported incidents.

Jon Whitlow, ITF seafarers' section secretary, commented: "The ITF welcomes the IMO's initiative and we supported it at the IMO Council. It is to be hoped that urgent action will result

and that seafarers will no longer be subject to such attacks and held hostage against the payment of a ransom."

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Seafarer's Assistance Program (SAP) has noticed a worrying increase of armed attacks on shipping since the start of 2008. The increasing instances of piracy and armed attacks on shipping are creating a rising reluctance amongst ship owners and crews to make voyages to Somali and Tanzanian territorial waters. While some attacks have taken place outside Somali waters, there is considerable evidence that the involved hijackers operate from bases within the horn of Africa, it is these bases which both the logistical support for attacks and a base operations for pirates to regroup.

We particularly ask the African governments to take action to prevent pirates from using African territories as a base from which to launch attacks.

It is high time for African governments to address the issue of piracy in Africa and take appropriate action to end attacks on shipping off the gulf of Guinea and the West Indian Ocean region.

Without urgent action there will be growing risks of life of Seafarers and of the 850,000 people in Somali suffering from hunger or a major environmental disaster.

However, the international community should crack down on all vessels fishing illegally in African territorial waters as this is the major justification for piracy.

There is also urgent need to curb illegal toxic waste dumping, human and drug trafficking, charcoal trade and arms smuggling activities along the Gulf of Guinea and the West Indian Ocean region.

There have been a total of 18 incidents in Tanzanian waters in the past two years with Seafarers being killed and goods stolen. While there have been a total of 17 incidents in and around Dar-es-Salaam port since January this year. Total attacks reported in Somali waters last year were 31, while since January this year were 23 incidents. These include actual, attempted and suspicious. It is a great honour to see ships carrying WPF relief cargo are being escorted by Naval Ships to Somalia we would appreciate very much if ships carrying CARE international relief cargo to Somalia are also escorted by the Naval Ships.

Andrew Mwangura
Programs Coordinator
Seafarers' Assistance Programme

Joseph Kayemba Ferunzi
Deputy Secretary General
Seafarers Union of Kenya.

Seafarers Assistance Program is a voluntary charity of merchant mariners founded in 1996. Its commitment is to offer humanitarian assistance to all seafarers; monitor, document and investigate seafarers abuses in Africa; design, coordinate and carry out training, cultural and leisure activities for seafarers; collect and disseminate information on maritime activities in Africa; collect and disseminate educational materials as well as studies.



SAVANNAH BISHOP APPOINTED HEAD OF AOSUSA

Bishop J. Kevin Boland, of Savannah, Georgia, has been appointed National Bishop Promoter of the AOSUSA by Cardinal Francis George, President of United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). The appointment was effective February 28. Bishop Boland will oversee the pastoral activities of about 81 AOS chaplains and their pastoral teams, active in 61 U.S. ports in 49 dioceses.

Cardinal Renato Raffaele Martino, President of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, and Archbishop Agostino Marchetto, Secretary, praised the appointment with the following letter to Cardinal George dated 15th March 2008:

“Your Eminence,

Thank you for informing us of the nomination of H.E. Bishop J. Kevin Boland as National Bishop Promoter for the Apostleship of the Sea in the U.S.A. We would be grateful if you could please convey to him the assurance of the support of our Pontifical Council in this important pastoral responsibility. AOSUSA is a dynamic work reaching out to a large and varied maritime population and I am sure that Bishop Boland’s experience with the maritime ministry will be most useful in helping him to carry out successfully his mandate.

I would also like to express our gratitude to H.E. Bishop Curtis Guillory for his many years of service to the Apostleship of the Sea. Under his guidance AOSUSA has prospered spiritually and has initiated many projects that have been of benefit to countless seafarers and their families”.

NEW NATIONAL DIRECTOR FOR AOS GREAT BRITAIN

Commodore Chris York has retired after seven years as national director of AOS GB. In recognition of his service to AOS and to the Church, Pope Benedict XVI awarded him a Knighthood of the Order of St Gregory. The award was presented by Bishop Tom Burns, Bishop Promoter of AOS GB.

Captain Paul Quinn assumed the role of national director on 17 April 2008. He served for 37 years in the Royal Navy, the maritime section of the British armed forces. He brings valuable experience of human resource management to AOS. In his previous role, he was responsible for personnel, chaplaincy and administrative support for the 27,000 British naval personnel in the front line.

Cardinal Martino and Archbishop Marchetto sent the following farewell message to the former National Director.

“Dear Commodore York,

On the occasion of your retirement as AOS-Great Britain National Director this coming Thursday the 17th April, I reiterate on behalf of the Pontifical Council our gratitude for your extensive and valuable contribution to this important apostolate of the Church in Great Britain.

Please convey to Captain Paul Quinn our warm congratulations on the occasion of his appointment to this important pastoral responsibility and also the assurance of the support of our Pontifical Council.

May I wish you every blessing and happiness in your retirement, and may Mary, *Stella Maris*, continue to guide you and your family in your Christian pilgrimage”.





**Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care
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