



SEA SUNDAY (14TH JULY 2013)



MESSAGE OF THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL

"This world of the sea, with the continuous migration of people today, must take into account the complex effects of globalization and, unfortunately, must come to grips with situations of injustice, especially when the freedom of a ship's crew to go ashore is restricted, when they are abandoned altogether along with the vessels on which they work, when they risk piracy at sea and the damage of illegal fishing (cf. Angelus, 18 January 2009). The vulnerability of seafarers, fishermen and sailors calls for an even more attentive solicitude on the Church's part and should stimulate the motherly care that, through you, she expresses to all those whom you meet in ports and on ships or whom you help on board during those long months at sea".

These words were addressed by Pope Benedict XVI to the participants of the XXIII AOS Congress held in Rome November 19-23, 2013. As a matter of fact, for more than 90 years the Catholic Church, through the *Work of the Apostleship of the Sea* with its network of chaplains and volunteers in more than 260 ports of the world, has shown her *motherly care* by providing spiritual and material welfare to seafarers, fishers and their families.

As we celebrate **Sea Sunday**, we would like to invite every member of our Christian communities to become aware and recognize the work of an estimated 1.2 to 1.5 million seafarers who at anytime are sailing in a globalized worldwide fleet of 100,000 ships carrying 90 per cent of the manufactured goods. Very often, we do not realize that the majority of the objects we use in our daily life are transported by ships crisscrossing the oceans. Multinational crews experience complex living and working conditions on board, months away from their loved ones, abandonment in foreign ports without salaries, criminalization and natural (storms, typhoons, etc.) and human (pirates,

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shipwreck, etc.) calamities.

Now a beacon of hope is beaming in the dark night of these problems and difficulties encountered by the seafarers.

The ILO Maritime Labor Convention 2006 (MLC 2006), after being ratified by 30 Members countries of the International Labor Office, representing almost 60 per cent of the world's gross shipping tonnage, is set to enter into force in August 2013. This ILO Convention is the result of several years of relentless tripartite (governments, employers and workers) discussions to consolidate and update a great number of maritime labor Conventions and Recommendations adopted since 1920.

The MLC 2006 establishes the minimum international requirements for almost every aspect of seafarers' working and living conditions, including fair terms of employment, medical care, social security protection and access to shore-based welfare facilities.

While, as AOS, we are welcoming the entering into force of the Convention and confidently hope to see improvements on the life of the seafarers, we remain vigilant and express our *attentive solicitude* by focusing our consideration on the Regulation 4.4 of the Convention, which purpose is to: *ensure that seafarers working on board a ship have access to shore-based facilities and services to secure their health and well-being*.

We should cooperate with the proper authorities in our respective ports so that to all seafarers shore leave be granted as soon as possible after a ship's arrival in port, for the benefit of their health and well-being (cf. B4.4.6§5)

We should remind to port states that they shall promote the development of shore-based welfare facilities easily accessible to seafarers, irrespective of nationality, race, color, sex, religion, political opinion, or social origin and of the flag state on which they are employed (cf. A4.4§1.).

We should assist the proper authorities to establish national and local welfare boards that would serve as a channel for improving seafarer's welfare at ports, bringing together people from different types of organization under one identity (cf. B4.4.3).

We should also encourage the port authorities to introduce, aside from other forms of financing, a port levy system to provide a reliable mechanism to support sustainable welfare services in the port (cf. B4.4.4 §1(b)).

Our final responsibility is towards the seafarers. We should provide them information and education about their rights and the protection offered by this Convention, which is also considered the fourth and final pillar of the international maritime legislation, the other three being the *International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) 1973*, the *International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), 1974*, the *International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) 1978*. An effective implementation will be possible and real changes will happen only if the people of the sea will know the content of the MLC 2006.

Let ask *Mary, the Star of the Sea*, to enlighten and accompany our mission to support the work of the faithful who are called to witness to their Christian life in the maritime world (cf. *Motu Proprio Stella Maris* Sec. 1, Art. I).

Antonio Maria Cardinal Vegliò
President

✱ Joseph Kalathiparambil
Secretary

Indifference: the great evil of the maritime world

Forced Migration and Pastoral Care for the People of the Sea

by Msgr. Giacomo Martino, Consultor of the Pontifical Council
for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People



According to an estimate made by the ILO (International Labour Office) in 2012, two centuries after the abolition of the slave trade, at least 20.9 million people continue to work under coercion, largely in the informal and illegal economy. 90% of forced labor is found in various sectors of industry. In this presentation I will mainly deal with those forced into labor in the maritime sector (seafarers and fishers).

Fishing and aquaculture have become a global industry that employs a large number of migrant workers particularly vulnerable to forced labor. Although the majority of the industry respects the laws and the dignity of the person, it cannot be denied that some ship owners and manning agencies make use of abusive practices.

These activities not only violate the fundamental principles and rights of the employed fishers, but also damage the reputation of the fishing sector as a whole, undermining the honest market that applies legal, fair and morally acceptable means. Often the problem is underestimated by relegating it only to extremely poor geographical areas, especially in Asia. As a matter of fact, according to several researches, it is clear that such deceptive and coercive working practice such as this one, also are present in countries as New Zealand, Russia, Turkey, South Korea, Ireland, Scotland, and West Africa.

Msgr. Giacomo Martino made this presentation at the XX Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Council, of which he is a Consultor, that was held May 22-24, having as a theme: “The Pastoral Solicitude of the Church in the context of Forced Migration. A Study of the Document *Welcoming Christ in Refugees and Forcibly Displaced Persons*”.

The fishing vessels, particularly in high-seas fleets, can remain positioned in the same place in the middle of the sea, continuously for several years transshipping fuel, people and catch. Onboard these vessels, the fishers are unlikely to report abuse, injury or death or otherwise seek help for their own protection. The fishers, as well as seafarers, must surrender their document of identification to the Master Commander. In this way both on board and in foreign ports, mobility can be severely restricted. At sea, the ability for families

and friends to communicate with the fishers and vice versa is subject to the availability of cellular phones or, even worse, of satellite phones. Tracking the location of a ship depends on the extent of radio or satellite signals released by the vessel.

A further factor contributing to the vulnerability of these people is the irregularity of the salary, together with a lack of transparency, and the fact that often the workers are paid literally with a share of the catch, which encourages them to work excessive hours.

Often the helplessness of these fishers refers to factors such as poverty, inexperience and naivety of some migrant workers, which make them susceptible to exploitation by certain ship owners, brokers and

recruitment agencies. The high mobility of these people, who speak different languages and have different cultures or ways of life that are often incompatible, is a further factor in exploitation because it does not guarantee a fixed point of reference for confrontation for the reported abuses. The vast majority of victims in the field of fishing vessels are men. This does not exclude the possibility that women could also be recruited for forced labor or trafficking of human beings on board fishing vessels. This probability is rare, because of the necessary physical strength needed that becomes crucial in the recruitment process. The few cases of women or girls who were recruited in the vessels was for sexual exploitation or child labor. Women are more often considered victims of work in the field of fish processing on land.

The XXI World Congress of the Apostleship of the Sea held in Rio de Janeiro in 2002, reflected on the report "Ships, Slaves and Competition" prepared by Peter Morris in 2001, the Commissioner of the International Commission on Shipping (ICONS), which collected the results of investigations carried out on the influence of globalization in the maritime world. The report states that 10-15% of seafarers on ships in the world work in conditions of modern slavery. It reveals that a portion of the shipping world tolerates and even makes use of substandard vessels, to the detriment of the majority of ship owners operating lawfully. The commissioners of ICONS affirmed they had heard of seafarers disappearing after arguments with officials or the existence of black lists for those who join trade unions.

In the context of maritime labor, there are extremely severe issues regarding justice like the lowering of safety standards or the aging of the average age of vessels (which increases the number of shipwrecks and seafarers who die at sea) or the lessening of the minimum number the crew and the fragmentation of national groups, all which increases the sense of frustration and isolation of the seafarer.

The double ledger for "official" payroll and for those "actual" and other problems such as lack of health, medical care and insurances, mean that, in reality, the life of a seafarer is really far from the romantic idea that many have of a life of pleasures and adventures in distant lands. Through some Conventions (especially the last one the MLC2006, just ratified from Italy that will enter into force in August this year), the ILO established the minimum acceptable international labor standards regarding social security, conditions of employment and provisions of life on board ships that must be observed by the signatory countries.

Furthermore, both seafarers and fishers are often recruited from the poorest nations who accept lower wages at the expense of professionalism, which is harmful especially in emergency situations. In addition, because the offer of someone who is not an officer exceeds the demand of the labor market, frequently many manning agencies board seafarers thanks to a "bribe" that will be deducted from the first month's salary. Intensive periods of hard work (with a peak of 14/16 hours a day, 7 days a week) are normal, apart from the adverse weather conditions. On sub-standard ships and fishing vessels, accommodation may be inadequate, the cabins cramped and without adequate mattresses, blankets or sufficient ventilation, along with poor hygienic conditions, including continuous noise. In some cases, food is scarce, seafarers must survive by eating baits and rice or rotten meat and vegetables. Fresh water is also rationed.

Furthermore, international standards create discriminations between people of different nations. The International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code, applied in all the United Nations, provides that those who belong to the so-called "rascal states" cannot even get down on the docks of certified ports. It happened that the Syrian Commander of a cargo ship, that was transiting solely in the Schengen area, remained aboard his ship for over 25 months. Not only could he not take a walk in the ports, but for 12 months after the expiration of his contract, he was denied permission to reach an international airport to return home because his nationality depicted him as a "potential terrorist" so he could not "transit" from the port to the airport.

Every year in the world, ships and crews, are arrested for a duration months or even years because of the inability to pay wages by the shipping companies. The crews of these vessels, without having committed any crime, are forced to stay on board for safety reasons of the port or because the ship is the only treasure that could guarantee that one day, perhaps, they will receive the salary due to them. On board, seafarers live in a state similar to that of prisoners, if not worse: without salary, food and any social and medical assis-



tance. They are away from their country, their families and their children. In 2009, only in Italy, 29 ships were seized with hundreds of seafarers on board. By way of example, but not exhaustively, we mention the crew of the Ukrainian flag ship 'Odessa', seized in the port of Naples as of 1995. For over 8 years the crew experienced the solidarity of few volunteers.

The Master Commander Vladimir Lobanov and the eight members of his crew, in the span of a night, found themselves to be derelicts struggling for survival rather than professionals of the sea. A seafarer died of starvation and the lack of proper care. Together with hundreds of sailors, we speak of entire families, abandoned, shattered by severe economic and personal situations. Inadequate regulation ensures that crews remain relegated on these ships; arrested without fault, citizens of the port where they have no rights, not even to walk too far from the ship. Leaving the vessel (without the consent of the shipowner who is at fault) means losing all rights to receive accrued wages, becoming illegal in the country where you are, and being a sort of renegade in their own country. What dignity for the crews of vessels seized in ports around the world? The only fault of these people is having looked for a job in order to bring home money honestly. Instead, their ship owners were dishonest, who made use of men, women and families.

After years of neglect, the ships lose value and are not even enough to pay the ticket to send these poor people home. Those who return home do so with the shame of a released criminal, and the embarrassment of not having enough money to pay the debts that the family has accumulated during his long absence.

The phenomenon of piracy has never subsided and, in recent years, has had a strong resurgence because of the famine of the Somali people, exploited immediately by international crime. Hundreds of ships, and thousands of seafarers, were systematically attacked, taken, and brutalized; many kidnapped for several months in disastrous hygienic conditions without food and little water. Physically and psychologically tortured, some were even killed by their kidnappers-drug users prone to violence. Once they returned home the sailors lost their job, the only way to support the family, and no longer had the strength to embark again. During the long months of the kidnapping, long silences accompanied their families who were often kept ignorant of the situation, unaware of the condition of their loved ones, left to themselves without even the comfort of a human shoulder to cry on, waiting pointlessly for some positive news.

The maritime world is often victim of indifference; a difficult and dangerous life that no one knows and to which very few offer the human, emotional and religious attention that it deserves.

We must intervene with a clear identity of Church which, like Christ, announces glad tidings, freedom to the captives, without falling into extremes: on the one hand, preaching without being concrete, and, on the other, promoting rules and laws that, although being correct, do not put the human person first and remain a dead letter.

We are facing a social, institutional and legislative vacuum in the framework for the protection of the civil rights of sea workers, and it is unthinkable that only volunteers with emergency responses, fill this huge and deplorable vacuum of a society that is looking at the third millennium!

The Church, with the Apostleship of the Sea, has learned to devote Herself to these men and women not only out of "charity." She quietly strives, respecting the other's dignity to be welcoming with each of these slaves of the sea, making sure that, if even for a moment, they will feel at home.

The people of the sea, seafarers and fishers live at the edges of our cities. Unfortunately, they do not appear as a true "migration issue" because they do not physically have the time to "bother us", to be present with their needs and their urgent necessities. No matter where they come from, there are millions of seafarers calling at local ports and for reasons of their number, their

"The maritime world is often victim of indifference; a difficult and dangerous life that no one knows and to which very few offer the human, emotional and religious attention that it deserves".



problems and needs should call upon the local ecclesial community, which, unfortunately, in a majority of cases, remains indifferent.

For this reason the Church is called to look to them, bearing in mind that, as a whole, they constitute a true city constantly moving from one side of the oceans to another.

Who thinks about them? What does the Church and civil society for these "foreigners in every port"? What assistance, even if only humanitarian, is offered to these people coming from warmer countries transiting the Mediterranean, during the cold winter, with a small summer bag and a monthly salary of less than \$ 150?

For years we have tried to communicate with the people and the cities of the sea, to make them understand with gestures and words the abandonment, the poverty, the apathy and the loneliness of hundreds of thousands of seafarers, on ships scattered in the ports of the world . To no avail. The men and women of the sea, now more in number than yesterday, are like ghosts touching our cities daily, emerging from ships for the procedure of signing in, or for a quick phone call home, to disappear immediately inside the metal sheets like cockroaches struck by light; always "strangers in every port."

Mobility is not always characterized by the need to leave one's homeland to seek better living conditions, often escaping hunger and famines, persecutions and war. Sometimes, it is like the wandering of gypsies or circus people. The "place" where we feel loved becomes the convoy, the family, the group, or maybe even the crew, but never a territory. Seafarers and fishers live their mobility only for reasons of work but they return to their country, to their family and to their community.

The family, the group, the network are the means with which it strengthens the sense of belonging to a community, a culture, different from the guest one.

A survey on the maritime world shows that these people, due to the continuing absence, find it increasingly difficult to form a family and still have reintegration problems when they return home.

Seafarers are not capable of social involvement not even with the enrollment in a simple association and, over time, they lose their religious practice, which becomes something from time to time. The fact that the wife must carry the responsibility for the family and for the education of the children undermines the seafarer on one hand, at the same time leaving the family "crippled".

The atmosphere on board is not one of a real welcoming community, but mainly a working space in which the relationships that intertwine are essentially professional or superficial friendships, aware of the fact that they will never grow deep roots, precisely because of the continuous mobility and changes.

The lack of a "place", an area in which to express their feelings everyday, twists personal emotions into shutting in one's self effects, with attitude of self-sufficiency towards the world, of distrust, and of extreme simplicity in relations with those encountered in the various ports of the world.

The seafarers and fishers, when they are sailing or docking in our ports, are:

- Brothers who are personally experiencing the drama of migration in every port they touch.
- Brothers, who are always foreigners in their continuous drifting away from family, from their loved ones, from social life and also from their Christian communities.
- Brothers, the last among the least, scattered on the waters of the globe without ever being able to express their thirst for justice, for a fairer and more dignified treatment.
- Brothers on board vessels, sometimes exploited in a game of flags of "convenience" of countries without labor laws and safety on navigation.
- Brothers often forgotten (even) by a Church that is usually animated and attentive to the multiple social realities that surround it, but that sometimes reveals a deplorable forgetfulness for those who are sailing on



the seas that make up other two-thirds of the earth's surface.

Jesus adopts mobility as a method of proclaiming the Gospel.

Jesus walks with people and people walk with Jesus.

Jesus repeats that "he must go" to other cities, to Jerusalem, to return to the Father - as if he is in continuous movement.

Those who share his life are truly worthy of being called "his own."

The sentiments of the traveling Jesus is manifests, as for the migrant, even in a negative way. Often we fully understand the matters and the people when we miss them. The loved ones "watched from afar" regain their value, precisely because we cannot fully enjoy them.

The episode of the road to Emmaus is not just something that happened to two disciples after the crucifixion of Christ; it is, at the same time, a parable of the Christian life, because the Christian life is a journey, a trip, a way. The same evangelist Luke, in the Acts of the Apostles, defines Christianity as a "new way" (Acts 9:2, 19:9 etc.). In this non-stop journey, that is the Christian life, the Risen Lord is at our side, especially in the most difficult moments of our journey: the journey to Emmaus of the two disciples was not a trip of pleasure. It's a sad journey, probably a trip back home of two disciples who believed and trusted Jesus, who are now, disheartened and disappointed. They left Jerusalem because they had lost their Teacher, they no longer have a project, they have nothing more to do in the Holy City.



In short, the journey to Emmaus is a flight of the refugee, of the migrant, of the seafarer, of those who do not have bread and must seek it elsewhere.

Jesus is the Good Samaritan.

From Jerusalem to Jericho, the road is still long and full of wounded people in need of rescue where priests and Levites pass by, pretending not to see. In the experience of a daily mission of ship visits and of welcoming in our Stella Maris centers, the AOS learns not only to seek the neighbor, but to become also the neighbor to many abandoned brothers and sisters. Often, we do not have eyes to see and fight injustices near us while we turn our thoughts to those who suffer far away. The fear of "mingling" with these people and of personally fighting these injustices makes us compassionate towards those who are just far away enough to not make us feel bad with their family stories, to not get our hands dirty, to not smell of fish for days, weeks and months. It's easy to look over the horizon, see a ship and think about some romantic pleasure cruise, without having the courage to look down into the holds and get involved with those people that touch our ports, are close to our shores and shout for justice. We must "have the smell of the flock entrusted to us" and commit ourselves to them. Otherwise the words of Jesus, "Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven", would be words without meaning, emptied by the distrust of people who no longer have eyes to see, or hearts to love.

Jesus is the Good Samaritan. He is the true meeting place where time and space come together, allowing for the perfect exercise of the tenderness of faraway hearts, of love postponed, of complicated relationship and otherwise unbridgeable distances.

Jesus is close to every person wounded in the body and in the spirit, and pours the oil of consolation and the wine of hope on those wounds, even if it is through our modest, yet daily, welcome in ports around the world.

With the seafarers, there are also our realities of volunteers, equally unknown, that operate in the ports daily to welcome, encourage and often relieve the people of the sea. Catholic chaplains and volunteers of the AOS and those also of many other groups (majority of Christian background), help each other in the daily practice of ecumenism, through the ICMA (International Christian Maritime Association). An interdenominational ministry where everyone, no matter what race, religion or culture they belong to, are recognized for themselves.

Welcome and hospitality always place the seafarer first so that, away from their family, they can find a home away from home.

A drop of water in the ocean? Maybe yes, but if there is no place for them on shore or at sea, we hope that a smile and a helping hand will give them a small taste of heaven ... in the way each of them imagine it.

FACES OF THE SEA



DAY OF THE
SEAFARER
25 JUNE

This year's theme for Day of the Seafarer is **Faces of the Sea**. It is a natural evolution from last year's successful theme of "It came by sea and I can't live without it". Fundamentally it moves the theme to bringing the campaign back to the unsung heroes of shipping – the seafarers themselves and literally spotlights the human face of shipping and the sacrifices that seafarers make.

Like in previous years, your participation will be key to the success of this campaign and we will invite you to voice your support using social media.

For example, we will ask you to take a picture of yourself, or ask a colleague to take it, from a ship while working at sea or in port in a situation that surprises, or that inspires those that rarely consider what its like to be at sea. Post to any of the IMO's social media channels, telling us how many days you have spent at sea this year and why you posted this picture.

But this is just a small glimpse of what we have in store, so stay tuned for more information on how to get involved, our toolkits will be available in a few days. In the meantime, feel free to download our campaign's branding and start spreading the words.

Get involved and follow us here:

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/imohq>

Twitter: @IMOHQ and our campaign hashtag is: #thankyouseafarer

YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/IMOHQ>

RECEPTION TO LAUNCH THE 2013 THEME FOR WORLD MARITIME DAY: "SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: IMO'S CONTRIBUTION BEYOND RIO+20"

By Koji Sekimizu, Secretary-General, International Maritime Organization

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you here to this reception this evening to launch the World Maritime Day theme for 2013. It is a theme which will not only form the Organization's work during this year but also, I am sure, for many years into the future. In case you need reminding, the theme agreed by the IMO Council for this year is "**Sustainable Development: IMO's contribution beyond Rio+20**", and my objective today is to put that in some context and to tell you something about our plans to ensure that it is a theme that has relevance and meaning not just in 2013, but in the years ahead.

I should stress, too, that, at this stage, our plans are still developing. Nevertheless, I am very excited by the prospect of something that can provide a new direction for IMO in the future, and make a very positive and tangible contribution to the process established to develop UN-wide Sustainable Development Goals as well as to the well-being of mankind in the years ahead.

We are all talking about sustainable development, but it was the Brundtland Report, released by the United Nations in 1987, that put forward what has become the most widely accepted definition of sustainable development, namely "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

Our understanding of sustainable development today embraces a concern both for the capacity of the earth's natural systems and for the social and, not least, economic challenges faced by humanity.



And, today, the United Nations is still the global leader pushing forward efforts to turn the concept of sustainable development into something tangible on Sustainable Development year, twenty years after the first United Nations undertook an initiative to develop and set a series of Sustainable Development Goals.

I was in attendance at what became the event as a platform to draw attention to three of the pillars of economic, social, and environmental.

I was very encouraged by the event, entitled "The Future We Want", which was the outcome document of the Conference. This contains a number of specific areas of relevance to this Organization and international maritime transport, in general. I have, therefore, established an internal mechanism within my Office, with support from all Divisions, to work with our industry partners and interested stakeholders on the development and implementation of Sustainable Development Goals for the maritime transport sector, which will be IMO's own contribution to the United Nations led work on Sustainable Development Goals.

Such an initiative would exist both in parallel with, and as a contribution to, the wider efforts of the United Nations arising from Rio+20. IMO's contribution should be seen as a pro-active response to the call by the then President of the United Nations Assembly, Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz al-Nasser, that the outcome document of Rio+20 "is not an end but a new beginning".

It is my intention to launch consultations on the Sustainable Maritime Development Goals early this year. The IMO Council and the IMO Committees will receive updates and be able to comment on the matter by the middle of 2013, before a final policy document would be prepared.

Preparation of such a policy document needs:

- a clear concept of Sustainable Development for Maritime Industries; and
- realistic but ambitious goals.

I have asked my Task Force to start working on the 8 pillars I have suggested. They are:

- Safety culture and environmental stewardship; - Energy efficiency; - New technology and innovation; - Maritime education and training; - Maritime security and anti-piracy actions; - Maritime traffic management; - Maritime infrastructure development; and - Global standards at IMO.

This morning at the opening of the FP Sub-Committee, I declared that reducing maritime casualties by half by 2015 was my target. This could be an objective under the pillar on safety culture. My initiative for an Accident Zero Campaign and the holding of a Future Ship Safety Symposium would also be registered under this pillar and I certainly expect that we will receive the casualty investigation report on the Costa Concordia and will take necessary actions. These could be registered as targets and goals in the field of maritime safety.

For energy efficiency, as we all know, EEDI has entered into force and I would expect that some mechanisms would be established for monitoring implementation of EEDI and SEEMP. For new technology and innovation, I intend to establish a forum, between the Secretariat and the industry, to promote innovation in maritime technology. For the field of maritime education and training, I wish to explore new ways to promote provision of onboard training capacity and, for maritime security and anti-piracy actions, my targets declared at the opening of the Sub-Committee this morning could be registered as goals for this pillar.

These are just my vision and my expectations and I am sure you have your own views and ideas. I would encourage all of you to join together and provide a positive contribution towards formulating our sustainable development goals.

Ladies and gentlemen, as the United Nations' international regulatory body for shipping, IMO has been, and continues to be, the focal point for, and the driving force behind, efforts to ensure that the industry becomes greener and cleaner.

With shipping being so essential to the continued development and future growth of the world economy, IMO must continue to take the lead in supporting the shipping industry with the appropriate global standards and by helping to promote, through technical co-operation, the necessary national maritime transportation policy and institutional frameworks for the sustainable maritime transportation sector.

I am confident that, through this initiative, the theme chosen by the IMO Council for the 2013 World Maritime Day, – "Sustainable Development: IMO's contribution beyond Rio+20" – will be something in which IMO, the shipping industry and all other stakeholders, who are keen to turn the concept of sustainability into a tangible reality, will be able to join together, and make a very positive contribution.

January 7, 2013



ble. At the United Nations Conference held in Rio de Janeiro, in June last such conference in the same city, the

came known as Rio+20, and I used attention to how shipping contributes sustainable development – eco-

outcome document of the Conference. This contains a number of

UNDERSTANDING THE FILIPINO SEAMAN: HIS VALUES, ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOR

II part

Author: TOMAS D. ANDRES



WE CONTINUE THE PUBLICATION OF THE ARTICLE OF DR. TOMAS QUINTIN DONATO, CONSULTANT WHO CONDUCTS CROSS-CULTURAL ORIENTATION ON PHILIPPINE CULTURE FOR EXPATRIATES OF MULTINATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS.

3. DIETARY REQUIREMENTS

The customary Filipino food consists mainly of rice (plenty of it) meat and/or fish, vegetables and desserts and/or fruits in season. The above specially holds true for lunches and dinners.

Lunches and dinners normally include at least two dish meals, with vegetables a preferred part of it. Breakfast may be in the form of bread (breakfast roll), cheese or butter, slices of ham/bacon and coffee/milk. Another variation could be fried rice and dried fish or preserved meat products (sausages, processed meat). As a general rule, Pilipinos take heavy breakfasts and in-between meals snacks.

They don't go for table wines but would prefer carbonated soft drinks or a bottle of cold beer.

Filipino seamen can be very sensitive regarding food being given to them. They can feel and intuit whether they are being cheated with regard to their food allowances or given what is due to them. Where a complaint is made regarding the victualling allowance or the quality of the food supplied, immediate attention should be given to such complaint and proper action should be taken.

4. UNDERSTANDING THE FILIPINO MALE ENVIRONMENT, HIS ATTITUDES TO DRINK/DRUG USAGE AND SOCIAL HABITS

In the Filipino value orientation, a man is brought up with the orientation of strength, boldness and aggression. He is allowed more freedom of action than a woman simply because of the usually ascribed adult traits distinctive of the male - responsibility, independence and conviction. Oftentimes, these traits are shown under the guise of masculinity - that is, in terms of muscles, sexual prowess, booze, cigarettes. The Filipino male is to drink, smoke and have as many women as their energy will allow them prior to and after marriage. A man who is promiscuous is considered simply

as demonstrating his pagkalalake or manliness.

A value very common among Filipino males is machismo or the male's physical and mental superiority over the female. This machismo complex imposes on the Filipino male to engage in a sexual role which could only be verified by the peer group to which he belongs in terms of the number of affairs he maintains and children he sires either with his lawful wife or his mistresses. What divorce is to the Westerners, querida system is to a few Filipino males. This is a way of life wherein a married man maintains a mistress, sometimes to the extent of including a second home.

As a result of machismo, there exists a double standard of morality. A set of principles requires women to be faithful, modest and chaste while on the other hand, men are considered immuned from such principles and restrictions. Philandering by the Filipino male is not very much looked down upon in the Filipino culture. Because he is a man, he can be forgiven for taking too much sexual freedom. He just wants to prove his masculinity.

Social Habits

The Filipino is generally friendly, hospitable and helpful. He is a peace-loving and sociable fellow. He has a compromising character and is not inclined to confrontation.

Filipinos are fond of giving parties. Any event such as a promotion, a birthday, etc. can be an excuse for having a party, or giving a "blow-out".

As with any other culture, there are certain customs and traditions the Filipinos' follow in hosting parties:

1. An invitation is intended to confer honor on the guest. If the guest is a foreigner, it is a particular honor to be invited not only for the guest, but also for the host. Filipinos will invite everyone casually so no one feels left out. The person receiving a casual invitation usually realizes this when the host does not insist on his coming.
2. Filipinos will be very persuasive about an invitation

and if the guest must decline, it can be a delicate matter. In order to save the host any embarrassment, the guest should simply say he will let the host know an answer as soon as possible. Then, he should either compose a tactful note in response or ask a third party to act a go-between.

3. Gifts are usually presented at birthdays, baptisms, and anniversaries. They are almost never opened in front of the giver. Filipinos do not want to embarrass other guests. When a gift is given, it is usually handed over to the hostess with an apology: "Sorry, this is all I could afford." The recipient scolds the giver for taking the trouble to get a gift and sets it aside.

4. Filipinos do not usually send "Thank You" notes. Instead, the recipient waits to reciprocate.

5. It is not considered rude to be late. Filipino hostesses generally plan on an hour of socializing before serving the meal, allowing for latecomers. Though there appears to be no rule of thumb to gauge the proper arrival time, arriving at the exact time of the invitation will embarrass the hostess. It is better to be a little late " about 15 minutes or so.

6. The basic guideline of social behavior for Filipinos is the concept of *biya*, loss of face. Practically all of the guidelines below are designed to keep things on a smooth, even keel, without risking embarrassment to anyone. The host often apologizes for his house, because it is a status symbol. Do not admire an item in someone's home. The host may feel obligated to give the item to the admirer. It is considered polite to refuse food the first or second time it is offered. The invitation becomes more insistent by the third asking.

7. Quantity is the most important consideration in planning a menu. Not only will additional guests be arriving, but it is considered a sign of welcome to offer lots of food and drink

Rice is always served with a meal, usually in the place of bread. *Lechon*, a roasted whole pig, is customary for many occasions and ham is regarded as a festive main dish. Seafood is seldom the main course but is usually served as a first course or as an accompanying dish. Other pointers are:

A hostess in the Philippines is always prepared to feed more people than were originally invited. Yoyos children's nurses - and drivers often come with the family. Guests often bring family and friends to a gathering as well. Yoyos usually sit at the table to help the children. Drivers generally eat with the household staff.

The host and hostess generally do not sit with the

other guests. After much coaxing, the guest of honor is seated at the head of the table and the host and hostess hover, insisting guests to have more of this dish or that dish;

Guests are expected to eat everything, preferably in large quantities. But a guest should leave something on his plate to show there was more than enough food.

A large spoon is often presented as part of the table setting instead of a knife. It is used for pushing the rice into the fork and for cutting food.

8. Filipinos often ask guests to entertain other guests, particularly with speeches or by singing songs. It is considered rude to refuse and hesitant foreigners should remember that few of the other guests will stop talking to listen anyway.

9. Guests always linger-after the meal. Otherwise it looks as if they only came to eat. When it is time to leave, they must tell the host and hostess. This is called "getting permission".

Attitudes to Drink and Drug Usage

Filipino males are fond of drinking especially on occasions of gatherings and celebrations. As early as in 1621, when Magellan and his men arrived in the Philippines, the feast set before them included earthen jugs filled with *tuba* (a stinging and bitter-sweet hard drink made by extracting the sap of an unopened coconut bud.)

Any inclination to alcohol or drug use is directly related to a high degree of peer pressure and openness to new experiences, tolerance of deviance and non-conformity, independence, low self-esteem, and depression. Cautious, dependent, conforming, socially inhibited, achievement oriented, and religious Filipino males are relatively unlikely to try drugs or alcohol. Situational influences may also influence any likelihood of a Filipino male turning to alcohol or drugs. A shipboard situation with few outlets for recreational activities or programs may result in bored seafarers looking towards less healthy outlets for their energies.

Filipinos appreciate the restraint of rules, particularly when they have helped formulate them. Develop guidelines for drinking and celebrations - include hours, places that are allowed for drinking, the kind of supervision needed, and conventions about the use of alcohol and prohibition of drugs.

Encourage the Filipino seamen to become involved in activities which allow them to have a good time such as chess, dama, contests, bible study, during their free time.



Establish responsible drinking pattern. Use alcohol responsibly and in moderation. It is important to emphasize that the limits of bottle of drinks per person or nationality may be different. Westerners may drink five bottles of beer and still be not drunk while for a Filipino one bottle of beer may be enough to make him drunk. Establish ground rules for using or not using alcohol. Emphasize acceptance of another's wish not to drink.

A Filipino may turn to alcohol for relief from problems: personal, family, work and others. This is his way of withdrawing temporarily from the realities of his



problems. It is advisable to counsel Filipino seamen to approach their officers if they have any problem and be given proper counseling by them or any competent professional for that purpose. Encourage them to share their problems with their trusted fellow-seamen. Encourage them to write frequently as possible their loved ones and family.

Filipinos value very much their families' well-being and security. Ensure that the Filipino seamen's families are receiving regularly their hard-earned money. A letter to a seaman by his wife that she is not receiving money can lead to negative reaction toward his officers.

5. HOW TO MAKE THE FILIPINO TICK AND CLICK

Some Filipino seamen have created an image of the Filipino as a quarrelsome breed who tends to gang up with others of his country to fight it out with any other ethnic group willing to take them on. In general, this is not so. The Filipinos are a peace-loving people. They can easily accept as friends and brothers nationals of other countries, both from the East and West.

The Filipino seaman is responsible, hardworking, industrious and dependable. However, his Masters, Chief Engineers and officers should treat him under their command with consideration and social justice and keep him happy and contented no matter what circumstances are. They should visit him in his quarter in a fatherly fashion once in a while to inquire after his well-being; they should be his advisers and confidant regarding personal problems and should be ready to lend a

helping hand when needed. They should keep their cabins open any time to him when he has complaints. Treated in this way, he is bound to look up to his superiors with respect and give them their cooperation.

Conduct and Discipline

Stern discipline should only be imposed at the right time, and if possible, within the confines and privacy of a cabin. Calling crew's attention with harsh words where others can hear will only cause embarrassment and a feeling of resentment toward the superior. A ship is an isolated community, far from families and friends. Officers should, therefore, organize Filipino seamen, and activities on board in such a way that living conditions become more bearable in spite of the hard work. If an officer is held in esteem and loved by his Filipino subordinates, they will think twice before committing any infraction on the ship such as pilferages, quarrels, or acts of insubordination.

Personalism (person-to-person relationship) carries a premium in managing Filipino seamen. Authority may make the Filipino seaman work, but it won't make him work to his fullest capacity. A personalistic management style stimulates productivity, good conduct and discipline in Filipino seamen. He works and works hard for the officer whom he can consider not only his superior but also his friend. Thus, Filipino seamen are likely to be motivated more by gestures of personal concern and attention from their officers than by raising of voice or swearing.

Deep rooted values should be understood more clearly by Westerners who manage Filipino seamen. Work to most Filipino seamen is only a means to an end. Their ultimate achievement imagery is knowing that their respective families are enjoying some luxuries while they work on board and they look forward to a changed social status one day.

The social value of "utang na-loob" (loosely translated as "debts of gratitude") is very much in operation in the Filipino seamen. They work hard for an officer to whom they have "utang-na-loob" but they also expect him to continue feeding their feelings of self-worth. The officer's gestures of personal concern and attention will be more valued and repayed with productivity, and loyalty. Pats on their backs and one or two drinks are some ways of repaying the Filipino seamen after doing a good job.

Should the necessity arise for a Filipino seaman to be reprimanded, the officer should give him feedback about both his desirable and undesirable behaviors. The officer should do it in private, avoiding doing so in the presence of other people or else the Filipino will very likely feel that he has been publicly humiliated. An officer's hasty action, nasty remark, public reprimand, loss of temper, etc. will provoke the Filipino to belligerence.

Gambling

Filipinos have a penchant for gambling even at a very early age. They have the tendency to play or gamble anytime and anywhere. Family celebrations and funeral wakes are never complete without mabjong or poker or bingo sessions. The rich and earning Filipinos have pusoy, pekwa, casinos, horse racing, etc. Elderly Filipinos have their sakia, jueteng, and sabong or cock-fighting. This fondness for gambling is carried over to sea by Filipino seamen.

Gambling can have relaxational and recreational purposes for Filipinos, if properly regulated and managed. They should gamble only with their excess money; thus the bets should not be large. The officers should fix and delimit the site or area and time wherein mahjong and various card games may be played. Troubles arising through gambling must be prevented by the officers by their proper supervision of it.

6. COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY WITH FILIPINOS

To communicate effectively with Filipinos one has to step back A and look at how they develop perception. Meanings are not in words but in people. The Westerner has to listen two or three times as hard to Filipinos in order to find out what they really mean. Filipinos prefer to use body language rather than words to express themselves. Westerners look for meaning and understanding in what is said; the Filipino in what is not said. The silences for Filipinos together with the pauses between silences are very meaningful. They do convey messages.

The Westerner should have in mind the indirectness of the Filipino is contrast to his directness. The Filipino is indirect because he wants to keep his interpersonal encounters pleasant and friendly, because that way the channels of communication will remain open. The Westerner puts a premium on honesty and frankness and feels that communication has to be direct to be effective. For the Filipino, directness and frankness is rude and brutal.

Among intimates the indirect way of communicating is in the form of teasing or biruan. A form of teasing is the Filipino's propensity to giving nicknames. To the Westerner, some nicknames may appear unkind, especially if they are directed at the persons most obvious physical trait.

In Filipino culture, curiosity about another individual's personal life precedes entry into any relationship with him. So an officer must not be annoyed if, in trying to be friendly, a Filipino seaman asks him questions that seem to invade his privacy, like "How much is your salary?; "Why don't you have any children", or "Where did you come from?" These are simply a form of greeting and may not be seriously answered. A simple: "Oh, just



around the corner" will do. Privacy is not given as much importance among Filipinos as among Westerners.

Circumlocutions and Polite Indirections

Filipinos are very fond of circumlocution and polite indirections when they are dealing with foreigners and people of higher strata. A form of circumlocution or at least of polite indirection manifested in their speech is the constant use of the progressive form. An example is "I am inviting you to a celebration next month," in which the invitation is expressed in a state of continuing progress for a long time rather than as an explicit quickly completed action.

The Filipino is euphemistic. He chooses to give opinions in as pleasant words as possible and avoid using harsh and insulting words. To say "stupid" or "crazy" to a Filipino who commits a mistake would cause immediate resentment. In order to preserve harmony and good feelings between the Westerner and the Filipino, it would be advisable for the former to tone down his voice in speaking to the latter. Among Westerners, negative remarks and anger can be expressed loudly and vociferously and usually no harm is done; often results are quick and forthcoming when one displays a show of righteous indignation. Among Filipinos, it is a different story. Speaking in a raised voice, shouting, swearing and showing violent displays of temper are considered inexcusable. The Filipino involved will suffer a loss of face (mapapabiya), and the Westerner who has shown anger will suffer a loss of respect that he may never regain.

Comments on a Filipino or his work should be given a round-about way. The Filipino feels that he and his work are one. Criticism of his work becomes a criticism of himself as a person. Thus he reacts to criticisms emotionally unless they are couched in a language that is not hurtful, that considers his feelings.

The Filipino "Yes"

Westerners are oftentimes baffled by a Filipino's positive answer to an appointment or to instructions given only to discover later on that the same individual did exactly the opposite without cancelling the appoint'

merit or asking questions regarding the clarity of the instructions. An average Filipino will say "yes" when:

1. He does not know.
2. He wants to impress.
3. He is annoyed.
4. He wants to end the conversation.
5. He half-understands the instruction or what is being said.
6. He is not sure of himself.
7. He thinks he knows better than the one speaking to him. Usually the Filipino agrees weakly-instead of giving a flat refusal of "No." Siguro nga, Marahil, Pipilitin ko ("Maybe," "Perhaps," or "I'll try") are his usual answers to questions to which a Westerner would really say "No." This is because of the Filipino desire to please in spite of the negative response. To interpret the meaning of this "I'll try" or such similar vague answers, requires only a little persuasion to change the "I'll try" to a reluctant "yes" or an apologetic "no."

Asking Questions or Not Asking Them at All

There is a reluctance on the part of a Filipino to ask questions in situations where a Westerner ordinarily will. Officers who have managed Filipino seamen often wonder why they usually get a respectful silence when they expect him to react to certain issues they bring up in meetings.

One possible explanation for this is the Filipino attitude towards his officers and superiors. Since they are considered the epitome of wisdom or more knowledgeable, it is unthinkable for most seamen to question them. Secondly, Filipinos refuse to ask questions because they feel it is "shameful," nakakabiya, to do so. There is a popular belief that only the stupid and the ignorant and the provinciano (meaning "from the backwoods") ask questions. A Filipino seaman would rather pretend to understand the instructions given him and risk making a mistake than ask questions.

A suggestion when giving orders to a Filipino is to ask him to repeat the order back to clarify that it has been understood. Be willing to repeat your instructions. Be patient. Always ask for questions but don't ask leading questions such as "Did you understand the instruction?". Ask the Filipino to summarize what he understood. Speak clearly, using simple language and specific and accurate terms.

To encourage the Filipino to ask questions especially if he has not understood the instruction is to make it easy for him to ask for a favor by asking him what he can do for him. And when he hesitates, he insists that he asks him the question with admonition not to be shy.

On the other hand, an officer asking a Filipino personal questions such as "How are your wife and children?" conveys a message of goodwill. This is considered by a Filipino as a sign of concern. It is all part of pakikisama or "getting along well."

When correcting a Filipino, don't go straight to the

point. Talk about something pleasant first. In delivering your correction be as diplomatic as possible. Most Filipinos cannot take a direct, black and white declaration of his mistake. Do not use harsh tone of voice. Do not curse. Do not correct him in public. After a correction has been made, follow-up with an inquiry about some personal concern such as his family, his health, etc.

If an unpleasant encounter cannot be helped - say, if an officer has to call down a Filipino - one of the indications that an attempt is being made to lessen the hurt or minimize the unpleasantness is in this showing of concern for the Filipino's private life. Thus, after an officer has told his Filipino seaman to work harder because ship efficiency suffers because of him, he abruptly switches to an "And how are your wife and children?" routine. This relieves the Filipino seaman and makes him feel that he still belongs, that he is still accepted. Otherwise, he resents the criticism and does not accept it. The Filipino criticized concludes that the officer is unmindful of other people's feelings and is difficult to get along with.

Filipino Humor

Laughter spices the life of the Filipino. Without it, life for him becomes a mere routine and brings about sheer boredom. Laughter or giggling is commonly used to relieve tension in embarrassing or emotion-charge situations. Westerners find this mannerism disturbing. It seems inappropriate for a Filipino seaman to laughingly announce that he has an accident, yet it does happen. Such behavior does not mean that accident is being treated lightly, and in fact, it means quite the opposite. Laughing or giggling is acceptable behavior for a Filipino in tension-filled situations. Besides laughing when they are happy, Filipinos also laugh when they feel shy or are embarrassed.

Laughter, to the Filipino, can be kind of psychological therapy in time of difficulties, problems and untoward incidents. Filipinos are said to be one rare breed of people who can laugh even at themselves. Laughing at himself is one of the more important coping mechanisms of , the Filipino. Sometimes playful, sometimes cynical, he manages to laugh even at times when the Westerner would consider laughter inappropriate.



Seafarers released in Somalia after 838 days

After more than 2 years of captivity, the six seamen, who were kidnapped by Somali pirates in connection with the seizure of the Danish coaster M/V Leopard in January 2011, have been released and lead to safety. The two Danish and the four Philippine seafarers have very recently been released off the Somali coast and are now in safe surroundings.

"With very great happiness and relief we can inform that our colleagues finally have been released. The past more than two years have been extremely traumatic and inhuman for our crew and their families, and we very much look forward to having our colleagues back home", informs Claus Bech, Managing Director of Shipcraft.

"I have just talked to the families of the seamen. It was a very emotional moment, and it goes without saying that the happy news were received with great joy", informs Claus Bech, who now himself travels to meet the seamen at their resort.

In Safety with Qualified Team

The seamen are now in safety and are surrounded by a professional team consisting of both doctors and psychologists. "The first evaluations are that our colleagues, considering the circumstances, are ok. However, it is important to us that they receive the best possible medical assistance now, and as soon as they have been thoroughly examined and have received the doctor's acceptance, they will be brought home to their families", informs Claus Bech.

Inhuman Situation

This long period of time in captivity has been inhuman and exhausting for the hostages. For now details of the captivity is limited. The seamen were kidnapped by Somali pirates in the Arabian Sea in January 2011, when pirates captured the coaster M/V Leopard. However, the pirates damaged the ship and left it drifting. Instead the pirates kidnapped the crew and since took them ashore, where they were moved to different locations in Somalia. On a few occasions the hostages have been allowed to talk to their families.

For now Shipcraft's main focus is to help the seamen get back to a normal life. When they return home, they first and foremost need peace and quiet and undisturbed time with their families. The traumatic and inhuman conditions our colleagues have experienced have of course affected them deeply. Now our main focus is to ensure they get a good reintegration", says Claus Bech.

Close Cooperation with Authorities and Kidnapping Experts

Since the kidnapping of the crew Shipcraft has worked closely with the Danish Authorities to ensure the best possible handling of the situation. During the entire period the company has been closely connected to well reputable foreign - and since the end of 2011 also Danish - kidnapping experts. The experts have throughout the duration of the kidnapping advised Shipcraft in these extremely difficult negotiations with the pirates. "The kidnapping has been going on for more than two years. We are a very small company and the pirates' expectations to the ransom have been completely unrealistic", informs Claus Bech.

"We have together with our advisors been fighting hard every day to find a solution. We are happy that the hard work all involved parties have done in order to have the crew set free, now have been rewarded with their release. We wish to thank our extern experts and the Danish Authorities for their help and assistance during these hard times", says Claus Bech.

Considering possible future kidnapping situations Shipcraft cannot reveal the size of the ransom, but Shipcraft has paid considerable millions, substantially more than previous kidnappings where Danish citizens have been involved.

The seafarers needs peace and quiet. Shipcraft now ask media to accept that the seamen will need peace and privacy with their families. "Of course we realize that the matter has great public interest, and we will keep the media informed about any news. This is now possible as publicity no longer can endanger the release of our crew. In return we hope that the media will respect that our colleagues now first and foremost need peace and privacy with their families", informs Claus Bech.



M/V Leopard on Somali Coast

Source: <http://www.shipcraft.dk/>

ICSW + ISAN = ISWAN

The establishment of the International Seafarers Welfare and Assistance Network on April 1st, 2013, heralds a new era in the provision and promotion of welfare services to merchant seafarers.

The International Seafarers Welfare and Assistance Network, to be more commonly known by its acronym ISWAN, is the response of international bodies and partners of ICMA to the changing environment of seafarers welfare. The advent of the Maritime Labour Convention 2006 later this year, the recent unprecedented pan-industry partnership set up to address piracy (MPHRP), a series of strategic reviews among key players in the welfare sector, including ICMA, The TK Foundation and the ITF Seafarers Trust, ICSW and ISAN, have all contributed to set the scene for more effective and contemporary vehicles for welfare provision to seafarers.



The International Christian Maritime Association made significant contributions to the establishment of ISWAN. The Mission to Seafarers' Reverend Canon Ken Peters was part of the International Committee for Seafarers' Welfare (ICSW) review. The review workgroup recommended to the Presidium that an amalgamation of ICSW and the International Seafarers Assistance Network would be beneficial. ICMA's general secretary, Reverend Hennie la Grange, presided as ICSW's chair over the final year of the merger process, and now assumes the position of first chair of ISWAN.

While the operations of both parent organisations, ICSW and ISAN, are seamlessly incorporated into ISWAN, the welfare sector will see significant changes. ISWAN will inherit the valued membership structure of its predecessor, ICSW. The alliance of faith-based and secular welfare providers, of labour movements and shipping companies, of kindred societies, governments and ports will be better served by a Board of maritime industry- and seafarers welfare specialists. The Board will be accountable to the members. It will seek to collaborate with and advise stakeholders on best practice. ISWAN will initiate and support joint projects that would benefit seafarers based on sound research conclusions and stakeholder participation. The crucial benefit of closer ties with SeafarerHelp, the 24-hour global and multi-lingual helpline for seafarers, is ISWAN's enhanced understanding of the problems besetting seafarers, and improved access for seafarers to ISWAN's membership network for referrals.

The merger comes into its own as a leaner and more efficient instrument for service delivery at a time when seafarers are particularly at risk and resources for welfare stretched.

Already, ISWAN has been able to attract new members among shipping companies, provides a new home for the Seafarers Emergency Fund and offers dedicated front desking for welfare providers like AoS Great Britain, the ITF and Nautilus.

The new organisation, as were both ICSW and ISAN, is registered as a charity in the United Kingdom. It has the full support of both the ITF Seafarers Trust and The TK Foundation.

(taken from icma.as)

What a Wonderful World!

By Karen M. Parsons OFS
Port Chaplain-Galveston, Texas, USA

On April 20th, 2013 I celebrated my 28th anniversary being commissioned as an Apostleship of the Sea minister. I began my career in the Archdiocese of Detroit serving the Port of Detroit, Michigan. At that time I was a young mother with three children all under the age of four! I heard about the ministry through a church bulletin article in my parish asking for volunteers. At that time I had been praying for guidance. I wanted to work in the Church but there were not a lot of options for women back then.

I attended the information meeting at All Saints Parish in Detroit, where the Port Chaplain, Fr. Rick Hartmann was pastor. He recognized that being a full time pastor of an inner city parish and a port chaplain would not be giving the AOS ministry enough time. So Fr. Rick went to the people in the pews. He invited the laity into the ministry in Detroit from parishes all over the Archdiocese. I was in the class of 1985. The training was extensive- a six week course. Then it came time to visit the first ship. That is when

I stopped dead in my tracks at the bottom of my first gangway and turned to leave. Fr. Rick said, "Where are you going?" I told him I was afraid of heights and afraid of water and I was not going to climb that ladder hanging over the water! He laughed and said, "Pray, Miss Karen!" And so I prayed and slowly climbed that first gangway. When I reached the top I met a crew of Filipino Seafarers. The ship's name was the M/V Balsa 6. And I was hooked!

Within two years of that first gangway climb, Fr. Rick saw that this ministry was part of me and gave me the helm. I continued to work there for the next few years until it became apparent I needed to find a full time job to support my family. (The Port of De-

troit closes for the winter season due to ice on the Great Lakes). So in 1992, I sent out my resume to many ports in the US looking for a full time position. The Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston had an opening for a port chaplain in the Port of Galveston, Archbishop Joseph Fiorenza heard about my work in Detroit, he offered me the job and the rest is history. I have been with the Archdiocese of Galveston- Houston for the past 20 years!

In these 28 years I have visited over 8000 vessels, written close to 30,000 letters and countless emails to seafarers and their families, visited seafarers families in the Philippines, Poland, Russia, Germany, and Italy. I have been to every continent (except Antarctica) for conferences and/or to conduct seminars. My children have met people from all over the world and have grown into wonderful adults. This ministry has been a great blessing in my life. I'm still afraid of heights and water but I face my fears daily to get to the people that I am called to serve. That gives me strength and courage to face all of life's challenges. Just recently I visited a ship named the M/V Balsa 82! It is a ship from the same company as my first ship and they told me the Balsa 6 no longer exists.

Working with AOS colleagues from all over the world as well as our friends in the ICMA network has been truly good. Thank you for years of friendship and collaboration.

Now it's time to head back out to the docks to greet Christ coming into our port today! May our Lady *Star of the Sea* watch over us and those we serve always!



Karen with Jim Dillenburg,
a few years back ...



"THE FARTHER FROM SHORE, THE CLOSER TO GOD"

The sea has an influence on faith, and so one can say: "He who does not know how to pray, let him sail out to sea" (*Chi non sa pregare, vada in mare a navigare*). The Holy Father John Paul II called to mind this old Roman saying during his homily to the people of the sea in Gdynia, in 1987. He wanted to remind everyone, gathered there, of the difficulties that the life of seamen and fishermen brings, and at the same time reminded them of the influence that the sea has on the formation and the strengthening of faith. Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger spoke in the same spirit when, in his book *Salt of the Earth* that was published in 1997, he asked: *"More and more people are asking themselves whether the ship of the Church will still be sailing at all in*

the future. Is it still worthwhile to get on board?" In reply, he answered: *"Yes, I firmly believe that it is. It is a well-tried, yet youthful ship. The very diagnosis of the present makes it all the more clear that we need it. Just try to imagine for a moment the current parallelogram of forces without this ship; you'll see what a collapse there would be if it were absent, what a precipitous fall in spiritual energy. One can also see, in fact, that the decline of the Church and of Christianity that we have lived through in the last thirty or forty years is partially to blame for the spiritual breakdowns, the disorientation, the demoralization that we are witnessing. In that respect, I would say that if the ship didn't already exist, it would be necessary to invent it. It corresponds to such deep human needs, it is so deeply anchored in what man is and needs and is meant to be, that there is also a guarantee in man that the ship won't simply sink, because man will never, as I believe, lose his essential powers"*.

It is necessary to continually realize this constant relevance of faith: its existential necessity, its light, strength and beauty. It is necessary to deepen its significance in our daily life and in our relationship with other people, with whom we form one human family.

Although much time has passed from the publishing of the above words of the then Cardinal Ratzinger, they continue to make sense today, particularly in the context of the Year of Faith that was inaugurated by Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI in October of 2012 and will continue to the end of autumn of 2013. The title of the Year itself, when we call to mind recent global current events, is a indication for us to reflect profoundly – in the light of faith – upon our own life and our personal union with God, so that through prayer and the new evangelization, we may be able strive towards eternal life.

In a particular way, Jesus predestined the people of the sea to the promotion of the faith. He chose the Apostle Peter, calling him to be a fisher of men when he said: "From now on, you will be catching men" (*Luke 5:10*). In a certain way, this is why people of sea should feel particularly honored with this invitation to be missionaries: to proclaim the Good News and share the richness of their faith with others and all nations.

In this mission, a consistency of the Disciples of Christ in giving witness with their lives, in undertaking constant renewal, as well as in their words expressed among other crewmates of different beliefs and cultures, is of great importance. The ship is, in fact, a symbol of what is to come: it is a symbol of the future. This was common understanding in the past, when the image of a ship or boat was used to decorate New Year greeting cards. Today, this same symbol is used in the logo for the Year of Faith, enriched with the Cross as the mast and the symbol of a Blessed Host in the background.

During the Year of Faith, all Christians are called to intensify their personal reflection on faith, and to put greater effort into building unity. This includes building unity with those people who are still in search of the Truth and looking for the purpose of their life. In such a way, together, we can strive with hope and trust in the community of the Universal Church towards eternal salvation. Faith is not a private matter, but it is also a social responsibility flowing from what we believe. The Church is a light of reconciliation, and for this reconciliation we must pray for wholeheartedly. May this prayer be also our thanksgiving to the Creator, who leads the entire world, and us, on the path of our daily lives. As Vincent Van Gogh once wrote: "Lord, we love the light of your Sun and the roar of the sea. We look to the Heavens, as well, and love your stars, which you have so numerously created, calling each by name. And so much do we love that moment of the morning, when you raise your Sun on the good and the wicked alike".

Joanna Ryłko, AOS Gdynia, Poland

SRI CRIMINAL SURVEY

Lack of due process breeds fear of criminalization among seafarers

Seafarers' suggestions on how to improve their situation when facing criminal charges were presented at the landmark 100th session of the Legal Committee of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) which met in London on 15 – 19 April, 2013.

The suggestions, which emanated from a comprehensive eight language survey conducted by Seafarers' Rights International (SRI) over a 12-month period to February 2012, focus as much on fears of their own human rights being violated as on a lack of due process in the criminal process. A total of 3,480 completed questionnaires were submitted by seafarers from 68 different nationalities.

SEAFARERS'
RIGHTS

According to the seafarers themselves, there is a frequent lack of due process for seafarers who face criminal charges. Seafarers are complaining of unfair treatment, intimidation and a lack of legal representation and interpretation services. Almost half of the seafarers in the survey said that they would be reluctant to co-operate fully and openly with casualty inquiries and accident investigators because of concerns they could be implicated in a crime; because they do not trust the authorities; and because they are concerned that co-operation would have a prejudicial affect upon their employment.

The findings in the survey strongly suggest that the rights of seafarers, as enshrined in the Guidelines on Fair Treatment of Seafarers in the event of a Maritime Accident, adopted by the IMO and the International Labour Organization (ILO) are often be subject to violation: itself causing widespread concern among seafarers.

As many as 85.04% of seafarers surveyed, said that they are concerned about facing criminal charges. The main reasons were that seafarers feel they are scapegoated. Also seafarers feel there are numerous regulations which make them more vulnerable to being criminalised.

To improve the situation, seafarers want more information on the risks they are exposed to in relation to criminal charges as well as their rights if they are defendants, complainants or witnesses. They also want good and free legal representation when facing criminal charges; a fair process and fair treatment when facing criminal charges; a greater network of support from all the various stakeholders in the maritime industry if they do face criminal charges; and more uniform laws and procedures given the wide range of different crimes to which they are exposed.

"The message from seafarers is loud and clear," said Deirdre Fitzpatrick, Executive Director of SRI: "Seafarers are saying that their rights are theoretical and illusory; they need them to be practical and effective.

"Since criminal laws are largely tailored to nationals, they are an uneasy fit for foreign and temporary transnational workers. It is clear that seafarers are more exposed to criminal proceedings than many other workers and therefore need special assistance," she added.

"The seafarers' suggestions for what is needed to improve their situation, or their perception of their situation, offer a challenge to the maritime industry and to prosecuting authorities generally, if seafaring is to remain a viable option for young people.

"The SRI survey has brought the seafarers' concerns to the fore and it is hoped it will create momentum amongst stakeholders – seafarers' organisations, employers, regulators and non-governmental bodies, in addition to seafarers themselves – to better address the unfair treatment of seafarers. It seems that much remains to be done to protect this body of essential workers from unfairness and injustice but the effort is essential not only for the protection of serving seafarers, but also to improve the image of the profession for new recruits to come," Ms Fitzpatrick concluded.

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The 100th session of the IMO Legal Committee was attended by 88 member government delegations; 2 associate member delegations; 1 specialised agency; 2 intergovernmental organizations; and 20 non-governmental organizations.

The Committee agreed that the issue of fair treatment of seafarers in the event of a maritime accident should remain on its agenda and be discussed again in 2014.

A full copy of the SRI Survey is available on the [SRI website](#). Alternatively a hard copy can be requested from Debra Massey by contacting her at:

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ICMA REGIONAL CONFERENCE COMMITS TO PRIORITIES FOR MINISTRY

The final report from the ICMA Regional Conference held in Odessa concludes with a set of statements by the delegates that underline the region's commitment to caring for the welfare of seafarers.

The outgoing Regional Coordinator, AOS Deacon Ricardo Rodriguez Martos from Barcelona, Spain, wrote that the region was committed to pursue the following goals and priorities in delivering care to seafarers and families in the Black Sea, Mediterranean and Middle East Region of the international Christian Maritime Association.



1.Port Welfare Committees: PWC's are very important for achieving more efficient assistance to seafarers. The region's chaplains would promote such committees in each port.

2.Maritime Piracy Humanitarian Response Programme: In cases of emergency or of piracy, port authorities, ship owners and the ship's agents should be aware of the important role that port chaplains can play in welfare response and first emergency response.

3.ICMA Code of Conduct: To enhance ecumenical working, chaplains, volunteers and welfare workers from ICMA's members should follow the ICMA Code of Conduct.

4.Networking: Being connected to one another benefits seafarers and should be an ongoing goal of all ICMA members' personnel and centres.

5.Cruise ship ministry: Given that access to cruise ships is not easily gained, a short and simple directory of ports and welfare providers in the region would be produced and distributed among crews and crew coordinators on these ships.

6.MLC 2006: ICMA centres should promote the ratification of MLC 2006 in those countries where it is not yet incorporated in national legislation, and are urged to collaborate in its implementation in all ports of the region.

7.Ship visiting: Given the fast turnaround and workload while in port, many seafarers have no time to go ashore. Therefore, ICMA personnel should prioritise ship visiting

8.Onboard welfare: Chaplains could facilitate groups on board that care for the welfare of fellow crew members. These groups could form informal welfare committees or prayer groups.

9.Seafarers Rights: Chaplains are encouraged to engage advocacy for seafarers rights

For the full report of the Regional Conference: www.icma.as