



**AUGUST 20, 2013**

## **THE MARITIME LABOUR CONVENTION - MLC, 2006**

### **ENTRES INTO FORCE**



August 20<sup>th</sup> of 2006 was widely covered worldwide by the media, with the entry into force of the new International Labour Organization (ILO) Maritime Labour Convention (MLC). Founded in 1946, the ILO is the UN agency responsible for the promotion of worldwide dialogue on work related issues, labour rights, social conditions, as well as the formulation of specific programs and legislations. The ILO works through what is called a tripartite system – that is, through a dialogue between three social partners: employers, employees and governments. The ILO has been always interested in the particular category of maritime labour,

incorporating what was done by the League of Nations before the birth of ILO in the period between the two World Wars.

The maritime work is considered to be a sector worthy of special attention and protection because seafarers operate in a particularly difficult and dangerous environment. It is worth mentioning, in this regard, that a study carried out by the English Maritime Authority has revealed that the rate of mortality in the field of maritime transport is 12 times higher than that in the manufacturing sector – a percentage that, respectively, is disproportionately 81 times higher when it comes to the fishing sector.

In addition, the ship owner's image has changed throughout the years for various reasons. He is no longer the experienced and reliable manager that has an affiliation with his crew for reasons of familiarity and responsibility. Furthermore, the supervision of maritime labour, conducted by the national authorities, is diminishing in many cases. The merchant fleets are no longer managed by governments of maritime Nations (with their significant experience in carrying out such a task), but are registered with States that do not have the slightest will to effectively exercise supervision over ships flying under their flag.

For these reasons, those who belonged to the maritime cluster gladly welcomed both the ratification and, later, the entry into force of the MLC 2006. For the first time, a genuine control of both

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the working and living conditions of crew on merchant ships was introduced into International Maritime Legislation. Since the MLC 2006 does not apply to fishing vessels, one must refer to the Convention on Work in the Fishing Sector (C 188), adopted in 2007.

### **What is so exceptional about the MLC 2006, that it is so worth noting?**

First of all, for its coming to be, and for its history until now. The MLC 2006 began from the initiative of social partners, ships owners and trade unions, who all agreed that there was a need to ensure that also the maritime labour sector was incorporated into a well thought-out and effective regulation. This was already the case in regards to other basics aspects of the maritime industry, established through a set of regulations known as SOLAS, MARPOL and STCW that respectively deal with the safety of vessels and people through the management control, the prevention of damages caused by environmental pollution, and the qualification and certification of personnel employed on board.

For many years, the maritime labour sector produced regulations that were adopted by the ILO (more than 60 between Conventions and Recommendations), but unfortunately, in most cases, these regulations remained without effect as they did not enter in force, or were poorly ratified by the States. Therefore, the problem was to find a way to overcome the opposition of the States and to enforce, in a coordinated and effective way, the standards that already existed. The unprecedented solution was to bring together almost all the standards in a new Convention: in a single legislative text that would be current, well coordinated and would replace the previous. So in one swoop, all of the obsolete standards would be updated, and could be applied, once again.

The hard effort put in by the social partners, the use of a legislative instrument that contains a regulatory system firm in fundamental obligations but at the same time flexible in the application of their method, brought about a unanimous vote to adopt the new legislation by the diplomatic Conference, four years later. Today, after seven years after the formal adoption, we have reached the point when the legislation enters into force, that is, the point of its actual implementation.



This is a consequence of the fact that more than 50 States, which constitute almost 80% of the world fleet, have translated this Convention into national law.

It is an unprecedented success in the history of the ILO and of maritime legislation that will grant to seafarers, for the first time in history, the protection of the law with regards to the quality of living and working conditions on ships.

For those working on land, much of the content of the MLC 2006 will seem obvious, somewhat old and well known.

However, in the shipping world, the labour forces did not also profit from the progresses in social legislation that were common, particularly in European countries. Concepts such as collective bargaining, working hours, wages, social security contributions, safety, accident prevention, social security and health care, in most countries of the world, were hardly applied on land based work, and almost certainly were unknown to those working at sea.

The MLC 2006 efficiently introduces these concepts into the legislation of all countries that are ILO members. In this sense, it is of extreme importance that the Convention has the ambitious objective of gradually giving all seafarers (and their families) insurance coverage and benefits, equivalent to those of the land base workers, from the moment in which a State ratifies the Convention.

A peculiarity of the MLC 2006 is the duty of a State to enable in its' ports effective measures that guarantee a seafarer's welfare and well-being. We are dealing with an obligation that concerns Civil service, and cannot be transferred to other entities, such as ship owners.

## But what are the contents of the MLC 2006?

It consists of two parts: the first of which contains the principles and the standards for the application of the Convention, meanwhile the second section contains the substantial provisions, grouped into 5 areas. If the MLC 2006 is called the Fundamental Charter for maritime labour, it is because of the principles contained in the first part, in which every State is reminded of its obligation to respect the following: the freedom of association and collective bargaining; the abolition of forced labour; the abolition of child labour; the elimination of all forms of discrimination in employment.

It also recognizes the right of all workers to have: a safe working environment that meets with all safety standards; a just contract for work; decent working and living conditions on board; healthcare, medical assistance, forms of welfare and social security.

However, it is in the content of the articles that specify the obligations of the States that the MLC 2006 qualifies as exceptional legislation.

Indeed, the Convention establishes specific rules for those who wish to ratify it. It reminds the States of their obligations to effectively control national vessels; it obliges them to certify the compliance of each vessel to the MLC 2006 standards, calling for cooperation with other States to ensure the existence of these



norms through inspections and controls; it grants a State the faculty inspect all ships docking at their ports and requires them to enact legislation that controls all recruitment and employment of personnel, carried out in their own country.

But there's more. The MLC 2006 introduces criteria more of a commercial nature rather than a legal one, establishing that States cannot offer more favourable conditions to vessels of countries, which have not ratified the Convention.

The concept can seem perplexing, but it is extremely important and is the basis of the fundamental consideration in the process that lead to the creation of the MLC 2006.

Why should the honesty of shipping traders who comply with all the regulations be at a commercial disadvantage with the minority of traders using substandard vessels and inadequate working conditions? Why should those who work dishonestly benefit from a lower cost, and thus enjoy better competitiveness? In order not to offer an indirect advantage to these traders and to the nations that allow them to take advantage of the irregularities, the MLC 2006 suggests – or rather requires – that States that have ratified the Convention apply those same standards of the MLC 2006 in their own ports, including those States that have not introduced the Convention into their national legislation: all ships are to be inspected, and all must adopt to the standards of the MLC 2006.

In the future, there will no longer be a competitive advantage for those who act outside the law and still



want to be in business. Today, the ratification of the Convention by most of the influential and important nations in which most of the world trade occurs, already implies that there is very little chance for work for any substandard traders in those areas, if they do not conform to the regulations.

The second portion of the MLC 2006 consists of 5 sections (defined as Titles), which are organized in clear and obligatory manner, yet leaving a margin of discretion in the standards' application by a particular State. Four of the five Titles regulate: the minimum requirements of work for a seafarer on board; the conditions of employment; accommodation, recreational facilities, food and cooking; healthcare, medical assistance, welfare and social security protection.

The fifth Title contains provisions that ensure the effective application of the previous provisions, through the control of the national ships and those who call on its ports. These provisions are obligations that a State assumed as a Flag State, as well as a Port State.

Every Flag State is expected to certify that every vessel, with regard to management and working/ living conditions), particularly in reference to 14 key topics ranging from the requirements of seafarers (age, medical condition, qualifications), to the conditions of employment (recruitment and placement agencies, working hours, crew composition, payment of wages), manning levels of ships (accommodation, recreational facilities, food, safety and accident prevention, medical care), and the existence of procedures for filing crew complaints.

The requirement of having on-board a copy of this document of maritime labour compliance, or a declaration of a vessel's conformity with its requirements, is what makes the MLC 2006 an effective tool. With the release of this declaration, the Flag State certifies that the ship and its equipment have been checked, that there are regular verification procedures, and that the ship can operate. The supplementary controls, conducted by the States in the ports of call, are another supplementary means of control, and an additional level of verification usually reserved for those ships that do not have the declaration, nor a declaration of control by the previous Flag State.

As I mentioned earlier, there is large satisfaction in the maritime world for the development of the Convention. There is also greater expectation, perhaps at times a bit too optimistic.

The MLC 2006 introduced regulation for States that must be implemented, and that should put remedy to situations of great distress for sea workers. With the Convention's entry into force, we anticipate that occurrences, such as abandonment or lack of insurance in accidents and illnesses, as well as the most obvious aspects of exploitation of the crews, will vanish from one day to the next.

Perhaps it will not happen over night, and will surely take some time before the experience will provide guidelines for those who should apply the standards. We hope that the willingness of the States and, ultimately, the professionalism and honesty of the people who will be responsible to conduct the controls, will make sure that this innovation is really the beginning of a more just and serene world for our brothers who make their living at sea every day.



**Paolo Cavanna**

**Paolo Cavanna** has recently retired as Director of Legal and Insurance affairs of Costa Crociere, the leading cruise company in Europe. Since graduating in law from the University of Genoa, Paolo has had a lifetime of experience in the shipping industry, first in the cargo sector, and then in the passenger and cruise sector. He has been responsible particularly for the creation of joint ventures in the areas of cargo and cruise shipping, ship management, shipping agencies and the construction and operation of specialised shore terminals in Italy and other European countries. He has served for more than 30 years as advisor to ship owners associations, both in Italy and in Europe, assisting the Italian Government in international fora and standing committees including the IMO. For the last 15 years he has been an international shipping expert for the Civil Emergency Planning directorate of NATO. He has co-authored several books covering matters of interest for the shipping community and has published articles for shipping law reviews and other specialist shipping and insurance magazines.

# SEA SUNDAY 2013 CELEBRATED IN THE WORLD

## Sea Sunday 2013

### The 40th Anniversary of the Apostleship of the Sea in Madagascar

(25.11.1973 - 25.11.2013)

H.E. the Most Rev. Désiré Tsarahazana (Archbishop of Toamasina), presided the Eucharistic celebration on Sunday, July 28<sup>th</sup>, at St. Joseph's Cathedral in Toamasina. The Concelebrants at Mass were H.E., the Most Rev. Marcellin Randriamamonjy (Bishop of Fenerive-East and AOS Bishop Promoter for Madagascar), eight priests, including the Vicar General of Toamasina, the Regional Superior of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, and a Deacon.

The theme of the celebration was

#### «Faith and New Evangelization in the Maritime World and in the Lives of the People of the Sea»

In Toamasina, July 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of 2013 were memorable for their celebration of Sea Sunday, but particularly for the celebration of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of the Apostleship the Sea.

The seafarers and fishers, along with their families, strongly sought to make their presence felt both at the Sea Sunday, and above all, at the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Maritime ministry in Madagascar. Representatives of the administrative authorities and the local port workers also wanted to be present. During the celebration, after having attended Catechism classes at the AOS Toamasina under the direction of the second diocesan chaplain, Fr. Jocelyn Rivotiana, OMI, seventeen children of seafarers received the Sacrament of Confirmation.



Another significant and highly symbolic moment of the celebration was the awarding of the "Benemerenti" Medal (a Medal of Honor given by the Vatican City State) to fifty active members of the AOS Toamasina, in recognition for their faithful commitment to the maritime Pastoral care. Among them was Félix Randrianasoavina, the AOS National Director, who was accompanied by his wife and had received the Medal for more than twenty years of service.

## **Time of witness to the Faith and the Church**

During this Year of Faith, it is clear that – in communion with the Church – the AOS must take advantage of such a celebration to give witness to its commitment to the people of the sea. On Saturday, July 27<sup>th</sup>, several activities were organized at the national headquarters of the AOS in Toamasina. Together with Fr. Stansilaw Kazek, OMI, chaplain of the port of Toamasina, the seafarers contributed a great deal in showing their joy and their gratitude to the Church's ministry. All of the maritime Associations and Organizations sincerely desired to cooperate in the preparation and the financial support of the activities. On Saturday, three main activities were organized:

### **- An Ecumenical service**

The ecumenical spirit is inherent to maritime life, particularly onboard ships, as they are not labeled nor identified by religion. For this reason, the ecumenical effort is integrated into the work of the AOS in Madagascar. During the celebrations, an ecumenical service was held with the active participation of F.F.K.M. (the World Council of Christian Churches of Madagascar). It was chaired by Fr. Stéphane Tsiahoana, President of the Diocesan F.F.K.M.; assisted by Fr. Stanislaw Kazek, OMI; and Fr. Jocelyn Rivotiana, OMI. Among others present, H.E. the Most Rev. Jean Paul Solo, Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Toamasina; H.E. the Most Rev. Jean Claude Andrianjafimanana, Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Mahajanga; and Ms. Lucie Nirina Voahangy, Lutheran theologian at the service of the AOS.

### **- Statement by the AOS Bishop Promoter**

H.E. the Most Rev. Marcellin Randriamamonjy, Bishop of Fenerive-East and AOS Bishop Promoter, prepared a presentation for the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the presence of the AOS in the country. First, he noted the commitment of the AOS in the last forty years, having held a leading role in the history of the Church in Madagascar. Then, since this celebration was held during the Year of Faith, he strongly emphasized the importance of the faith in our lives, as well as the need for continuous support of the faith in our Christian commitment. Referring to the Apostolic Letter of Pope Benedict XVI, "Porta Fidei", Bishop Randriamamonjy said that everyone must know and live the faith, that an active faith changes us, and that faith is the foundation of our Christian life: "united in the faith in God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit: one God". He invited us not to forget that "faith is a gift from God". However, everyone has the duty to live it, strengthening it through an active sacramental life, especially in the reception of the Holy Eucharist. The Bishop also turned to all those, and asked: "Can we say that, in the AOS, the traditional and industrial fishers, the seafarers, have the faith and that they are living it?"



Furthermore, he made reference to the miraculous catch in chapter 5 of the Gospel of Luke and continuing with the Gospel of John 21:1-14, the Bishop concluded that the commitment of the AOS must not be limited solely to the material level, but must prove its dedication through the faith. Within the contest of the New Evangelization, he challenged us by asking what kind of pledge we should take in order to fulfill our duty as Christian. It is essential that, before giving the answer, we are aware of the various problems and difficulties that weaken the daily life of seafarers and fishers: the relationship with their family and with those they serve with at sea, their rapport with the administration and with the Church, the impacts of politics on their profession, the safety at sea, social security, etc. Due to the globalization, all of these problems are painfully affecting the life as a whole.



"AOS - he said - provides material and financial support, working tools and other such things, but is this sufficient to say that we are doing pastoral work?"

According to the Bishop Promoter, one of the obligations of the New Evangelization is to reflect profoundly on the lives of seafarers in relation, for example, to their conversion, so that they may live as true Christian witnesses of the Risen Christ. This will allow us to live in community while, at the same time, helping to find solutions for today's various problems together. We must never forget that "Apostolate" comes from the word "Apostle", and that we must be apostles in the various places, in which we live.

### **- Testimony of Life**

The celebration of the anniversary was an opportunity for the wives of seafarers to give their witness of life as Christians, and especially as members of the AOS. Marie Eliane Rasolonindrina, the widow of a seaman, presented the daily difficulties of family life when the father is at sea. She insisted, in particular, on rumors, slander and defamation from the society that victimize the wives, and often refer to the fidelity of the couple during the absence of the husband. She was able to overcome all of this through the AOS, through faith and through prayer.

Gladys Fly Marie, the wife of an officer in the merchant Navy, spoke particularly of their journey as a couple towards Christian marriage through prayer and faith. After a decade, the life she lived with her seafarer husband was blessed through the Sacrament of Marriage in the chapel of the AOS in Toamasina, on July of 2011. Ms. Norline expressed the daily difficulties for the family of the

artisanal fishers with their precarious life. She recognized the AOS's support provided to wives of seafarers in setting up a Cooperative that would develop and improve the handicraft work of wickers and embroideries, so as to contribute to the family budget. During the festivities, the Cooperative commemorated its tenth anniversary.

### **- History of AOS in Madagascar**

At the end of the celebration on Saturday, Félix Randrianasoavina, the National Director, recalled the history of the AOS in Madagascar. The "seed" – launched by the AOS International and entrusted to Fr. Bernard Tesson

in October of 1970 – did not flourish until November 25<sup>th</sup>, 1973, when H.E. the Most Rev. Jérôme Razafindrazaka, then Bishop of Tamatave, entrusted this pastoral mission to Fr. François Le Gall, SMM. The National Director then outlined, with a PowerPoint Presentation, the forty years of the AOS commitment to the social ministry on behalf of the people of the sea in Madagascar.



## **SEA SUNDAY CELEBRATION IN MAURITIUS**

On the occasion of the celebration of this year's World Day of Prayer for the People of the Sea (Sea Sunday), the leaders of the AOS Mauritius chose the region of Grande-Rivière-South-East to pay tribute to those who work in the maritime industry. After blessing the pirogues at the Bambous-Virieux pier, Fr. Jacques Henri David, chaplain of the port and the National Director of the AOS, celebrated Mass in the presence of local fishers, their colleagues across the region, members of their families and the heads of the fisheries sector. During the homily, the celebrant illustrated the daily difficulties faced by seafarers, who carry out a difficult profession often far from their loved ones.

He then congratulated the authorities for the ratification of the ILO Maritime Labor Convention, which came into force last August. Thanks to this agreement, the working conditions of seafarers will improve with respect to, the employment and the medical care, among other things. The celebrant then quoted the message of the Pontifical Council, which encourages the States to promote the development of welfare facilities accessible to seafarers, irrespective of nationality or religion.

He also spoke of his concerns for the fishers in the context of the Agreement with the European Union, and called local fishers to provide his colleagues with the most comprehensive information on the matter. In thanking the fishing community of Grande-Rivière-Southeast, Fr. David said that the



AOS is aware of their difficulties. A common expression in the world of fishing is "fishery management" – a concept sometimes very difficult to comprehend for some fishers, who are in need of proper training in the matter. It is a term that calls for sustainable fisheries, for awareness of the fact that the sea is in danger due to climate change, pollution, overfishing and the depletion of resources. To all of society, he launched an appeal: "Save the Sea!"

Then, Fr. David reminded everyone that the social role of the AOS is not only to seek Christ in the neighbor, but also to be a neighbor to others, particularly to the numerous seafarers left without assistance as victims of the economic crisis. Currently, there are over 1,500 abandoned ships in the ports of the world and many seafarers are without salary. In this regard, Fr. David called to mind the crew of the M/N Cemrem, which was abandoned in Port-Louis in 2009 and later sent home, thanks to the collaboration of the Seafarers Welfare Fund, the trade Union, the shipping agents and port authorities. They will finally receive their salaries, after having waited for more than 4 years. It is time, he said, that the authorities establish a "fast track lane" to allow the abandoned seafarers to recover the money that is owed to them, so that they can go back home to their families.

The chaplain also stressed the professionalism of seafarers, citing the example of the crew of the Costa Concordia, to whom he paid tribute for the dedication demonstrated in the rescue of passengers during a shipwreck. The great number of lives saved is thanks to the discipline and dedication of all the staff, which knew how to overcome fear, observed safety procedures, and went out to assist those people.

He then called for greater solidarity towards the people of the sea, and remembered the nightmare of seafarers being attacked by pirates. Piracy is a real problem in the region of the Indian Ocean, and Fr. David expressed his appreciation for the initiatives taken on by the government to fight against this plague. The AOS is ready to give all of its moral support to seafarers who have undergone this experience.



**Family members of fishermen laid flowers in memory of their loved ones.**

(Taken from "The Mauricien," July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2013)



## THE FEAST OF OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL PATRON SAINT OF THE PEOPLE OF THE SEA

July 16, 2013



***“PUT OUT INTO THE DEEP.***

***AT YOUR COMMAND, I WILL LOWER THE NETS”***

As it is every year on the occasion of the Feast of our Lady of Mount Carmel, Our Patron Saint, I wish to extend a warm greeting to the entire family of seafarers in Spain, thanking the Blessed Mary for her protection over us, while at the same time asking Her to continue keeping us in Her care, particularly in these times of such dramatic change. We celebrate this Feast day under the motto of: *“Put out into the deep. At your command, I will lower the nets”*. We wish to place the faith in Jesus Christ at the center of our lives, just as the Church proposes us to do during this Year of Faith. For this reason, we wish to accept the Lord’s invitation to put out into the deep water, in order to bring all seafarers onto the path of the New Evangelization – as proposed by the Pastoral Plan of the Spanish Catholic Bishops’ Conference for the upcoming years.

We, the people of the sea, want to accept the Gospel of Jesus Christ in order to proclaim and defend human dignity with courage – a dignity that is so often trampled in the maritime world. In this sense, the Apostleship of the Sea, that is the Church’s Pastoral care for all people of the sea, is the realization of Her walking alongside mankind in faith, in order to bring the light of life to the men and women of the sea, and to help in solidarity those seafarers, who find themselves in need far away from their families.

The 23<sup>rd</sup> World Congress of the Apostleship of the Sea was held in Rome, last November. It was an extraordinary event, in which men and women of the sea, coming from all parts of the World, came together to reflect on the New Evangelization within the context of the maritime world. During this time, many of the issues that influence life and work at sea were undertaken in discussion. Our goal was to deepen the Church’s effort in all sectors of the maritime world, which recently has become for us a greater challenge, and we expressed an appeal to the entire international community to better the conditions of life and work of all men and women of the sea. The World Congress also demonstrated the example of service that seafarers give each other, particularly in moments of uncertainty, isolation and danger, offering all men a model of how to live in a continually changing world.

On this occasion, Pope Benedict XVI received the participants [of the Congress] in a private audience, addressing to all gathered his important discourse, whose key ideas I now wish to present to you. The Holy Father began by quoting Pope Pius XI, who – in 1922 – approved the Constitutions and statutes of the Apostleship of the Sea. Then, having cited the *motu proprio* *Stella Maris*, he recalled the figure of Blessed John Paul II, its author, who confirmed the mission to expand the maritime world ministry. Pope Benedict thanked those present at the Congress for having responded to his call in announcing the Year of Faith, whose goal was to give a renewed impulse to the mission of the entire Church.

The Holy Father then recalled how the maritime world was, from the beginnings of Christianity, an effective instrument in Evangelization. By sailing the seas, the Apostles and Disciples of Christ were able to reach the entire world. Even today – as the Pope recalled – the Church crosses the many seas to carry the Gospel to all the nations. Our presence in the seaports, and the visits we make every day onboard, are a visible sign of the pastoral solidarity of the Church. Benedict XVI then referred to the complex effects that globalization has on the maritime world, reiterating that the particular vulnerability of seafarers, fishermen and sailors must inspire an ever more attentive solicitude of the Church. He offered a special place in his discourse to fishermen and their families, who – probably more than anyone else – must overcome

the difficulties of the present times and the uncertainties of the future, so greatly marked by climate change and the excessive exploitation of resources.

In closing his moving message to the people of the sea, the Pope urged us not to abandon our place at the “front lines” of evangelization to so many men and women of diverse nationality and origin who come through our ports. He urged us to continue to respond to the people of the sea that await us onboard, without hesitation, easing the profound nostalgia of their soul by showing them the attentive and considerate face of the Church that welcomes.

As you can see, these words of Pope Benedict XVI make evident the concern and faith of the Church, that She has always shown towards the men and women of the sea. We see these same characteristics in the apostolic ministry of Pope Francis, who asks us to go the peripheries of the world to announce and give witness to the Good News of the Lord. In the peripheries of the maritime world, there are many of our brothers and sisters who are still awaiting us.

Next October, we will inaugurate the National Assembly of the Apostleship of the Sea in Huelva. Let us pray that we will succeed in uniting our efforts, so as to demonstrate to the entire family of the maritime world the love and closeness of Jesus Christ and His Church.

May Mary, Our Lady of Carmel, Stella Maris, reinvigorate your hope always, and fill you and your families with God’s blessings.

With my blessing and affection,

Luis Quinteiro Fiuza

Bishop of Tui-Vigo, and Bishop Promoter of the Apostleship of the Sea

## PRAYER TO THE VERGIN MARY STELLA MARIS

*O Mary, Star of the Sea,*

*Mother of God and our Mother, turn your sweet gaze upon all those who face the dangers of the sea every day, and on their families. Ensure for them the sustenance of life, so that they may protect the integrity of creation and serve peace among all peoples.*

*Protectress of migrants and itinerant people, help with maternal care the men, women and children forced to flee their lands in search of hope and a future.*

*Do not let the encounter with us and our peoples become a source of new and greater slavery and humiliation*

*Mother of mercy, ask forgiveness for us who, blinded by selfishness, folded on our interests and prisoners of our own fears, have become distracted towards the needs and sufferings of our brothers.*

*Shelter of sinners, convert the hearts of those who cause war, hatred and poverty, those who exploit their brothers and their weaknesses, those who engage in the shameful trade of human life.*

*Model of charity, bless all men and women of good will, who welcome and serve those who “have docked” on this Earth: may the love received and given be the seed that will bear the fruit of new fraternal bonds and the dawn of world peace. Amen.*



Pope Francis - July 8, 2013, Lampedusa

# MARITIME CONFERENCE

## "FOR THE RIGHTS OF SEAFARERS"

Vigo, March 15, 2013

The Maritime Conference had a dual objective to be implemented simultaneously.

### It had a dual function:

- **A reflection** on the conditions of the seafarers' work, family and social life.
- **An objective:** to create a Center for Seafarers' Rights and offer them free legal assistance.

Experts on the situation currently lived at sea, despite the distance and silence before society, explained to the participants how the work of fishing is carried out, who imposes the conditions, and the abuse suffered by the workers, as well as the inhibition of those responsible for this exploitation in the remote fishing grounds.

I. In the **REFLECTION** on the privations suffered in work at sea, these impacts were considered:

On the fisher: his work day, fatigue, insecurity and arbitrary salary.

On the seafarer's family: the long days at sea and their effects on his wife and children.

On social life: a visitor and absentee in this setting and in the decisions for which he is responsible.

The right to vote.

The flags of convenience.

The abandonment of ships and crews.

II. **THE OBJECTIVE** is to create a Center for Seafarers' Rights for the purpose of offering them legal support in defense of their rights which are trampled on so arbitrarily.

The possibilities and effects were presented whereby this care will benefit the workers who are poorly treated in a society where established labor rights are recognized for all workers.

This Conference was held to try to bring our society closer to the reality of the seafarers' serious needs, which call for our attention and efforts, in order to offer them and their families the respect that is due to the dignity of a human being.

### Conclusions

1. The PCP (Common Fisheries Policy) implies social improvements for the seafarers.
2. In the fight against illegal fishing (IUU) we have an opportunity to eradicate the exploitative labor practices.
3. To modify the rules so that voting by delegation handled free of charge by Notaries (which already exists in the case of the sick) will be applied to all kinds of boats.
4. To explore the possibility of an electronic vote with the current technological means.
5. To strengthen the surveillance of the Agencies that manage crews.
6. To intensify the controls regarding labor on Spanish ships as well as on foreign ships in a Spanish port in accordance with international law.
7. To end the hiring of foreign seafarers at conditions different from those of Spanish seafarers aboard fishing ships under a Spanish flag.



8. Ratification by Spain of the ILO Convention 188, to recommend its ratification to the rest of the European Union countries, and to impact the need for the State governing the port to be able to carry out inspections.

9. To carry out an effective control of compliance with international legislation by Spanish shipowners registered abroad since they unload their catches in a Spanish port.

10. To recommend the ratification by all the European Union countries of the SCTW-F Convention.

11. Stricter regulation of the jobs that should be described as hard to fill.

12. Unification of the bodies that control and spell out the existing regulation.

13. A call for special attention by the control authorities to ensure that in every case there is a written work contract.

14. To facilitate regular communication between the seafarers and their families on land through the new existing technologies aboard in order to prevent their social and family isolation.

15. On newly built ships, to take into account the spaces necessary for minimum living conditions for the crew members.

16. To balance the days of rest with the other European countries of reference.

17. To encourage the public administrations to make cooperation agreements with the non-profit organizations for the creation of a center for seafarers' rights.

**The Maritime Conference was considered an interesting event for carrying out a public reflection on the reality lived by the seafarers' families, and for introducing into our society a clear view of the need for means to protect them and set up the defense of the labor, family and social justice to which they are entitled as workers.**

**The creation of a Center for Seafarers' Rights would be a necessary support for justice where they can go. It would offer them free legal aid to defend their labor rights which are violated with great arbitrariness and no legal consequences. Some interesting reports showed us the possibility of this achievement and the inherent needs for its coverage.**



# UNDERSTANDING THE FILIPINO SEAMAN: HIS VALUES, ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOR

## III part

Author: TOMAS D. ANDRES



WE CONCLUDE 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. WE HOPE THAT IT WAS USEFUL FOR HELPING IN UNDERSTANDING THE FILIPINO SEAFARERS AND RELATE WITH THEM.

### The Filipino English

The average Filipino speaks English well, sometimes even sounding like an American. At times, however, Filipinos speak English with dis-



tinct regional accents - Tagalog, Ilocano, Pampango, Visayan "depending on what part of the country he comes from.

Within the English languages are numerous accents and there will be a certain amount of time require for familiarization of the way English is pronounced by Senior officers.

Don't be too particular about the pronounces "he" or "she" or diction in general. Some dialects alphabet does not have an "F", and so Filipinos tend to pronounce it as "P". Filipino seamen sometimes misuse their she's and he's because in Filipino language there is no such distinction in gender.

Filipino English is slightly different from American English or British English. It is based upon the American dialect, but with strong influences of the indigenous languages. Grammar and

pronunciation are noticeably affected. Additionally, some words have restricted, specific meanings. Following are a few commonly-used words and their meanings:

"Blowout" - a treat or celebration

"Brownout" - an electrical power failure

"Colgate" - toothpaste

"Comfort Room" - restroom

"Dear" - expensive

"Dirty Kitchen" - second kitchen, usually the maid's kitchen

"Frigidaire" - refrigerator

"Xerox" - copier machine, photocopying

"Kodak" - film

"Polaroid" - instant photography

"IBM" - computers

"San Miguel" - beer

"to pass" - to pick up, to stop for, to go by, to pass by

"to get down" - to get out "to go down" - to get off

"to sleep late" - to stay up late

"dressed for his funeral" - dressed to kill

"to have oiled his officer" - to have buttered his officer up.

"his watch is dead" - his watch has stopped

"open the light" - put on the light

"homely" - to be very much dedicated to one's family.

### Friendly Phrases

Learning and using a few Filipino words while with Filipino seamen is a very powerful way of saying "I like you." Common greetings such as "Kumusta kayo?" (How are you?); Magandang um-

aga" (Good morning); "Magandang gabi" (Good Evening); "Mabuhay" (long live); etc. will help develop a very deep kind of rapport with them.

## **7. HOW TO MOTIVATE AND BEING OUT THE BEST IN THE FILIPINO**

The Filipino is unique. To motivate him one must understand his hierarchy of needs which is not exactly in the same order nor fits perfectly the Western framework of hierarchy of needs.

In the Filipino hierarchy of needs, the first need is familism or the need to belong to a family or group. A Filipino normally sees himself first as member of the family and only secondly as member of the outside group whether it's an office or company. The Filipino could not be expected to put the welfare of his company over and above his family. To motivate and bring out the best in the Filipino, it may therefore be to the long-term favor of firms to implement measures that will satisfy their Filipino seamen's concern for their families. Furthermore, the Filipino seamen can be expected to maintain company loyalty so long as the company objectives do not conflict with the implicit objectives of the nuclear family.

The second need of the Filipino in the hierarchy is the need to be reciprocated. This is based on the utang-na-loob value, a behavior wherein every service received, favor, or treatment accomplished has something in return. The Filipino has a high sense of personal dignity. His dignity and honor are everything to him, so that the wounding of them, whether real or imagined, becomes a challenge to his manhood. He respects other people but they must also respect him. Many conflicts between a foreign superior and a Filipino seaman are founded on a disregard on the one hand, and a sacred regard on the other, of individual dignity. The foreigner is apt to underestimate the dignity of the Filipino. He idolizes, perhaps the individual dignity of his foreign superior but he demands the same treatment; if not, he loses his self-control because he feels that he has been wronged or insulted though the cause itself may be trivial or slight.

According to the findings of Dr. Angelina Ramirez, Filipinos find the following reasons of vital importance in work satisfaction:

(1) He expects to be treated as an individual with dignity.

(2) He wants to carry on an open communication and get feed-back from those he works with.

(3) In the context of performance appraisals, he wants to be rated high because the benefits of recognition and promotion go with it.

(4) He wants to be given credit for any participation which results to the productivity of the organization.

(5) He works best with co-workers who are socially supportive.

(6) He wants to be involved in challenging tasks which provide calculated risks but he is resistant to change when new behavior is required from him which he is not ready for.

The third need in the Filipino hierarchy of needs is social acceptance, that is to be taken by his fellows for what he is or what they believe him to be, and be treated in accordance with his status. The Filipino needs to be socially accepted by the people who can help him in time of need. He must develop and cultivate their goodwill so as to get along with them for they are psychological investment for future economic, religious, social, and political gains. Thus, acceptance of a fictive relationship is enjoyed and appreciated. By fictive relationship, we mean that relationships which is neither legal nor by blood. However, though fictitious it may be, it is definitely real in Filipino culture. When a Filipino calls his superior "kuya" (elder brother) or "tatay" (father), although he is not real-



ly related to him, he is developing a fictive relationship which may make him feel he is one of the members of the officer's family.

Sometimes, a foreigner may be invited to be a sponsor for a wedding or baptism by a Filipino. Since there are several sponsors, the Filipino may be asking the foreigner because of the special pres-



tige a foreigner brings, a manifestation of the need for social acceptance. For Filipinos such request is not only a religious act but a social one; it is therefore believed that to deny such request would be a very rude act. If the foreigner chooses to participate as a sponsor, the Filipino considers this as a great honor.

The fourth need in the Filipino hierarchy is the social mobility need. Most Filipinos want to make more money to climb the social ladder. If they are given help to achieve this goal, they will do so. Because of this need, evaluation by an authority or superior would be welcomed but not by subordinates or peers. The Filipino sees his mobility as guaranteed if it were determined by his superior.

The fifth need in the Filipino hierarchy is pagkabayani ("being a hero"). This is the highest of the need levels. Here enters the values of "honor," "dignity," and "pride." Here enters the value of hiya which in Filipino in the broadest sense best defined as "self-esteem." This is one of the most important concepts in the social psychology of the Filipino because in it are found almost all of the aspects of the Filipino value and motivation.

## **8. HOW TO NEGOTIATE AND HANDLE CONFLICTS WITH FILIPINOS**

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

When a Westerner's personal rights are trampled upon, his first reaction is ordinarily to complain and fight back. The Filipino is surprised to see Westerners quarrel over disagreements on personal rights and afterwards become friends as if nothing happened at all. This is because the Filipino has been culturally brought up to value harmony. If a Filipino's rights are trampled upon, he first uses the friendly way. He often makes his feelings known through the indirect or roundabout approach. For him, to directly confront someone means bearing lasting wounds which require friendly reconciliation! Only after the friendly means (pakikisama) are exhausted does he resort to violence (pakikibaka).

The Filipino desire for harmony does not mean the absence of actual conflict truly enough, for him violence or a direct confrontation is not the first step. However, if put to shame, the Filipino can



turn violent. Any attempt at casting doubt upon or questioning a Filipino's action, integrity and honor even if it is true can elicit vindictive reaction from him. One who publicly denounces a Filipino may only get worse results because he did not follow the cultural norm of first airing grievances privately and politely.

The average Westerner conducts his personal life and his maintenance of law and order on principles of right or wrong; the average Filipino, on sanctions of shame, dishonor, ridicule, or impropriety. The average Westerner is forced to categorize his conduct in universal impersonal terms. The "law is the law" and "right is right," regardless of other considerations. The average Filipino takes the law from the concrete and personal angle. He has a shame culture and this factor greatly affects his behavior. A Filipino feels that saving his honor is more important than the truth. The Westerner's passion for the truth no matter who is hurt is illustrated in exposing the misdeeds of the departed. But this is not the case for the Filipino. Any superior or official's misdeeds are buried with him; his memory is honored for he has gone.

Take the case of the concept of justice. Justice for the Filipino is not something abstract. Being just is something concrete, visible; someone from whom you can elicit sympathy or pity. Justice is the judge, the officer, the superior. The ethics of justice for the Filipino is based on the value of harmony. Justice for Filipinos is not individualistic but communitarian. The Filipino's concept of justice is "inner self-worth," not necessarily equality to all.

Negotiating with Filipinos requires a deep sense of respect for elders and for authority. It should be done with care and diplomacy in order not to hurt the "inner self-worth" of the Filipinos.

The relationship of the negotiators should be a human relationship and possibly in a family atmosphere. Both negotiators should work together for the good of one another without any selfish motive of trying to outdo one another.

### **Steps in Filipino Negotiation**

Intensive preparation for negotiation is essential since this is viewed as following an orderly logical psychological process.

Step One: "Magtapatan ng Loob" or be sure to prepare truthful facts. Both negotiating parties should tell truthfully what they think and feel.

Step Two: "Magkagaangan ng loob" or develop a trusting relationship and atmosphere. Filipinos are persons who go along with persuasion. For example just by setting the negotiation on his or your birthday can be a propitious occasion for negotiation with a Filipino. A birthday is a venerable occasion in the Philippines. A Filipino is supposed to greet even his enemy on his birthday.

Step Three: "Makuha ang loob ng bawat isa" or harmonize your objectives and intentions with his objectives and intentions. Negotiating with Filipinos must be a win-win situation; an attempt to grant the greatest satisfaction to both parties within their established value range. It assumes an established range of values that are alternatives to both parties.

Fourth Stage: "Magkapanatagan ng loob" or setting the terms of agreement and concentrating on what they are supposed to do. The essence of a good negotiation is making the best possible deal for both negotiating parties without creating long-running problems or injury to both of them. The negotiation must aim for a mutually beneficial deal. Each negotiating party must put himself in

the other person's shoes. The emphasis must be on the fact that both parties involved are satisfied.

It is in the atmosphere of peace of mind that both parties can analyze issues and established common terms. The emotional climate must be conciliatory, emphatic and directed toward problem-solving. The attitudes and behavior of the negotiators must be trusting, supportive, relaxed, helpful, reasonable and creative. It is in this kind of atmosphere that a Filipino becomes reasonable, condescending and noble.

Fifth Stage: "Puspasang loob na tinutupad ang pinag-usapan" or both parties wholeheartedly fulfill their obligations and live up to the duties and responsibilities of their agreement.

Negotiated accords allow the negotiating parties to be both stable in their own areas and flexible in details.

Negotiating with Filipinos demand a holistic approach. One should be logical and sensitive to emotions at the same time.

## **9. DO'S AND DON'TS WITH FILIPINOS**

Here are some general statements intended to help Masters and officers sailing with Filipino seamen:

### **1. Do understand the Filipino's body language:**

*The Filipino frequently nods in the middle of a conversation, which simply means, "I understand what you are saying," but it does not mean "yes."*

*The eyebrows are raised in recognition, and to answer "yes."*

*Establishing eye contact is a recognition signal. A smile to go with it becomes a friendly "hello" without words.*

*The lips are used to point.*

*"Sst-Sst" is used to get attention.*

*Clucking (like giggling) is used to show sympathy.*

*The common signal for OK where the thumb and index finger form a circle means for Filipinos money. The new sign for OK is the thumb-up sign.*

*Using one's forefinger or index finger upward to call a Filipino is considered degrading and only used for animals. A downward gesture of the hand should be used without making the arch too wide since this will appear too dominating.*

*Staring is rude and aggressive. The better part of valor when confronted by a glaring tough looking character is to look briefly and then cast one's gaze away.*

*Arms akimbo is considered arrogant, challenging, an-*



*gry. It is not a posture that will win and influence Filipinos, unless you are a policeman about to issue a traffic ticket.*

*It is insulting to beckon someone by crooking your finger. Filipinos will point out a direction by shifting their eyes towards the direction indicated.*

*A light touch on the elbow is permissible when calling someone's attention.*

*Two males holding hands or with arms over each other's shoulders are the accepted norm, free of any overtones of homosexuality.*

*Physical contact with opposite sex in public is not on. Ladies greet each other with a kiss on the cheek, but male and female keep respectfully apart. Some women may shake hands with a man, but they have to initiate such gesture.*

*A limp handshake is socially acceptable.*

*A woman and a man will refrain from being demonstrative in public.*

*The average Filipino requires less privacy than the average Westerner. He tends to require less personal space as well. Filipinos stand close to one another when walking and talking, - and do not find body contact in crowds offensive.*

*Filipinos usually don't queue or line up.*

## **2. Do understand the Filipino's physical and verbal mannerisms:**

*Officers, elders and superiors are addressed by "sir" or "ma'am", or by their title or profession.*

*When asking a question, an apology is offered first (I'm sorry to bother you, but...)*

*When inviting a Filipino, do invite him at least three times. Filipinos are taught that it is proper to refuse the first time or two. To them, insistence is a clear sign that the offer or invitation is a sincere one.*

*Flowers are associated with death. Give food to a sick Filipino, but not flowers.*

*"Pasalubong" is a gift given as a souvenir after a trip. A superior bringing "pasalubong" when returning from a trip shows to his people that he thought of them during his absence.*

*Consistency is a prime requisite for a smooth relationship for Filipinos.*

*The use of a third party or intermediary is a very acceptable norm for asking and for telling. This helps avoid a direct confrontation situation, which may lead*

*to embarrassment.*

## **3. Do understand what annoy Filipinos:**

*Someone who strongly disagrees with his opinion in a discussion. You can disagree with him but not strongly.*

*A person who looks down on him.*

*Ignorance that foreigners show about his native land.*

*Minute attention to small details.*

*A person who treats him like a servant.*

*Criticism from someone who is not his superior.*

*Someone with less experience telling him how to do his job.*

*Inconsideration for his feelings.*

*Race prejudice.*

*Body odor.*

*A foreigner who says "that is the way we do it back home."*

*Being told to hurry up.*

*An air of superiority in a person.*

*A blunt and overly frank person.*

*Rich people who refuse to talk to people of lower social status.*

*Foreigners who write about his native land without knowing too much about it.*

*People who preach democracy but do not practice it.*

*People who demand a yes or no answer.*

*People who take credit for what is accomplished in joint efforts.*



## **4. Do understand the Filipino concept of property.**

*The Filipino concept of property is threefold:*

*1) What is mine is mine. The Filipinos have inherited from the Western world the concept of private ownership such as having land titles and documents for things they own.*

*2) What is yours is mine. The kapitbahay or neighborliness value requires a Filipino to share some of his properties with his neighbor; vice-versa, this value gives him right to some properties of his neighbors. In the name of neighborliness, a neighbor can borrow another's car or go and watch TV in another's house.*

*3) What is public property is mine. The Filipino value of sakop makes public and private properties assume a communal dimension. In the Philippines public property belongs to no one. Rather the user of public property appears to regard it as his own personal property.*

*The Filipino uses public space while driving as he would*



while walking - taking on rights to it as he moves. He considers that particular spot on which he stands or which he moves, his personal property and, therefore, utilizes it as long as necessary in any way he wants.

The Filipino when elected or appointed to office, tend to use his office, vehicle, telephone, for his private and personal use.

The sharing of goods in the sakop dimension might actually be "borrowing." The Filipinos, for example, who have a strong sense of sakop property, consider things "borrowed" what Westerners consider "stealing."

**5. Do call a Filipino by his name.** A Filipino subordinate called by his officer by his name feels very elated because he is proud to know that his superior knows him personally.

**6. Always offer a Filipino** coffee, tea or something when he visits you. This is a sign that he is wel-

come to your office.

**7. It would always be proper to say** "Quiet please" or "kindly tone down" rather than saying "Shut up."

**8. Do give a Filipino a way out** of a situation so he can save his face and not get embarrassed. Such embarrassment causes "hiya" which is painful for a Filipino to accept.

**9. Don't lend money** except in very exceptional cases. Repayment may be a problem. To avoid misunderstanding as to whether it is really borrowing or not, make a clear distinction between the three concepts of property of the Filipino. In some cases borrowing money may just be a symbolic way of asking for money.

**10. Don't expect punctuality** or promptness in terms of time if you have not clarified whether it is linear or cyclical time that applies to the situation.

## CELEBRATING THE "DAY OF THE SEAFARER"

"Faces of the Sea" was the theme for this year's Day of the Seafarer celebrated on June 25<sup>th</sup>. "As the human face of the love of God, He makes us messengers of His Joy". These words were sent during the XXII AOS World Congress in Gdynia in 2007 to the maritime world.

How can we help to make the faces of the sea happy ones? There are many elements of joy constituting the event as a pleasant one.

On Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> of June during the Mass celebrated at 4 p.m. in our Gdynia Maritime Church we announced the Day of the Seafarer coming on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup>. After the Mass the seafarers played basketball in the gym. The match was recorded and the seafarers got the CD copies on the Day of the Seafarer.

On June 25<sup>th</sup> in the morning Fr. Edward Pracz during the opening of the Gdańsk Bulk Terminal prayed for the seafarers reminding all the present official it was the Day of the Seafarer.

How can you make the face happy?

Sometimes a small gift is enough. The AOS in Gdynia gave the seafarers in the AOS Centre club and on boards of the ships a bar of chocolate with the inscription of the Day of the Seafarer June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

Such a small gesture made the seafarers very happy indeed. On board the ship "Sophie Shulte" we said a prayer for all the seafarers all over the world. Let us continue this tradition in the spirit of solidarity with them.



Fr. Edward Pracz, AOS Gdynia, Poland

## THE RELEASE OF CAPTAIN SERGEY MASLENNIKOV

In August 2012, I was informed through Douglas Stevenson (Center for Seafarers' Rights) and Father Olexander Smerechynskyy of the Apostleship of the Sea of Odessa, about the case of Captain Sergey Maslennikov, a native of the Ukraine, who was imprisoned in the Soto del Real prison (Leon) in Spain and carrying out a nine-year sentence for the presumed crime of drug trafficking about which he always proclaimed his innocence.

His health, moreover, was very precarious due to throat cancer that required surgery which caused him problems swallowing.

In October 2003, his vessel, the tugboat Zudar Sexto, which was used as a rescue boat for the fishing fleet operating in the Cabo Verde zone, was ordered to aid a boat in danger, and soon after the boat and crew were arrested, accused of drug trafficking. The crew was imprisoned for eight months and subsequently extradited to Spain. In 2005, they were released on the condition they would not leave the country. Finally, the crew left Spain because they did not have the means to survive. Captain Maslennikov, however, decided to stay in Spain to prove his innocence and that of his crew. In 2009, a new investigation was opened and the National High Court condemned the captain sentencing him to nine years and a day in prison.

To add to Sergey Maslennikov's sorrow, during that time his son died and he could not even attend the funeral.



The sentence was later confirmed by the Supreme Court and, from the legal standpoint, there was nothing more that could be done.

We contacted the prison chaplain and the lawyer who was taking care of the case. In this way we were able to get information about his personal situation and, at the same time, let him know of our interest and moral support.

We were sure that the legal paths were exhausted and so we thought that the only thing we could do was collect written texts and signatures on the international level asking for the prisoner's release on humanitarian grounds. We began the action to request Captain Maslennikov's release and gathered written texts from the New York Center for Seafarers' Rights, the International Christian Maritime Association, Seafarers' Rights International and the ICMA centers of Odessa, as well as from port and labor union authorities of that port. Moreover, during the World Congress of the Apostleship of the Sea in the Vatican in November 2012, 150 signatures were gathered for the same purpose. All of these written texts were sent to the National High Court on December 27, 2012.

During the following months there was no news, in part owing to the change in the defense lawyer. However, in July we were informed that the National High Court had decided to grant the captain conditional freedom although his repatriation would be delayed because of a second throat operation. Finally, on August 6<sup>th</sup>, Captain Sergey Maslennikov reached Odessa putting an end to a long nightmare.

A few days ago I had a moving experience. Captain Maslennikov, together with his wife, met with Captain Alexander Sorokin of the Mission to Seafarers and Father Olexander Smerechynskyy and Rostylav Inzhestoykov of the Apostleship of the Sea to express his gratitude for all the support

he received. He phoned me in Barcelona and in correct Spanish thanked me for the actions we had taken and told me that he was quite well physically and very happy to be home again.

I do not know to what point the written words and signatures gathered and sent to the National High Court helped in Captain Maslennikov's release, but in this regard there is no doubt that the voice of solidarity from the international maritime world was sent.

This is another case confirming that the situation of seafarers accused of crimes abroad is very precarious, especially that of the captains who have to face the presumption of guilt which is often difficult to refute. Also, a sense of vulnerability is created when one finds oneself in a foreign country, far from one's family and suffers from problems of understanding because of the language and the slowness of the legal processes.

We are very happy that Captain Maslennikov is finally home again, and we hope that he can beat his illness completely. He continues to insist on his desire to defend his innocence for a crime he never committed.

We take this occasion to make an appeal to the international community so that the seafarers involved in presumed crimes in foreign countries will have greater protection and be guaranteed at all times the essential contact with their families.

Barcelona, September 2013

Dean Ricardo Rodriguez-Martos  
Diocesan Delegate of the Apostleship of the Sea in Barcelona

## A LETTER FROM KAREN PARSON

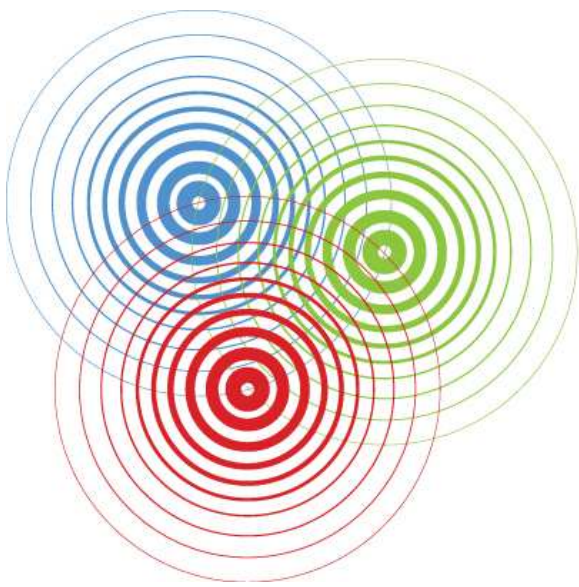
I had a wonderful morning! In 1991 a Filipino deck officer, Jimmy Custodio, was killed aboard his bulk carrier while the ship was in Cleveland, Ohio. I was still in the Port of Detroit, Michigan at the time. I was notified by the ship agent that the ship was heading my way and they would need grief counseling. When they arrived in Detroit, I went on board and spent much time listening and consoling the officers and crew. Jimmy was only 31 years old, married and had three small children. One of the officers gave me Jimmy's home address so I wrote his family a letter of condolence. His wife, Laarni, wrote me back. We began corresponding. I helped her through her grief and the hard times of raising her family alone.

Eventually the children grew up, finished college and began to work. Laarni also got her degree in nursing and emigrated to the United States, first living in California and recently moving to San Antonio, Texas. Yesterday evening I received a call from Laarni saying she was in Galveston for a brief vacation with some friends. This morning I drove to the place they were staying and, after 22 years of corresponding with her, I finally met my friend Laarni. It was a very emotional but fun visit. God is good. What a blessing He has given both of us.

Karen







# **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:**

## **IMO'S CONTRIBUTION BEYOND RIO+20**

In his World Maritime Day message, IMO Secretary-General Koji Sekimizu said that maritime transport was central to sustainable development, as the world's only really reliable, global, cost-effective and energy-efficient mass transportation method for energy, materials, foods and industrial products.

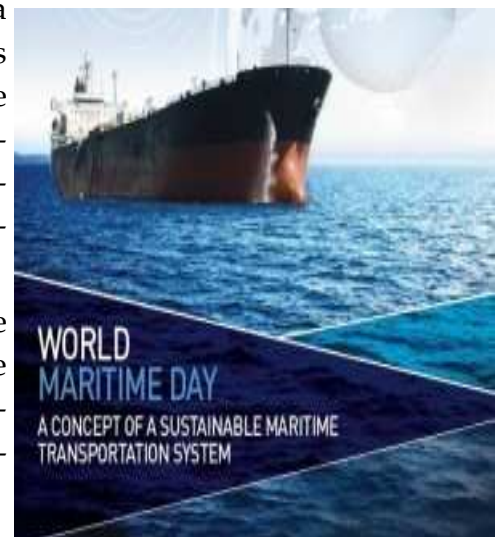
"The maritime transportation system itself must, therefore, ensure that its development is also sustainable," Mr. Sekimizu said, adding that this blanket term included not just the operation of ships, but all the activities that are vital to support shipping, such as the operation of maritime traffic management systems and global communication systems, ports and multi-modal connections are all components of this multi-faceted sector.

"Shipbuilding and classification, ship registry and administration, ship finance, ship repairing, ship recycling, the education and training of seafarers, are all part of the system - as, indeed, are search and rescue services, maritime security agencies, coast guards and maritime law enforcement agencies and many others, too. They all have a part to play in defining and achieving a sustainable Maritime Transportation System," Mr. Sekimizu said.

"Because the Maritime Transportation System is so essential to the continued development and future growth of the world economy, IMO will continue to take the lead in supporting it with the appropriate global standards and by helping to promote, through technical co-operation, the necessary national maritime transportation policies and institutional frameworks for a sustainable Maritime Transportation System," Mr. Sekimizu said.

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon also issued a message for World Maritime Day, in which he noted that this year's World Maritime Day fell at an important time, as the United Nations was leading the final stretch of its global campaign to address human suffering through the Millennium Development Goals while shaping a vision for the post-2015 period.

"In this effort, we value maritime transport as a cost-effective and energy-efficient link in the global supply chain. Let us use this occasion to reaffirm our commitment to optimize the management of maritime transport to support sustainable development," Mr. Ban said.



# The God of seafarers

**Reflections of the National Director  
of the Apostleship of the Sea-France**



Port 2000 at Le Havre is a 4 km long container terminal. There are immense storage areas with trucks coming and going constantly. There are cranes distributed all along the wharf for handling the containers on the ships. The ships are enormous: the largest ones are nearly 400 m and transport the equivalent of 9,000 large trucks.

When I show up to go aboard to meet the twenty or so very busy seafarers, I am before a great scrap metal wall with a long, steep gangway to climb.

I tell myself: there are men on board (perhaps a woman). They are mainly Filipinos, Indians, Indonesians, Chinese, Russians, Ukrainians, Croatians, Montenegrins, Romanians... They are the migrants of globalized labor. In a short time they visit the world. I find the congeniality of the Filipinos or the Indonesians among whom the length of the contract does not seem to shake their morale. We hear the anger of the second Polish captain submerged with work at the port of call, which limits his time for rest; or the disappointment of the Indian commander who told me that he was not respected by his company. I hear about their sorrows and hardships, the family they are missing, the stressing work; they get some joys: becoming a father, a son or daughter's success in school... I bring all of this into my prayers.

I also tell myself: this humanity, which is so different by origin, culture, language and religion, is loved by God. This humanity is his family in becoming one of us, flesh of our flesh, through the incarnation in Jesus of Nazareth. Also, by climbing up the gangway to meet the seafarers, I am going into a place that He inhabits. I am going to meet up with Him through the faces of these seafarers in front of me: they become faces of brothers and they are so many faces of Christ.

I am a witness to the "winks" of the Spirit. The young Chinese second captain shares his human convictions with me while he copies the Sunday prayers and readings for the Filipino seafarers in his crew that he speaks about so well. The very young Indian lieutenant, after exchanging ideas about his country and his life, asks me to bless him. The Korean officer, a Christian, to whom I had given a Bible, thanks me three months later for all the benefit he got from reading it. The Chinese engineer, at the time when phone cards are sold, asks me for a Bible and makes the sign of the cross to show that he is a Christian. I will never forget when the crew of Filipinos and Romanians changed over on a container ship and gave each other a very fraternal hug. I am thinking of the French commander, who is not a Christian, for whom sailing with the Filipinos was a spiritual enrichment.

In the God of the seafarers I see the figure of Abraham, the father of peoples and believers, who gathered up our God's promise of life and love: in a morning of visits, I visit humanity which is diverse but one! I also see the figure of Elias, the seeker of meaning, who was able to recognize God's passage in the light breeze. I am always struck when I see how the seafarers appreciate one another beyond the differences of cultures, religions or origins. I recognize Moses in this, the spokesman of his brethren, for whom God is the breath of life and freedom for Man. I also hear the seafarers' re-criminations, cries and sufferings and I am always astounded by the confidence they show towards one who listens to them and meets them gratuitously.

Guy Pasquier, June 11, 2013

## MOVING FORWARD, STRENGTHENING ICMA

### The General Secretary of the International Christian Maritime Association completes his term.

*Rev. Hennie la Grange left ICMA at the end of July 2013 after being in post since July 1st 2007.*

The Strategic Review is moving ICMA forward in leaps and bounds. The Association has now arrived on the eve of a new era that promises to strengthen ICMA by transforming the secretariat and promoting the work of its members. These challenges call for new skills and fresh commitment. The last decade's implementation of the GRUBB Report, ICMA's previous review, and the ever changing environment of our ministries have led ICMA to branch out and break new ground.

I am gratified by the time I spent with ICMA. Moving across continents to take up this role has been worth every sacrifice.

I have been blessed with a world of new friends and family in faith. I have met remarkable people. I have discovered treasures in Christ's church that I had never imagined. I have seen growing unity. Together we have celebrated difference. We have shared moments of great achievement while battling the complexities of life and work. We have seen excellence and failure, and together we have overcome. We have experienced firsthand the love of Our Father at work in this unique ecumenical community. Of course ecumenical communities need nurturing, and tolerance remains key. God's Spirit, I pray, will help you to guard over this precious chunk of his kingdom.



I have the utmost respect for port chaplains who serve God and care passionately for his people of the sea. I thank God for you. Your labors, performed against impossible odds, are an inspiration. May God bless you with fulfillment, as that is the reward, I know, you desire most.

I hope that I have been able to contribute, just a little, to Christian unity, to the dignity of port chaplains and to the well-being of seafarers, fishers and their families.

I hope that I may have instilled in the industry and among our partners in the welfare sector, a sense of faith's value in inspiring selfless commitment to care.

I hope that ICMA, its members and its chaplains, are a little more valued as a resource that can be relied upon even to swim that extra mile, when walking on the water is not an option.

Thank you all for having me! Thank you for your friendship and hospitality. I have not always been able to deliver what was expected or required, but you loved me all the same, as Christians do.

May God bless you all.

Hennie la Grange

**Rev. LaGrange will continue to remain involved in the maritime ministry having been appointed Chaplain of the Queen Victoria Seamen's Rest (QVSR). At the same time he has joined the MPHRP (Maritime Piracy Humanitarian Response Programme) with the task of implementing the MPHRP goals and objectives in areas of the world, currently not covered by the regional MPHRP programs.**

**Rev. LaGrange also acts as liaison with IMB (International Maritime Bureau) and ISWAN (International Seafarers Welfare and Assistance Network).**