



Catholic Maritime News

July 2008

Volume I

Number I

Reflections of Most Reverend J. Kevin Boland, Bishop Promoter, Apostleship of the Sea

I received a letter from Cardinal Francis George from Chicago appointing me as the Bishop Promoter of the Apostleship of the Sea in the United States. This appointment was effective February 28, 2008. I am flattered with this unexpected recognition and I will certainly do my best to support, encourage and endorse the work of the maritime apostolate. In the generic sense, we are dealing with People of the Sea. Our late Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, issued an apostolic letter entitled *Stella Maris* which dealt exclusively with the maritime apostolate. Within the context of that letter, People of the Sea include seafarers and maritime personnel, spouses and children of seafarers, pensioners and those who work regularly in the maritime apostolate. Besides these there is the significant group which we call chaplains who strive to see that the People of the Sea are provided abundantly with whatever is required to lead holy lives. As the apostolic letter points out, the responsibility of the Bishop Promoter is to foster the work of the maritime apostolate.

The Diocese of Savannah has two significant ports within its confines. The Savannah Port is considered the fourth largest port for container traffic in the United States. The other port is situated in Brunswick, Georgia and is the receiving distribution point for thousands of foreign-made automobiles. Both of these ports are significant economic engines for the growth of South Georgia and many points beyond.

In October of 2007, I led a pilgrimage to the Holy Land of approximately 45 people. It was a great experience. One of the highlights was the Sea of Galilee. We boarded a boat and moved out into the middle of the lake and the crew cut the engines. We read scripture passages dealing with Jesus and his apostles and the events that surrounded this holy place. This was probably the most authentic moment of the trip because the Sea of Galilee has not changed that much in the 2000 years since Jesus walked the shores and invited his apostles to come and follow him. And so they did! One could say the maritime apostolate had its beginnings at the Sea of Galilee.

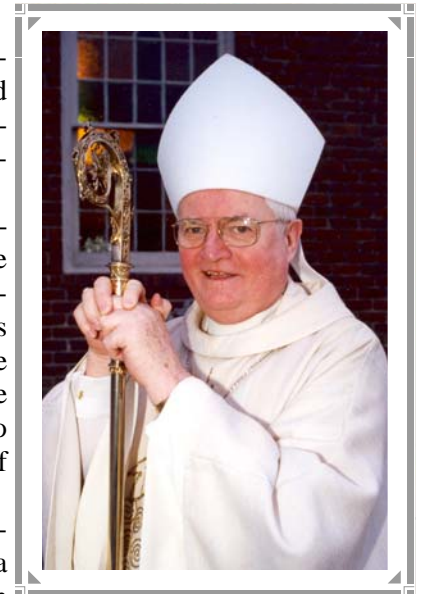
My appointment reminded me of another historical happening. On the front entrance of the City Hall, which is situated in the midst of historic Savannah, is a bronze plaque commemorating the date that the S.S. Savannah sailed from Savannah harbor to Liverpool, England. It was the first occasion that a steamship, in this case together with sails, crossed the Atlantic Ocean. The date on the plaque is 22nd day of May 1819. This led President Roosevelt to establish a National Day of Prayer for all of those involved with the sea and the maritime industry. The selected day was May 22nd.

As Bishop Promoter of this apostolate I will have a special interest in advocating and encouraging ministry to all seafarers because of how the maritime industry has developed. The times spent in ports are relatively short. Hence providing them with good pastoral ministry is that much more challenging.

The other aspect of my ministry will be to support and endorse the cruise ship priest program. Many of the cruise lines are officially affiliated with the Apostleship of the Sea and in return the priests who serve on cruises will have the stamp of approval from their respective dioceses and religious communities.

Recently I had the opportunity of a brief meeting with Sister Myrna Tordillo. As the National Director she does marvelous work on behalf of the apostolate. I look forward to meeting the officers and board members of the AOS-USA so that together we may promote that segment of the Church's ministry which literally touches thousands of people's lives day after day and week after week. God's blessings.

July 2, 2008



Most Reverend Kevin J. Boland

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Secretariat of Cultural Diversity in the Church
Pastoral Care of Migrants, Refugees & Travelers / Apostleship of the Sea National Office

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Catholic Maritime News
Is published 3 times a year

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The Apostleship of the Sea of the United States of America (AOSUSA) is a national membership organization of chaplains and pastoral teams, cruise ship priests, mariners, student mariners, associate and affiliate members.

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During the AOSUSA annual conference on April 1-4, 2008, officers and administrative board members were elected.

AOSUSA Officers and Board Members 2007-2009

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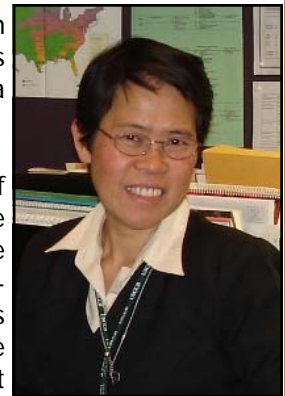
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FROM THE NATIONAL DIRECTOR

Greetings from the Apostleship of the Sea national office.

After six months hiatus in the publication of the Catholic Maritime News (CMN), we are resuming this publication for our readers. Our apologies for this interruption and we assure you that this publication will be done in a timely manner in the future.



Sr. Myrna Tordillo

In the January 2008 issue of Catholic Maritime News, we informed our readers that we were looking to reduce publication and gave other proposals to stretch the publication (see Vol. 66, No.1). We are most grateful to those who took the time and responded by sending back their subscription forms and those who emailed or wrote us informing their preferences in receiving the CMN. Some preferred to receive hard copies of the CMN and there were those who indicated that they would be happy to receive electronically. Based on the responses we received, we will print a limited number of hard copies and others who may want can download electronically the PDF file. There will be one more issue for 2008 besides this publication, and these will be available electronically in PDF format at: <http://www.aos-usa.org/maritimeneews.php>. Back issues of the CMN are retained in the web page which can be found in the website of the Migration and Refugee Services, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' web portal.

Very soon, issues of the Catholic Maritime News will also be available at the website of the Secretariat of Cultural Diversity in the Church which is in the process of being launched. The CMN can be viewed at <http://www.usccb.org/pcmrt/resources.shtml>

In this issue, you will find that we retained many of the features of the Catholic Maritime News that our readers appreciated in the past. Our special feature for this issue is a message from our AOS Bishop Promoter, Most Reverend J. Kevin Boland. Besides the columns of the AOS National Director and the President of the AOSUSA, there will be a Chaplain's

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Where Has All the Mercy Gone?

Fr. Oubre Sinclair

Where has all the mercy gone?

Long time passing

Where has all the mercy gone?

Long time ago

Where has all the mercy gone?

Rights have crushed it, all the time

When will they ever learn?

When will they ever learn?

(Sung to the tune of Where have all the Flowers Gone,
with apologies to Pete Seeger)

As people liberate themselves from the bonds of religious morality, and patriarchal, hierarchical religious institutions, they celebrate their new found individualism, self-absorbed, narcissistic consumers, and unbounded personal freedom. A growing social tendency is to punish anyone who disrupts or negatively affects people's lives to the fullest extent of the law, and even beyond the law.

But with the liberation from morality and religion comes the death of mercy, which is ingrained in those very same moral codes and religions. Specifically for Christianity, one can never become self righteous if he or she is trying to live out the discipleship of Christ. Just when one begins to think they are special, the words from the *Our Father* begin to whisper in our soul: "...and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us." Our heart reminds us of the *Golden Rule*: "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets." (Mt. 7:12) And our memory of Peter's question to Jesus and his response calls us to show mercy: "Then Peter approaching asked him, "Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive him? As many as seven times?" Jesus answered, "I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times."

I share these thoughts with you today as I grow more and more disturbed with the ever growing attempt to criminalize maritime accidents. Whether it was the *Prestige*, where the same Spanish government that refused to give sanctuary to a ship in distress, then arrested the captain of the vessel once she broke up and spilled her crude oil cargo on the Spanish coast. The

Cosco Buson incident has caused the San Francisco pilot to be indicted for violation of the migratory bird act and other environmental laws that were not passed as maritime laws. Finally, the anchored tanker *Hebei Spirit* was struck when a crane barge broke free from the tug that was towing it. The tanker was in a designated anchorage, yet Master Jasprit Chawla and chief officer Syam Chetan were arrested



Fr. Oubre Sinclair

by Korean officials. On June 23, the Korean court found the officers innocent of criminal actions, but then by July 1, Korean prosecutors gave notice that they would seek a new trial.

In these and many other cases, seafarers are finding themselves being criminally prosecuted in maritime accidents that did not end in the loss of any human lives. However, these accidents did end in the inconvenience of individual lives. As one woman lamented after the *Cosco Buson* incident, since the beaches would be closed during cleanup, she would not have any place to take her dog for a walk.

So, we are going to throw men and women into jail because people can't walk their dog on the beach. Somewhere along the way, mercy has been lost. In addition, the real connection that exists between those who consume and those who leave their homes and families to deliver the goods that are consumed is torn apart.

As we continue down this secular road, which promises so much freedom, and so many rights, just keep in mind that everything is going to be great. Oh, unless you make a mistake. Then there is no more mercy because you have committed the ultimate crime of this new religion. You have hindered someone's freedom. You have bothered someone's life.

SAVANNAH BISHOP APPOINTED HEAD OF THE APOSTLESHIP OF THE SEA

WASHINGTON— Bishop J. Kevin Boland of the Diocese of Savannah, Georgia, has been appointed National Bishop Promoter of the Apostleship of the Sea (AOS) by Cardinal Francis George, president of United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). As Bishop Promoter, Bishop Boland is responsible for fostering the work of the maritime apostolate among the U.S. bishops and overseeing the work of the AOS national director. The appointment was effective February 28.

Bishop Boland served on the USCCB Pastoral Practices Committee, as chairman of the USCCB Committee on Marriage and Family Life from 2001-2003, and remains a committee consultant. From 2002 – 2005 he was a member of the USCCB Budget and Finance Committee. In 2006, he became a member of the Bishops' Committee for the Protection of Children and Young People and was elected to the Board of Catholic Relief Services. In January 2008, Bishop Boland became a member of the Subcommittee on the Pastoral Care of Migrants, Refugees and Travelers.

The Diocese of Savannah with more than 73 thousand Catholics, has an active Apostleship of the Sea Ministry. The Port of Savannah is among the top 20 ports in the country.

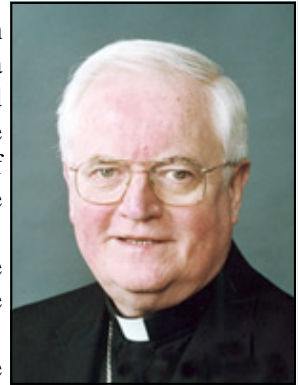
The Apostleship of the Sea is the work of the Catholic Church in the maritime world. It started in Glasgow, Scotland in 1920, and has since extended its mission in many countries. The international AOS is based in the Vatican under the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People. The AOS reaches out to mariners, fishermen, their families and all who work and travel on the waterways of the world.

Bishop Boland will oversee the pastoral activities of about 81 AOS chaplains and their pastoral teams, active in 61 U.S. ports in 49 dioceses. The AOS offers spiritual and material assistance to seafarers, who are often away from home and unable to participate in regular parish life. He will also guide the Cruise Ship Priest Program, administered by Apostleship of the Sea USA (AOSUSA), a national membership organization of chaplains, deacons and laity to ensure that priests in good standing serve on cruise ships. There are about 645 cruise ship priest members.

Cardinal Renato Raffaele Martino, President of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, praised the appointment.

“Bishop Boland’s experience with the maritime ministry will be most useful in helping him to carry out successfully his mandate,” Cardinal Martino said, and pledged the support of the Pontifical Council.

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Bishop J. Kevin Boland

Please Pray for:

The repose of the souls of:

- Paul Callais, 39, son of Gloria Callais of Abdon Callais Offshore, LLC. Paul was a Gonzales banker who reportedly fell from a yacht on June 25th while vacationing.
- Msgr. Patrick Gallagher, 67, Chaplain to the Port of Los Angeles and AOS Director of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. He died on April 4, 2008 after a brief illness.
- Rev. James Keating, 83, AOS Chaplain of the Archdiocese of Chicago and pastor emeritus of St. Francis de Sales on Chicago’s southeast side. Fr. Jim died on February 10 of renal failure.
- Rev. Joseph Pham Duc Trinh, AOS Chaplain of the Port of Palacios, TX who died last March. Fr. Trinh who ministered to fishermen in the area, was also responsible for the Vietnamese ministry in the Diocese of Victoria, TX.

“May the souls of the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace.”

In the next CMN issue, we will run full length articles of our AOS chaplains who preceded us this year.

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CATHOLIC MARITIME MINISTRY IS KEY ON PRINCE OF WALES ISLAND, ALASKA

Many people picture Alaska as a land of tundra, polar bears, and igloos, but in Southeast Alaska - the panhandle that hugs the western coast of British Columbia - the sea plays a major role. On Prince of Wales Island, the third largest island in the United States, fishing is a major part of life - an industry, past-time, and tourist attraction. It only makes sense, then, that ministry to those who earn their living by the sea is a vital part of the pastoral service of Father Perry Kenaston, pastor of St. John by the Sea Catholic Church in the village of Klawock. This part of his ministry is shared by his colleagues, the pastors of the other Christian churches on the island.

The pastors understand the value of ministry to their seafaring parishioners. One typical- and always popular - response is the traditional Blessing of the fleet, held annually over the Memorial Day weekend. Held at the city dock of the village of Craig, the Memorial for those Lost at Sea and Blessing of the Fleet brought in residents from across Prince of Wales Island. Brigadier General Craig Christiansen, Director of the Alaska Army National Guard for the Alaska Department of Military and Veterans Affairs of Alaska, was a special guest at this ecumenical service. The service drew the participation of various members of the community: from local veterans to Boy Scouts and the Heenya Kwaan Native Dancers, as well as the officers of the Salvation Army and pastors of the Presbyterian Church and the Baptist Church.

Fr. Perry Kenaston played a key role, blessing the fishing ships that came by and praying that God would shield each vessel and "always guide and protect her through calm and stormy seas." The Blessing of the Fleet ceremony and his many dealings with the fishermen of Prince of Wales Island are some aspects that Fr. Perry particularly enjoys in his ministry. He is always available to bless the fishing boats of his parishioners or of people he meets on the dock and they welcome his blessing and prayers for their safety and an abundant harvest of the sea. Parishioners of St. John by the Sea Catholic Church include commercial fishermen, natives who hunt and fish as part of their subsistence living, and owners of lodges and fishing charter companies.

"During the three years that I have been assigned to Prince of Wales Island, I have found that the experience [of the maritime ministry and culture] have been very rewarding to me," Fr. Perry said. "Not only do we visit the different communities on the island to celebrate Mass and develop community, but we also have different activities on the island," such as the Blessing of the Fleet.

Ministry on this large island with communities scattered throughout this temperate rainforest has always been challenging. The Catholic community on Prince of Wales was considered a part of the mission area of the Diocese of Juneau until 1983, when Juneau Bishop Michael Kenny assigned Father Michael Nash as the first fulltime pastoral presence. Father Nash and Sister Nadine Grogan served on the island until August 1987, when the team of Father James Blaney and Sister Laetitia Lariviere arrived.

The island's Catholic community gathered at the Presbyterian church in Craig until, under Fr. Blaney's pastorate, the parish acquired land in Klawock. Parishioners themselves designed and built St. John's Church, which Bishop Kenney dedicated and blessed in April, 1992.

Along with the challenges of living on an isolated, rainy island, parishioners of St. John's have faced frequent changes in leadership. In 1999, Father Edward Matthews became the pastor, followed quickly in 2000 by the pastoral team of Father Jean-Paulin Engbanda-Lockulu and Sister Zita Simon. Sister Zita remained as the only pastoral presence when Fr. Jean-Paulin took on a new assignment in 2003. Sister Zita left to take on other diocesan responsibilities, and Father Perry took on the pastorate on his own in August, 2004. He was joined in January, 2006, by Sister Barbara Kelley.

Through the years, St. John's Parish has thrived, despite the logistical challenges of travel and often uncooperative weather. A faithful community of Catholics gathers every Sunday morning at the humble but well-built church in Klawock. But St. John's Parish also includes Catholics from diverse communities across the island. Mass is celebrated every Saturday morning in a private home in the northern village of Naukati for a faithful and growing community. Other parishioners gather on Sunday afternoons in a small church donated to the parish. Most recently, Fr. Perry has expanded his outreach to include Catholics in the communities of Whale Pass and Kasaan, as well as in Meyers Chuck, a town on a neighboring island.

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Blessing the Boats

Traditionally, St. Johns by the Sea Catholic Church has officiated the "Blessing of the Fleet". This year Father Perry Kenaston blessed the seven boats on Memorial Day, May 26th at 7 p.m. at Craig, Alaska. F/V Seafarer's first year Captain, Jason Smith, opted to participate and then depart for Sitka at 9 p.m.

By midnight F/V Seafarer hit wrong tides and were being battered broadside. The crew dropped the power skiff from the back deck to tow it behind. The seas didn't let up and waves reached thirty feet every third wave. The GPS quit working. Jason, a seasoned fisherman of many years knows southeast waters so he used landmarks to navigate. Seafarer finally reached inside waters by 2 p.m. The rest of the trip to Sitka was good including fair tides at Sergius Narrows arriving about 9 am Tuesday.

The next day F/V Seafarer was hauled out for appointments with marine surveyor and shipwright. As the starboard hull was being checked one plank was tapped and sprung open on impact.

Jason and his crew knew they had received a miraculous reprieve, protected from disaster at sea. Thank you!!! Heavenly Father.

Submitted by the owner of F/V Seafarer., a parishioner of St. John by the Sea Catholic Church, Prince of Wales Island, Alaska

Alaska – deliberate pollution thwarted

The US Coast Guard issued a [press release](#) stating that one of its helicopters observed a fisherman underway in Southeast Alaska deliberately pumping oily bilge water overboard. The incident is under investigation. (4/24/08).



On April 1-4, 2008, the **Apostleship of the Sea USA (AOSUSA) Annual Conference** was held at the Maritime Institute of Technology in Linthicum, MD. Rev. Sinclair Oubre, JCL is president of AOSUSA and diocesan director of AOS, Beaumont, TX. The Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People was represented in the conference by Rev. Msgr. Novatus Rugambwa, Undersecretary. Rev. Allan Deck, SJ, Executive Director of the Secretariat on Cultural Diversity gave a reflection about cultural diversity. Speakers included Sean Connaughton, Maritime Administrator; Deacon Albert Dacanay, AOS Regional Coordinator for North America; and Sr. Ellen Dougherty, MRS who gave a session on human trafficking.



On April 3, the Apostleship of the Sea National office hosted a reception at the USCCB for the AOS USA Conference participants who came from the USA, Canada, the Caribbean and Ireland. Msgr. David Malloy, USCCB General Secretary welcomed the conference participants and said that the AOS ministry is an important pastoral outreach by the Catholic Church to the people of the sea and praised the work of the AOS chaplains and their pastoral associates.

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Disposable - The People of the Sea

As a mariner and a port chaplain, I am wearied by the attitudes of land people toward the people of the sea. This attitude can be summarized as, "We have to protect ourselves from them."

While I was in the planning stages of the new Port Arthur seafarer center, I was in discussions with different organizations about partnering. In the course of the negotiations, the partners raised concerns about having "drunken" sailors sharing the building with them. Would it give a bad impression to their customers? Would their female employees feel safe? Would those rowdy sailors make so much noise that they would not be able to conduct business?

Recent news events have confirmed the prevalence of this vigilance-attitude. In the February 25, 2008 issue of *America*, the editors regurgitate a claim by the environmental group Eco-Pros about reefs being destroyed by human activities. Among the biggest destroyers are "trawlers that drag huge steel chains and nets along the sea bottom scraping coral, underwater plants and animals into nets along with sought-after fish."

Ignoring the effects of coastal development, pesticides, fertilizers, and changes in water temperature, the editors focus only on those *fishermen*. They place the question in people's minds as to why we even need those people any more. However, since they know nothing about shrimping or other trawling practices, they don't know that to intentionally drag over a coral reef would rip up one's nets, and cause the fisherman to lose a lot of valuable gear. But this doesn't really matter, because what is really important is to protect ourselves from "those people of the sea."

On April 22, 2008, a PRNewswire-USNewswire reported that Capt. Joseph Cota was indicted by a federal grand jury for making false statements to the Coast Guard concerning his medications and medical conditions. Capt. Cota has also been charged with violating the Clean Water Act, and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. In addition, as a news report noted, he and the crew of the *Cosco Busan* have prevented many elite bay area residents from walking their dogs on the beach.

The cacophony from the California congressional delegation for new laws, chastisement of the Coast Guard, and the prosecution of everyone involved to the fullest extent of the law appears to be the response of a community that feels that it has been invaded. What is lost in all the noise is that the *M/V Cosco Busan* was in the San Francisco Bay area because the bay area people wanted what she had onboard, and craved all the consumer items that were in her containers.

The fact that the ILO/IMO has had to produce the *Guidelines on the Fair Treatment of Seafarers* speaks of how far we must go in demanding that the land-based communities respect seafarers. We must make them aware of how essential the work of the people of the sea is to the quality, and in some cases, the very survival of their lives.

The late Cardinal Stephan Hamao, of the Vatican office for the Apostleship of the Sea noted in his 2005 *Sea Sunday Message*:

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

The first steps in changing the public's prejudice toward mariners is challenging their efforts to scapegoat seafarers, and make them aware of how their very survival is built on the backs of the men or women who have traveled so far to bring them so much.

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Port Ministry

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

Peace be with you.

I wanted to write to share an experience I had on board a ship docked inside the Port of Baltimore today.

As often as I can, I remind the officers and crew that if it were not for men and women like them, we would not have much of what we have on land; the food we eat, clothes we wear and the vehicles we drive. I express as well that many of us on land now know that in more ways than one can imagine, they are in fact, heroes.

While sharing these same realities with the Captain of one particular ship this morning, he broke down and began sobbing, his body shaking. At first, I thought, "what did I say," to have him react this way, and in front of his crew? Did I somehow injure this man's spirit by reminding him of the months he spends away from his loved ones? Did I somehow instill a feeling of guilt? Then I noticed that the crew too were wiping the tears from their eyes.

Immediately I stood up and went over to the Captain to seek his forgiveness. Sitting down next to him, I placed my hand on his shoulder. "I am so sorry sir, I did not mean to hurt your feelings."

He began to explain that there were times over the years when he questioned what he was doing within his career as a Captain and even before, when he was beginning his life as a seafarer.

"What you said about our being heroes," he cried, "that ours is like a ministry because *we serve the world* and that we should see what we do as *God's work* – *Holy work*; it was never explained to us in such a way."

Wiping away his tears with the back of his hand, he looked at me and smiled. "Sir," he said, "mine are not tears of sadness, they are tears of joy. We who are seafarers are sometimes told we are heroes by our friends and family but we never understood that others, like you, felt the same way about us."

Moments later, the Captain and I stood in his office and prayed that God would continue to bless his crew and their families with spiritual abundance, prosperity and good health. Afterwards, he thanked me for visiting and we plan on having the crew attend Mass this weekend.

As we all understand, our seafarers continue to need our prayers and to hear from us as much as possible

that they are indeed, very special to us and to God.
PAX,

In Mary Star of the Sea,

Joseph Peter Buccheri / Associate Chaplain



Msgr. Novatus Rugambwa, Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People; Fr. Allan Deck, Executive Director of the Secretariat of Cultural Diversity in the Church/USCCB; and Sr. Myrna Tordillo, AOS National Director- on a visit to the Port of Baltimore with Msgr. John Fitzgerald, AOS Chaplain and Director of the Stella Maris Center, and Joseph Buccheri, Assistant Director of the center.

National Director continued from page 2

column, Port Ministry column, news, updates and related maritime information.

We are working to develop further the format and content in the CMN and hopefully in the near future, to be able to increase the number of times of publication.

We welcome your feedback and comments as we strive to provide you with information. We are continually looking for articles; consider this message an open invitation for you to send articles so that our readers will know what is happening in your port area or for news and information about the maritime community. Thank you so much to those who send in their articles. Many, many thanks to Margaret Marzec for the great work of putting together this issue.

With prayerful best wishes!

PRESS STATEMENT

Seafarer's Assistance Program (SAP) has noticed a worrying increase of armed attacks on shipping since the start of 2008.

The increasing instances of piracy and armed attacks on shipping are creating a rising reluctance amongst ship owners and crews to make voyages to Somali and Tanzanian territorial waters.

While some attacks have taken place outside Somali waters, there is considerable evidence that the involved hijackers operate from bases within the horn of Africa, it is these bases which both the logistical support for attacks and a base operations for pirates to regroup.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Since July last year, Kenya Maritime Authority in collaboration with Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPRA) has been undertaking a study of proposals on the development of appropriate commercial maritime policy in Kenya.

The terms of references for this study are to review Kenya's commercial Maritime policy with a view to aligning these policies to long term national development strategy, Kenya Vision 2030 and thus enhance the contribution of the Maritime sector to the achievement of its objectives.

Also, it aims at reviewing the level of domestic participation in the commercial Maritime sector in Kenya. In this respect KIPPRA will hold stakeholders workshops in Mombasa and Kisumu in June this year.

It is our hope these won't be a cash cow study and workshops.

Andrew Mwangura
Programs Coordinator
Seafarers' Assistance Programme

Joseph Kayemba Ferunzi
Deputy Secretary General
Seafarers Union of Kenya.



NEWS FROM NOAA

NATIONAL OCEANIC & ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION • US DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Contact: Anson Franklin / Scott Smullen
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 1, 2008

“Fishery Failure” Declared for West Coast Salmon Fishery *Declaration Clears Path for Congressional Action*

Secretary of Commerce Carlos M. Gutierrez today declared a commercial fishery failure for the West Coast salmon fishery due to historically low salmon returns. Also today, NOAA’s Fisheries Service issued regulations to close or severely limit recreational and commercial salmon fishing in the area.

“The unprecedented collapse of the salmon population will hit fishermen, their families, and fishing communities hard, and that is why we have moved quickly to declare a fishery disaster,” Gutierrez said. “Our scientists are working to better understand the effects that ocean changes have on salmon populations. We are also working closely with fishing communities to improve salmon habitat in river systems to support sustainable fishing.”

Hundreds of thousands of fall Chinook salmon typically return to the Sacramento River every year to spawn. This year, scientists estimate that fewer than 60,000 adult Chinook will make it back to the Sacramento River.

“This is far below what is needed to sustain the population and we have decided to shut down the commercial ocean salmon fishery for all of California and most of Oregon to aid their recovery,” said Jim Balsiger, NOAA’s Fisheries Service acting assistant administrator. “It’s a tough decision, but the condition of the salmon fishery forces us to close most of it to ensure healthy runs of this valuable fish in the future.”

Although the reasons for the sudden decline of the fishery are not completely understood, NOAA scientists suggest that changes in ocean conditions, including unfavorable shifts in ocean temperature and food sources for juvenile salmon, likely caused poor survival of salmon that would have comprised this year’s fishery. Loss of freshwater habitat for salmon spawning, rearing, and migration to the ocean is a chronic problem that has made salmon populations more susceptible to the occasional poor ocean conditions. NOAA will undertake a thorough examination of the causes.

Coho salmon stocks off Washington and northern Oregon, while in slightly better shape, are still far below normal, and there will be substantially curtailed commercial fishing off those areas as well. A small recreational fishery off Oregon’s northern coast and targeted on hatchery-produced coho salmon will be allowed.

The disaster declaration opens the door for Congress to appropriate money towards alleviating the financial hardship caused by the fishery disaster.

Under Section 312(a) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, the Commerce Secretary can declare a commercial fishery failure if requested to do so by a governor, or at the Secretary’s discretion. The Secretary must determine that the commercial fishery failure resulted from a fishery resource disaster due to natural causes, man-made causes beyond the control of fishery managers, or undetermined causes.

*United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Secretariat of Cultural Diversity in the Church
Pastoral Care of Migrants, Refugees & Travelers / Apostleship of the Sea, National Office*

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Chaplains participated in the Ship Welfare Visitor Course (SWVC)

Three AOS chaplains from the United States attended the Ship Welfare Visitor Course organized by the International Committee on Seafarers' Welfare, designed as a 'Train the Trainer course'. As accredited trainers, they will then train 'welfare workers in the ports where they are given responsibility' with the aim to cascade the course in different regions.

On June 9 to 13, 2008, Deacon Reggie Seymour of New Orleans, LA and Mike de Toro of Stockton, CA completed the SWVC course held in Panama City (Panama). Others who attended the Trainers Course in Panama were Fr. Samuel Fonseca, Santos, Brazil; Rev. Andy Krey, Savannah, GA; Deacon Michael Ho, Toronto, Canada; Chaplain Kent Williams, Vancouver, WA; Chaplain Cadman Sekyi, Africa.

Fr. Tom Falkenthal of the Port of Everglades and Miami attended the course in November 2007 in Boston, MA. In July 2008, Fr. Tom, gave a training to ship visitors with the collaboration of Fr. Henry Hernando, AOS San Pedro, CA and Fr. John Provenza, pastor. The training, held at Mary Star of the Sea Parish in San Pedro was very enthusiastically received, with participants from San Pedro, Long Beach, Oakland and San Diego.

"The objectives of the SWVC course is to encourage ship visiting and to enable all those involved in ship visiting (both volunteers and paid welfare workers and chaplains) to have a proper understanding of ship-board protocol and safety. The aim is to give the course to ALL welfare workers throughout the world within four years, volunteers and paid, who visit ships or work inside the port. Both the instructors' course and the SWVC course are accredited by the Nautical Institute" (ICSW 2007).

TSA – TWIC enrollment – Port Hueneme

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) issued a notice stating that enrollment of maritime workers for the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) will commence in the Port of Port Hueneme on May 1. [73 Fed. Reg. 22429](#) (April 25, 2008).

Portsmouth – TWIC enrollment

The TSA issued a [press release](#) stating that enrollment of maritime workers for the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) has commenced in the Port of Portsmouth, New Hampshire. (4/24/08).

Second Stella Maris Center, Jacksonville, FL

The second Stella Maris Center in Blount Island, Jacksonville, FL was dedicated in May 2, 2008 by Bishop Victor Galleone of the Diocese of St. Augustine. Attending the dedication were William Betz, Diocesan Director of Catholic Charities, Sr. Myrna Tordillo, Fr. Sinclair Oubre, Port of Jacksonville authorities, priests who celebrate Mass at the center, collaborators, friends and volunteers of the Stella Maris Center. Deacon Gjet Bajraktari, AOS Chaplain, organized the event. Deacon Gjet welcomes volunteers to assist in the centers or do ship visitation. For more information contact: apostleshipofthe@bellsouth.net

The first Stella Maris Center in Talleyrand Avenue was inaugurated in August 2004 by Bishop Galleone. He had served as a missionary in Peru as a young priest. He is a strong supporter of the Apostleship of the Sea ministry in his diocese.



Bishop J. Kevin Boland, newly appointed National Bishop Promoter of the Apostleship of the Sea (AOS) by Cardinal Francis George, president of United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), appeared on Catholic Radio Weekly, the Catholic Communication Campaign's flagship radio show, the weekend of June 21-22, 2008. Bishop Boland was interviewed discussing his new role as head of the Apostleship of the Sea.



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The National Day of Prayer and Remembrance for Mariners and People of the Sea, May 22, 2008

The National Day of Prayer and Remembrance for Mariners and People of the Sea was observed on May 21, 2008 with a concelebrated Eucharistic Liturgy presided by His Eminence Theodore Cardinal McCarrick, Archbishop Emeritus of Washington. Concelebrants included United States Navy Captain, Rev. Gregory Ciazzo, from the Archdiocese for the Military Services; AOS Chaplain, Rev. Dominic Ishaq, from Philadelphia, and Coast Guard Captain, Rev. William Cuddy. The Mass at St. Joseph’s on Capitol Hill, Washington, DC was attended by Maritime Administration (MARAD) staff headed by Maritime Administrator Sean Connaughton and Ms. Julie Nelson-Deputy Maritime Administrator; Embassy of the Philippines’ Consul General Domingo Nolasco and Minister Carlos Orita; and John Cullather of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. The North American Maritime Ministries Association was represented by Rev. James Von Dreele and representing the AOSUSA was Jon Fukurawa Also in attendance were friends and families of seafarers. Susan Clark of MARAD was the soloist during the Mass and the Mariners Chorus sung songs relating to the sea. The Apostleship of the Sea National Office organized the event.

The National Day of Prayer and Remembrance for Mariners and People of the Sea is designated on May 22nd by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in November 2005, to encourage Catholics in the United States to support and participate in prayer services and remembrance of those who work in the maritime world. May 22nd coincides with the national Maritime Day celebrated by the US government.



Photo: Manny Lopez



Photo: Manny Lopez



Photo: Manny Lopez



Photo: Manny Lopez

The National Maritime Day observance sponsored by the Maritime Administration was held on May 22, 2008 at the Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial, South Basin Drive, Washington, DC. The National Maritime Day observed for 75 years now, honors the U.S. merchant marine and remembers those mariners who gave their lives in service to America and freedom. Speakers were Secretary of Transportation Mary E. Peters; Senator Leonidas Raptakis of Rhode Island State Senate; and Sean Connaughton, Maritime Administrator. The Apostleship of the Sea National Director, Sr. Myrna Tordillo gave the Invocation.

On May 20, 1933 Congress designated each May 22 as National Maritime Day. “While the day originally commemorated the first successful transoceanic voyage under steam propulsion accomplished by the steamship Savannah, in following years the day developed into an occasion for honoring the many sacrifices and contributions of American merchant mariners and the United States maritime industry”. (MARAD)



Maritime Administration Photo



Maritime Administration Photo



Maritime Administration Photo

New National Director Seeks to Raise Awareness of 'Essential' Ministry to Seafarers

By Denis Grasska

SAN DIEGO -- The Apostleship of the Sea is the Church's ministry to seafarers.

It began in Scotland in 1920, but has expanded so rapidly that today every major country has a national director of Apostleship of the Sea, who answers to a bishop promoter and oversees the work of the many chaplains and volunteers who minister in the nation's ports.

The international Apostleship of the Sea is part of the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Migrants and Travelers.

In January 2007, Sister Myrna Tordillo, MSCS, became the national director of Apostleship of the Sea - USA. Since January 2008, she has also held the position of Program Specialist for the Pastoral Care of Migrants, Refugees and Travelers, within the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' recently formed Secretariat of Cultural Diversity in the Church.

Sister Tordillo's responsibilities include overseeing the work of the 81 chaplains and pastoral team members ministering in 61 American ports in about 49 dioceses. During a visit to San Diego in late April, she met with Father James Boyd, chaplain, and Deacon Sam Martinez, director, of the Stella Maris Seafarer Center.

The Stella Maris Seafarer Center, open seven days a week, is home to San Diego's Apostleship of the Sea. Though a diocesan chaplaincy, the center is operated as an ecumenical effort. Its operation, which involves providing hospitality to seafarers, depends on the support of donations and volunteers. Because of an increasing number of ships from predominantly Catholic countries, such as the Philippines, more volunteers are always welcome.

Sister Tordillo's visit was intended as a display of support from the national office and also a means of learning more about how seafarers ministry is performed in San Diego. Through her visit, she hopes she will be able to better determine how the national and local Apostleship of the Sea can work together to meet the needs of seafarers.

"By the nature of their work and their lifestyle, [seafarers are] always away from family, they're always many months on the seas," said Sister Tordillo, who notes that the Apostleship of the Sea is "an essential ministry" of the Church that operates with the approval and support of popes and bishops, even while many Catholics are unaware of its existence.

"Even for those who are in the maritime communities, not many are aware of this very important ministry," Sister Tordillo said, "and we want to get the word out to the parishes, to other people, to the larger community."

"It is something that ... is not really highly visible compared to other social ministries," she said, "and yet seafarers and all the people of the sea" -- including those in the fishing industry, families of seafarers, port personnel and other travelers -- "really need to be evangelized."

Sister Tordillo said seafarers need the kind of spiritual and social care that chaplains and their pastoral teams provide. During their short time in port, she said, seafarers are "the parish congregation of the chaplain," and they should be welcomed by the Local Church.

Among its other work, the Apostleship of the Sea also ensures that priests in good standing are placed with cruise ships and cruise lines that welcome their services, through its Cruise Ship Priest Program.

As national director, Sister Tordillo said she feels "thankful and blessed" that chaplains and pastoral teams throughout the country have such commitment and dedication to their ministry.

For more information on the Apostleship of the Sea - USA, visit www.aos-usa.org. For more information on seafarers ministry in San Diego or to get involved, contact the Stella Maris Seafarer Center at (619) 702-4703, Deacon Sam Martinez at (619) 429-3580 or Father James Boyd at (858) 292-1822.

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Tragedy Aboard the Madeleine A Pastoral Reflection / Father Tom Falkenthal

It was so early in the morning when the phone rang that it was still dark outside. Somehow, even before answering the call, I knew it was bad news. And it sure was: an accident on a ship in Port Everglades: three people dead.

Three longshoremen, Hayman Sooknanan, Rene Dutertre and James Cason had entered an enclosed cargo hold containing a leaking tank of argon gas. They became overcome by the lack of oxygen and lost their lives. It took only moments for the horrific tragedy to run its course.

The adrenalin jolt instantly cleared away any remaining sleepiness. The initial, "Oh no!" quickly became, "O Lord, hold them gently in your hands."

By the time I arrived in the Port, Deacon Ron Perkins, who lives only five minutes from the Port, had already been pier side with the emergency responders and in the Port Administration building giving comfort to family members as they rushed in. The most anyone can do in such moments is receive their tears, accept their groans of anguish, and listen to their endless protests against the unspeakable pain. Ron may have been ordained a deacon less than two years but he earned his stripes that morning.

When I arrived at the ship, it was obvious things were far from normal. Crew members of a container ship in Port are always busy, always moving to and fro and always in a hurry. Doing ship's business required eyes clear, alert and quick to understand. Not this time.

The seafarers were all standing in small groups of three or four, not working, not talking, just standing. If one moved a few feet, the others seemed to follow as if no one wanted to be alone—so uncharacteristic and yet so understandable. Their eyes were unfocused. Their greetings were hushed and reverent: "Thank you for coming, Father. You know what happened, right?"



The ship's Master was waiting at the gangway for the chaplain's arrival. Asking if I could meet with the entire crew, he gathered all hands in the crew's mess. Shoulder to shoulder in that now cramped space, they shared how well they knew these three men who always worked their ship. Their grief was palpable; so was their fear. After all, it might have happened to them. Would there be a "next time?" Would it be *their* families receiving the bad news? How much more would their families back home—so many thousands of miles away—worry when they got today's terrible news?

The entire crew shared their hearts and their prayers. When the prayers concluded, a quiet comfort seemed to fill the room. The Master asked if I could walk the ship and bless all the spaces with Holy Water. And so we did, both inside and alongside the ship from the pier, the crew walking with me each step of the way.

Just before I left, the Master asked if I could give him a candle. "I'm Russian Orthodox and candles are important to us," he said. "They remind us of God's presence with us aboard our ship."

Then there was the Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD) for the employees of Florida Transportation Services (FTS). About 75 of Hayman's, Rene's and James's buddies gathered, each feeling hollowed out by grief. Deacon Ron Perkins and I conducted the CISD helping these longshoremen and all the FTS team to better understand what they were feeling and how to constructively deal with it.

Then, of course, there was the Memorial Service. The music was uplifting, the scriptures inspirational and the fellowship ever so necessary as 285 people paid tribute to their fallen friends.

The support for the Memorial Service was extraordinary. FTS people, Port leaders and workers, BSO, the Port Everglades Association, our own Seafarers' House team—*everyone* did *everything* they could.

In a way, we're all seafarers here. Some of us go to sea and others serve those who do. Surely all of us in Port Everglades are People of the Sea. May I ask you to take a moment to open your heart and let this Seafarers' Prayer be your prayer, too.



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A Seafarer's Prayer

O Lord, anchor of my life, stay near me as I stand my watch.
 Keep me alert because the safety of shipmates depends on me.
 Help me see the beauty of your creation as I sail your vast oceans.
 Keep me faithful to those I leave behind, and bless them while I am away.
 Protect us from all the perils at sea.
 Calm the waves and hush the wind.
 Bring me safely home to my family and friends.
 Help me keep you within my heart. Amen.

God bless you! Father Tom Falkenthal

Mary Star of the Sea, a Fisherman's Parish

By Alexander Sanchez (contact: onefather@cox.net) (619) 690-0700
 Stella Maris Seafarer's Center, San Pedro CA

Mary Star of the Sea has sometimes been known as the "Fishermen's Parish", because of its close ties with the fishing and cannery community in San Pedro, CA. The parish was established in 1889 and has a long tradition of providing support, comfort, and Catholic religious guidance to seafarers.

Mary Star of the Sea Parish continues to seek ways to support the maritime ministry. The Ship Welfare Visitor Course was hosted at the parish on July 22-23, 2008. 18 volunteers participated in the training including Father Henry Hernando, AOS Chaplain, San Pedro.

Our Pastor, Father John Provenza welcomed the students and the Trainer, Father Tom Falkenthal. Father Falkenthal was invited to provide the training by Fr. Henry Hernando. It is a blessing that Fr. Tom Falkenthal sacrificed of his time and treasure. He is the AOS Chaplain for the North Miami, Florida Seafarer's House (AOS Stella Maris). That seafarer's center is fortunate to have him who is originally from the Archdiocese of Chicago and is currently serving as AOS Director of the Miami Archdiocese. Father Tom Falkenthal stated that the training was developed for world wide dissemination. The course provided much needed training in security and safety issues for the participants .

In the past, Mary Star of the Sea Parish has sent AOS volunteers to the annual two week Chaplaincy Training course in Houston, Texas, so the recent training we received was not only a refresher course but a welcome first for most of the other volunteers. The volunteers salute Mary Star of the Sea Parish for its support and the support it has given to seafarers since 1989.

The Ship Welfare Visitor Course is funded by the International Seafarer's Trust and accredited by the Nautical Institute. Actually, it seems to me that the course is a prologue for things to come in qualifying and certifying volunteer visitors to the ports and the ships. The United States' Department of Homeland Security requires us to be more vigilant than ever for the safety and security for all but at the same time allows chaplains and volunteers to continue the ministry to seafarers. The training encourages to develop closer ties, relationship and friendship with all the players in the maritime ports such as the Coast Guard, Port Authorities, Harbour Masters, Port Security Officers, the Port Commercial Managers, Trade Union Representatives, the Port Welfare Committees, the Wharf Workers Representatives, (Stevedores) and others who make a Port run efficiently and successfully. It was pointed out to become acquainted with all the people involved in operating the ships and caring for the seafarers. This seems like a big task for us volunteers, particularly for our parish, but it can be done with the help of Father John Provenzo, Father Henry Hernando, and the expert training that Father Tom Falkenthal gave.

The volunteers want to thank the Star of the Sea Parish staff and volunteers who made the training a pleasant experience by providing us with breakfast and lunch. The classroom where the training was conducted was excellent and comfortable.

And finally, Father John Provenzo, Father Henry Hernando, and Father Tom Falkenthal wish to congratulate the volunteers who completed the course and passed the final examination. The final examination was necessary for the qualification, accreditation and the issuance of credentials to the volunteers.

Again, a hardy and strong Bravo Zulu to Mary Star of the Sea Parish in San Pedro, California.

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ITF launches new resource for world's seafarers

A major new resource for the world's seafarers was unveiled this week at the ITF's maritime conference in Stockholm, Sweden. www.itfseafarers.org, an innovative news, advice and support service, was launched both to press and to the hundreds of inspectors, dockers' and seafarers' delegates attending the week long conference.

The new site is the only 'one stop shop' for seafarers anywhere, irrespective of how computer literate they are or how good or bad the equipment they access it from may be. It offers them information on their health, their pay and safety and includes features such as: Crew Talk message boards; advice and help; Ship Look-up Tool showing vessel agreements and other information; Inside the Issues briefing area; interactive polls; trade union contact details, and an ITF inspectors' blog.

ITF Maritime Coordinator Steve Cotton explained how the new project was the result of seafarers' pleas for web-based support that they could access from home, at sea and, in particular, during time snatched on shore leave. "Time, effort and all the expertise we can draw on has gone into getting this site right," he said, "and with feedback from users we expect to make it better still."

Also speaking at the press conference was ITF General Secretary David Cockroft, who told journalists "There are 300 delegates here who are seeing this website and what it can do today, and who are going to take the news of it out from Stockholm to their unions, home countries, ports and seafarers."

The new site has taken eight months work to develop and launches in English, the international seafarers' language. Chinese, Russian and Spanish versions will follow. Ease of use and access were built into it from the start.