

**CONSTITUTION OF THE**  
**APOSTLESHIP OF THE SEA OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**  
**(AOSUSA)**

**ARTICLE I - NAME**

The name of this organization shall be the **APOSTLESHIP OF THE SEA OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA (AOSUSA)**.

**ARTICLE II - MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the AOSUSA is to be a spiritual and theological resource to the Roman Catholic Church in the United States of America. The purpose of the AOSUSA is to teach and witness to the Word of God and to serve God's people; especially seafarers, maritime personnel and people of the sea; by fostering their growth and renewal, through prayer, study and Christian service.

**ARTICLE III - PURPOSE**

- a. To provide mutual support and intercommunication for all members working in the Apostleship of the Sea in the United States of America.
- b. To labor on behalf of the dignity and human rights of every person in the Maritime community.
- c. To work under the auspices of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Apostleship of the Sea - International.
- d. Any other provisions herein notwithstanding , the AOSUSA will at all times be organized and operated for spiritual, religious, charitable and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or a corresponding section of any future federal tax code.
- e. Sensitive to the complex church and social environment of today's world, the AOSUSA offers men and women the opportunity to prepare for Apostleship of the Sea ministry through training and formation.
- f. That the AOSUSA develop and maintain for the USCCB a Cruise Ship Priest Program for the pastoral care of cruise ship passengers and crew.

**ARTICLE IV - NATURE**

## Section 1 **Non-Profit, Religious, Charitable and Educational**

The AOSUSA is formed without capital stock and functions as a non-profit organization. Its work is exclusively religious, charitable and educational.

No AOSUSA funds shall inure to the personal benefit of any member.

## Section 2 **Membership**

### **Pastoral Member**

Any Catholic person holding an official diocesan appointment as Director of the Apostleship of the Sea, Port Chaplain, Assistant or Associate Port Chaplain, Director of a Seafarers Center, or ship's Chaplain.

### **Cruise Ship Priest Member**

A Catholic Priest who has fulfilled the application process and been accepted for the approved list of Cruise Ship Priests. Cruise Ship Priest Members shall enjoy the same rights and privileges of Pastoral Members.

### **Mariner Member**

Any Catholic person who has domicile or quasidomicile within the United States of America, and who works on board a ship or vessel, a person working on an oil rig or platform, a retired mariner or a student of a maritime school.

A mariner's eligibility for membership shall be established by a License, Merchant Marine Document, or sponsorship by a pastoral member.

### **Associate Member**

Any Catholic person, who is appointed by a local pastoral member to his or her Diocesan AOS ministry.

### **Affiliate Member**

Any person who supports the mission and purposes of the AOSUSA through prayer, ancillary support and financial help may be enrolled by any AOSUSA member. Affiliate members must be accepted by a majority vote of the Administrative Board.

### **Honorary Member**

Honorary members can be enrolled only by action of the Administrative Board.

## Section 3 **Dues**

Dues may be levied by the AOSUSA for all its members. All its members will then be subject to the payment of dues according to a schedule set by the members of the AOSUSA.

Honorary members shall not be required to pay dues.

#### Section 4 **Loss of Membership**

- a. loss of official appointment or sponsorship
- b. failure to meet requirements of membership category
- c. failure to pay dues

### **ARTICLE V - ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD**

#### Section 1

The government of the AOSUSA shall be vested in an Administrative Board which shall consist of eleven (11) members. The Administrative Board shall consist of elected officers of the AOSUSA and five (5) Board members, who are elected as provided in Article VI, the appointed Bishop Promoter and the National Director. No more than one (1) elected member from any one (1) Archdiocese, Diocese or religious community shall be a member of the Administrative Board at the same time.

#### Section 2

There shall be five (5) members on the Administrative Board, who are not officers, but who shall be elected from Pastoral, Mariner or Associate membership by the membership at its annual meeting. Four members will come from each of, and represent each of the following regions: the Great Lakes/ Inland, East Coast, Gulf Coast, West Coast/ Alaska - Hawaii, and one (1) Cruise Ship Priest.

#### Section 3

One of the nine (9) elected positions on the Administrative board must be a mariner member.

#### Section 4

Any vacancy of the elected Administrative Board shall be filled, until the next meeting of

the membership of the AOSUSA, by a majority vote of the remaining members of the Administrative Board at the next meeting of the Board.

#### Section 5

The Administrative Board shall meet during the course of the annual meeting of the AOSUSA and at least one other time during the year to conduct the business of the AOSUSA.

#### Section 6

Special meetings of the Administrative Board shall be called by the President at any time. It shall be his/her duty to call special meetings upon request made upon him/her by any four (4) members of the Administrative Board provided a quorum is assured. Notices of such meetings shall be given in the manner provided in the By-Laws.

#### Section 7

A majority of the Administrative Board shall constitute a quorum at all meetings, regular or special, for the transaction of all business of the Administrative Board.

#### Section 8

The Administrative Board may delegate to an Executive Committee all of its power during the interim between meetings. This committee shall consist of the officers of the Administrative Board. Any action of the Executive committee shall be done in consultation with the Bishop Promoter and/or the National Director.

#### Section 9

The Administrative Board shall appoint and exercise general supervision and control over activities of the regular and special committees of the AOSUSA.

### **ARTICLE VI - OFFICERS**

#### Section 1

The officers of the AOSUSA shall be President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Their terms shall be for a period of two (2) years.

#### Section 2

All officers shall be either Pastoral, Mariner or Associate Members of AOSUSA.

#### Section 3

The principal duties of the President shall be to preside over all general meetings of the AOSUSA, all meetings of the Administrative Board, and to direct the activities of the AOSUSA under the supervision and control of the Administrative Board.

#### Section 4

The principal duties of the Vice-President shall be to perform the duties and functions of the President in case of his absence or inability to preside; to perform such other duties as shall be required by the By-Laws or by the Administrative Board.

#### Section 5

The principal duties of the Secretary shall be to correspond, to provide minutes of all meetings, to care for all the books, documents, and papers which belong to the AOSUSA, and to perform such other duties as shall be required by the By-Laws or by the Administrative Board. The Secretary shall archive all original documents which are 3 years of age or older, by forwarding them to the National Director.

#### Section 6

The principal duties of the Treasurer shall be to receive and disburse all monies belonging to the AOSUSA, to keep an accurate record of the money and property on hand, and generally to keep an accurate record of all financial matters pertaining to said office as shall be required by the By-Laws or by the Administrative Board.

The Treasurer shall furnish a statement of the financial condition of and a budget for the AOSUSA annually and at such other times as the Administrative Board shall require.

#### Section 7

An officer may be removed according to the procedures stated in the By-Laws.

## **ARTICLE VII - Bishop Promoter and National Director**

### Section 1

The Bishop Promoter fosters the Apostleship of the Sea in the United States. His office is described in Section 4, Part IX and X of *The Motu proprio Stella Maris (On the Apostleship of the Sea)*.

The Bishop Promoter oversees the AOSUSA, assuring it prudently carries out the mission of the Apostleship of the Sea in the true spirit of our faith and according to the laws of the church.

### Section 2

The National Director cooperates with the Bishop Promoter and liaises with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. The office is described in Section 4 Part XI of *The Motu proprio Stella Maris (On the Apostleship of the Sea)*.

## **ARTICLE VIII - VOTING AND ELECTIONS**

### Section 1

- a. Voting on all matters in the AOSUSA is limited to Pastoral, Mariner and Associate Members of the AOSUSA and shall be on the basis of one vote for each member in attendance, in accordance with the By-Laws.
- b. Affiliate and Honorary members have no right to vote on any matter.

### Section 2

Voting may be by voice, ballot or other means as the matter requires. The AOSUSA or Administrative Board has the right, as the case may require, to determine the method of voting.

### Section 3

A majority of those voting members present shall be sufficient for adoption or decision upon any matter before the AOSUSA except for amending the Constitution of the AOS-USA.

Section 4

Each officer and elected member of the Administrative Board shall assume office immediately after the official close of the final public sessions of the annual meeting of the AOSUSA, and shall remain in office until the end of the second annual meeting of the AOSUSA thereafter, until his/her successor has been duly elected or duly qualified or until he/she submits his/her resignation to the Administrative Board.

Section 5

Nominations for all offices and elected Board memberships shall be made from the floor at a general meeting of the AOSUSA.

**ARTICLE IX - MEETINGS**

Section 1

The AOSUSA shall hold an annual meeting at a time and place to be determined by a majority vote of the Administrative Board.

The membership assembled in general meeting, will have primary authority regarding all decisions, actions and policies regarding the AOSUSA.

If the Administrative Board, by a majority vote, shall decide that the annual meeting must be postponed, all the officers and members of the Administrative Board shall retain office until the impeding cause has been removed and a meeting has been held.

Section 2

Notices of special meetings shall be made forty-five (45) days in advance by U.S. Mail, or in any other way authorized by the Administrative Board or Executive Committee.

Section 3 **Attendance**

General meetings are open to all members. Pastoral, Mariner and Associate members have voice and vote. Honorary and Affiliate members have voice, but no vote.

**ARTICLE X - PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES**

Parliamentary procedure is to be followed in the conduct of meetings as set forth in Robert's Rules of Order, revised edition, except as may be amended by these articles of the Constitution or By-Laws. The Administrative Board shall designate a member to serve as Parliamentarian.

#### **ARTICLE XI - RESIGNATIONS**

Resignations from the Administrative Board shall be submitted in writing either to the President of the AOSUSA or the Vice-President in the event of a vacancy in the presidency.

#### **ARTICLE XII - BY-LAWS**

By-Laws regulating the activities of the officers and the Administrative Board of the AOSUSA as well as the conduct of business at general meetings of the AOSUSA, shall be adopted by the voting membership of the AOSUSA by simple majority vote at any general meeting and may be revised from time to time in like manner at any general meeting.

#### **ARTICLE XIII - ADOPTION OF THIS CONSTITUTION**

The Constitution shall become effective upon its adoption by two-thirds of those present and voting at the meeting at which it shall be presented.

#### **ARTICLE XIV - AMENDMENTS**

A copy of any proposed amendments of this Constitution shall be sent to the Secretary of AOSUSA at least three (3) months prior to a scheduled general meeting of the AOSUSA. A proposed amendment must be endorsed by at least ten (10) voting members in good standing. A copy of the proposed amendment will be mailed to all members of the AOSUSA at least thirty (30) days prior to the date of the next scheduled general meeting. Such an amendment shall be adopted at a general meeting by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of those present and voting.

**ARTICLE XV - DISSOLUTION**

Upon dissolution or termination of the AOSUSA, its assets will be distributed to the appropriate office overseeing seafarers' welfare at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops for religious, charitable and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or any corresponding section of any future federal tax code.