

## **GREAT LAKES AND RIVERS REPORT**

### **AOS-USA BOARD MEETING**

**NIAGARA FALLS, ON, MAY 11, 2010**

**Duluth/Superior** – the shipping season opened rather early this year and we have had two or three salties in so far. The Twin Ports remain the most active ports on the Great Lakes, are the #1 port in the US for bulk cargo, and #15 nationally overall. Traffic seems to be rebounding from the recent downturn because of the recession. The Twin Ports Seafarers Center is finding itself on a more secure basis financially because it has been able to find renters for some of its facilities. The Center is located in a former Catholic rectory served by Benedictines and was rather spacious, a small monastery. Besides a counseling service, rooms are rented to students from local colleges.

**GREEN BAY** – Deacon Glen Teske, former AOS-USA board member, will be at the regional conference with a new deacon volunteer John Brenda. Glen is suffering high blood pressure. Traffic has been slow so far. Glen is serving on a committee to review port security. There have been problems at some terminals that are restricting access to chaplains. The new supervisor for Seafarers Ministry is Karen Johnson from Catholic Charities.

**MARQUETTE, MI** – Deacon David Adler reports that he is no longer serving as chaplain, and has not been replaced. There are few ships coming in except ore boats, and he had difficulty getting on them. He was not receiving much support from the diocese. He did visit regularly at the Coast guard station.

**SAULTE STE MARIE, MI** – Fr Ted Brodeur is 70 years old but still doing what he can. There is no port on the American side, but the Canadian side has a very busy port because of Algoma Steel. There is no port ministry on the Canadian side, and Fr Ted would like to see one started. He gave me some contacts **whom he thinks would be very interested in helping. More tonnage goes through the locks than through the Panama Canal and the Suez Canal combined. There is little time to visit the boats going through the locks, but he does leave prayer books and reading materials at the mail pick-up. He sometimes puts up seafarers at the rectory, and sometimes visits at Algoma Steel which is the second largest plant in the northern hemisphere. They are working on new locks which will be able to handle container ships. Tom Snyderwine at the Port of Erie says the containers would come by rail from New York to Erie where a new container facility is under consideration.**

**ERIE, PA** – Msgr Tom Snyderwine says that traffic is still minimal, but traffic at Ashtabula and Conneaut, Ohio is picking up with taconite being unloaded. He continues to do fleet blessings and ceremonies, and says hello to AOS old timers. He was an officer of the group that preceded AOS. Erie offloads stone and aggregate.

**BIFFALO, NY** – Msgr Ducette is mostly retired but does some work out of his apartment blessing ships and recreational boats, the fire boats and police boat.

**THUNDER BAY, ON** – the former chaplain Fr Lino Santi died, and his replacement Fr Mauricio Naifredi is overwhelmed by parish work and wants to be replaced. Fr Naidredi is a Scalabrinian priest, and order founded in Italy to care for immigrants. They are very active in the Philippines and are the order to which our National Director Sr Myrna Tordillo belongs.

**TORONTO AND OSHAWA, ON** – Deacon Derek Stelton is from England, a former merchant mariner, and did prison ministry before becoming a port chaplain. Many of the salties drop off incoming cargoes at Montreal and proceed to the Twin Ports to pick up grain.

**TOLEDO, OH** – Deacon Ed Gryczewski is 84 and pretty much retired. He has been chaplain since 1987. The diocese has picked up some of his expenses There are about 35 ships a year, mostly lakers carrying pipe, lumber, steel, coke, fertilizer, and agricultural products.

**CHICAGO, IL** – Fr Kilian Knittel is the new chaplain, replacing Fr Jim, our former AOS board secretary. He is retired, and still waiting for more information from the diocese as to what his duties are and what facilities he should visit.