

Minutes of the General Assembly  
AOS USA  
California Maritime Academy  
Vallejo, CA  
5-8 April 2005

Fr. Sinclair Oubre, President of AOS USA opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. He welcomed all to the Conference, explaining AOS USA's special interest in reaching out to Maritime Cadets. Fr. Sinclair asked for prayers for sick and dying members. All introduced themselves.

Fr. Sinclair explained the difference between AOS and AOS USA. Took care of house keeping items. Appointed prayer leaders. Appointed Resolution Committee: Jon Furukawa, Patrick LaPoint, Jack Garvey.

Message to Mariners Committee: Carol Waud, Sr. Joy Manthey, Tony Haycock.

At 7:56 p.m. Fr. Sinclair recessed the meeting. Ended the day with Evening Prayer.

Fr. Sinclair re-opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m. Wednesday, 6 April 2006.

### **AOS - Vatican report**

Fr. Sinclair stated that Fr. Jacques Harel (AOS Vatican) will not be able to be in attendance due to Visa issues. Fr. John Jamnicky AOS National Director spoke on behalf of AOS-Vatican and AOS in the United States. Cardinal Hamao will also be unable to attend due to other issues. And now with the death of His Holiness Pope John Paul II, he would of course be unable to attend anyway.

AOS-Vatican has been reaching out to fisher folk affected by the Tsunami. They have been very concerned about the issues on board Cruise Ships and is pleased to see the work that is being done on this by AOS USA. There will be a regional conference in Progresso Mexico which Fr. Jamnicky hopes many will attend.

Bishop Curtis Guillory, AOS Bishop Promoter cancelled his attendance for the conference after the Pope died. He felt it was necessary to stay in his own Diocese. He is very interested in our work and committed to it and sends his best regards. Archbishop William Levada also sends his regrets. He will be attending the Pope's funeral and will not be present. He just appointed an AOS Chaplain to San Francisco.

### **AOS National Director's Report.**

- brochures, luggage tags, etc available.

- received phone call from Maritime Administration regarding National Maritime Day, May 22. They asked if AOS would be involved in promoting special prayers for mariners. Jamnicky suggested he'd like to do it in an official way through the Bishops Conference (for next year since it would take some time to do this.) Fr. Sinclair said we can put something in CMN in April and May editions. Fr. Rivers Patout suggested each chaplain send a letter to Diocesan

newspapers to promote this.

Regional Meeting in Progreso, Mexico. Fr. Lorenzo Mex Jimenez is regional coordinator for North America and Caribbean. May 24-26. Room and board provided. Transportation is the only cost. Nearest airport is Merida. Regional Conference is to prepare for the world congress in 2007.

Next Annual Meeting of AOS USA will be April 25-28, 2006. Galveston/Texas City Port Chaplain Karen Lai will be hosting us at that time.

World Congress is held every 5 years. It will be held in Poland in 2007. Tentative dates June 23-30, 2007.

AOS USA is a not for profit 501c3, recognized by the USCCB, and in the Catholic Directory. AOS is not. It is an apostolic work of the Church. They are closely aligned, and AOS USA's purpose is to support the work of the AOS. He stated that he expects that all AOS Chaplains should be members of AOS USA. That is the primary vehicle that we use to disseminate information. Participation at this meeting is really for AOS USA members. Participation means membership.

Cruise Ship Priest Program. Bishops, cruise lines, priests are delighted with it. Greatest difficulty is getting cruise lines on board. Fr. Jamnicky discussed the possibility of sending out a list of forbidden ships. It is the position of AOS, that if a cruise line is not on board with the program, they would prefer the cruise line not have Mass on board at all, rather than chance invalid priests on board. Fr. Jamnicky told this to the President of the ICCL. He asked Fr. Jamnicky to hold off on such a list, and said he would bring this to the attention of all the Cruise Lines.

*Fr. Sinclair interrupted Fr. Jamnicky's report to introduce the Vice-President for Academic Affairs.* He welcomed everyone to CAL Maritime, stating that their President is currently in Washington, but welcomes everyone. He stated he is a member of the Board of Education in the San Francisco Archdiocese. He appreciated the idea of having a more organized spirituality on board. Cal Maritime is the only university in the U.S. outside of the Coast Guard Academy to form Coast Guardsmen. 850 students. 85 % staying rate. 100% get jobs upon graduation.

*Fr. Jamnicky resumed his report.* 2 videos have been created. Most recent one is a streaming video done by the USCCB.

Fr. Jamnicky said his term as National Director is up this December. He has not asked to renew. Job opening is already listed on USCCB website. He has had a wonderful 5 years. Will be leaving Washington November 18, 2005. Encourages others to consider this position.

Fr. Harmon Skillin thanked Fr. Jamnicky for his work and years of service. Suggested a more positive approach to getting cruise lines on board. Use of a sticker system or such. Fr. Patout asked what if there are other norms and expectations, and questioned why they may not wish to come on board.

Deacon Joe Connick stated that it is a known fact that Cruise Line crew members are not treated well. Fr. Bob Sipe suggested having Cruise Assignment Agents speak to us at future conferences. Fr. Jamnicky agreed this would be good, and stated that he would have liked to have had Msgr. Harriman at this meeting, since it is in his area.

Fr. Dana Michaels said he spoke to Msgr. Harriman and said the priests would like to have an evaluation form. Fr. Dana would like to put something together. Fr. Sinclair showed the streaming video created by the USCCB Catholic Communication Campaign.

*Jon Furukawa gave the layout of the campus to everyone.  
Break at 10:25 a.m. Re-convened at 10:40 a.m.*

### **USCCB/CCA AOS USA Maritime Chaplain Certification Committee**

Fr. Sinclair introduced JeanMarie Weber from USCCB/CCA to discuss the AOS USA Maritime Chaplain Certification Committee. She gave brief over-view of the office. The need for Certification has been growing.

USCCB/CCA does 2 things:

- Accredit programs
- Approve Certification Standards and Procedures.

They only work with those organizations listed in the Catholic Directory. Jean Marie's presentation will be e-mailed to Doreen who can e-mail it to the group.

Certification is a commitment to quality and to continuation of the ministry. USCCB/CCA very much wants to know who they are dealing with. Who each ministry is. So a host site review is necessary.

#### Process:

Open certification file  
Prepare required documents  
host site review  
submit to USCCB/CCA Board  
Initial 3 years  
Annual reports are submitted  
Periodic review every 7 years

Even if only 3 or 4 chaplains are certified, at least it shows the group is committed and organized. This is important in a world in need of standards and credibility.

On going formation and a commitment to life long study is important. Doing whatever you need to do to keep going, and not plateauing is important. Mentoring is needed.

#### Some of the benefits of certification include:

Networking  
peer support

enabling (in the positive sense!)

Karen Lai gave a personal testimony of her certification. Being a woman, she was not ordained and began as a volunteer in seafarers ministry. Fr. Rick Hardman saw her future calling in port ministry. He took care of sacramental needs of crew. She did the rest of the work of the Center. Msgr. Ray Rao National Director saw to getting her to the Houston School for 2 weeks. This was the beginning of her Certification Process. She was certified through the NCCS (now AOS USA). This certification enabled her to get a position in the Archdiocese. Since that was a part time position only, she moved to Galveston, where Bishop Fiorenza saw that she was certified and felt she was the person for the job. This certification gave her the ability to be a part time Theology teacher at the local High School. She is now in the Spirituality Institute, which her certification also enabled her to become part of. Certification is not just a piece of paper. It is a true commitment. And very important. One that can open doors.

Jean Marie thanked Karen for her testimony. Office for laity and family values will be publishing a new document. A new one on priestly formation, one on diaconal formation and another on lay ministry formation. This will push the need for Certification.

She shared some of the organizations who have Accreditation and Certification Standards. Each organization establishes the criterion by which the competence of the chaplain is measured. Models of standards are developing which are common. These can be of help to us as we go through our own standards. There are National Certification standards for Lay Ecclesial Ministers which can be shared with us as well.

*Recess called at 11:20 for Mass and then lunch. Committee meetings will be held at 1:30-2:30. Fr. Sinclair reconvened meeting on Thursday, April 7, 2005 at 8:45 a.m.*

### **President's Report**

Reviewed Cruise Ship Priest program as very successful. Recent articles have particularly stirred up the Rent-A-Priest organization, which would seem to indicate that we are having the impact that the program was needing. Greatest difficulty now is getting more cruise lines on board. Norwegian recently came on and Disney should be on board within the next couple of weeks.

Shore Leave issues are still being monitored by Tom Matyok and Fr. Sinclair. There is nothing currently happening on that issue, however the new TWIC is being tested, and the committee is monitoring the regulations that are being developed so that maritime ministers will not be excluded access to TWIC's.

Reviewed Amicus Curiae brief on behalf of foreign seafarers and their access to U.S. Courts of Appeals issued their ruling against seafarers traditional right to U.S. courts.

Star of the Sea Award was presented to Brother Marinus/Captain LaRue as voted on at the last Annual meeting.

CMN now up to date.

He encouraged all members to make use of our new avenues of communication:

- CMN on-line
- important documents on line
- aosusa yahoo discussion group
- Cruise Ship Priest list serve
- Port Ministry list serve

Tasks needing to be addressed:

- review dues structure
- establish committee on seafarers medical issues
- recruit additional cruise lines
- increase membership among seafarers and cadet/trainees, so AOS USA can become the professional Catholic mariners organization in the U.S.
- monitor ILO, USCG, homeland Security and Merchant Marine issues, and respond on behalf of AOS USA when it is approved

Fr. Harmon Skillin moved to accept report. Fr. Jamnicky seconded, and all approved

### **Minutes of the General Assembly 2004 Annual Meeting**

All minutes and other reports were e-mailed to the membership on a number of occasions. They are also available on the website. Fr. Sinclair asked if there were any corrections or amendments to make to the minutes. Deacon Patrick Lapoint motioned to accept the minutes as given. Sr. Joy Manthey seconded. All approved.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Fr. James Keating gave the Treasurers Report. He apologized for not having it in electronic form. He stated that the Texas office is being competently run by Doreen. However, it does bring in many other expenses. There are over \$74,000 in Employment expenses, etc.

#### *Highlights of report:*

Actual income interest is over \$2,000  
Donations \$18,582.90  
Gift from Catholic Daughters \$14,000  
Contract labor \$43,595  
other employment expenses insurance, etc. \$3,737.13  
Badges, \$3,125.67

Deacon Connick moved to accept. Deacon LaPoint seconded. All approved.

### **Speaker**

Fr. Sinclair introduced guest speaker, Mr. Joe Holland, author of *Modern Catholic Social Teaching*, professor at St. Thomas of Villanova University in Miami, FL. As part of the requirements for Certification, all chaplains must have training in Catholic Social Teaching.

He gave a presentation on Catholic Social Teaching, which is constantly changing and evolving as social issues arise.

## **Secretary General Report**

Doreen Badeaux gave the report of the Secretary General (attached)  
Joy motioned to accept. Jon seconded. All approved.

*11:25 recessed for Mass and Lunch.*

*After lunch, Joe Holland continued part II of his lecture. Mike Campling, Director of ISAN spoke regarding seafarerhelp.org*

## **By-Laws Change**

4:40 Fr. Sinclair resumed meeting with discussion of By-Laws change.

The Board of Directors recommends increasing all dues by \$10 except for the Student Mariner Membership Dues.

Sally moved to accept. Deacon Gjet seconded, all approved.

Discussion:

Bob McKoon said Treasurer's Report showed increase. Fr. Sinclair stated that what we brought in, versus what we expended showed a deficit of \$12,000. Dues have not been increased for several years.

Sally asked if we have a bill to be paid. Fr. Sinclair said we have to pay USCCB \$10,000 for next 5 years for the Cruise Ship Priest program. Fr. Sinclair further stated that his concern is actually the amount of money that we bring in. The fact that we're ahead is really mainly due to great support from AOS. If a new leader comes in, we may or may not have that kind of support. These dues would not take effect until 2006. If we wait, we may not make it as an organization to 2007.

Patrick Lapoint suggested that we need to operate within the parameters of what our dues bring in, not looking at what we MAY bring in from donations, from AOS, etc. Deacon Connick stated that his board would complain if dues went up by \$10.

Sally, wanted to clarify how money comes into AOS USA from AOS. Fr. Sinclair stated that it costs us a certain amount to run AOS USA. We covered all except \$12,000 on our own. Fr. Jamnicky generously gives us grants and such but we do not know how long we will get this support from that office. He does not want to have to go into our reserves in order to get us by.

Deacon Connick had concerns with how this issue was brought up to the membership. Fr. Sinclair stated we have not increased dues in 10 years and the board agreed it was time to discuss it with the membership.

Sally said that when the Treasurers' Report came out, she did not understand it to say that we have a debt and not a deficit. Fr. Sinclair said there are both. A deficit of \$12,000, and a debt to the USCCB in the amount of \$50,000.

The vote was called. The motion passed with all in favor and one opposed.

## **Proposal: AOS USA seafarers' health and wellness committee**

Fr. Sinclair reported on a resolution presented by Vice-President Tom Matyok. Tom now works in healthcare, while still serving on the board of directors for the Brunswick GA Center. He proposed the following committee.

*Purpose:* Committee will focus on health and wellness issues unique to maritime community.

- lack of medical treatment
- inadequate medical chests
- preventive actions
- diet
- disease
- high rate of heart disease

Patrick motioned to create the committee. Fr. Richard Adiukwu seconded.

Discussion. Sally stated this is too broad an issue to tackle. Fr. Sinclair stated that he sees this committee as being one that would monitor what is going on 'out there' in order to report back to the group and let them know what's going on in other ports, etc.

International Seafarer Medical Committee, is doing work internationally, they are doing general research. When the reports are out, they will need us to disseminate it to our members. But we have no present group assigned to monitor it.

Sally stated it should be stated more like: Committee will be monitoring efforts of ICMA and other such groups.

Patrick agreed to change the motion to be stated "The committee will monitor efforts to enhance healthcare among seafarers."

Joy questioned the need for this. None of us are doctors. Pat Teske suggested that the Committee should not be a huge one. Fr. Sinclair stated most of our committees are passive. Something happens outside, and the committee reports on them.

Deacon Connick asked if this is a budget item. Fr. Sinclair stated there is no money budgeted for it at this time.

Call for show of hands 10 in favor, 5 opposed. The motion passed.

*Fr. Sinclair recessed the meeting at 5:10p.m.*

*Fr. Sinclair reconvened business meeting at 10:20 a.m.*

Shore leave report from Tom Matyok. Sally motioned to approve. Patrick seconded. All approved.

### **Merchant Marine Committee**

Jon Furukawa gave the report for the Merchant Marine Committee

TWIC will be required of anyone who requires unescorted access to the port. 3000 or more ports will be regulated. 10,000 vessels will be regulated by this. TWIC is in planning phase only, and is not very well put together yet. No mariners have even been tested with them yet. TWIC will be self-supporting program. It will be fairly expensive. \$100 if not more.

Patrick motioned to accept report. Connick seconded. All approved.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

### **Message to Mariners**

Submitted by Carol Waud, Fr. Tony Haycock, Rose Kearney

Fr. Sinclair presented it to the group. This can be used for Sea Sunday, National Maritime Day and reprinted in seafarer and Catholic news papers, etc.

Teske motioned to accept. Keating seconded. All approved

### **Resolution Belated thank you to the Merchant Mariners of WWII Act of 2005**

Presented by Jon Furukawa

Connick motioned to accept. Robert McKoon seconded. All approved

Connick suggested that Fr. Sinclair to send this to the American Legion, DFW, and Navy League

### **Resolution to establish a National Marine Scholarship Program to recruit and prepare Graduate Studies for Careers in the Fields of Marine Science**

Jon Furukawa presented the resolution

Connick moves to approve resolution. Patrick seconded. All approved.

Fr. Sinclair stated that it will be e-mailed everyone as a pdf. It will be very important that each chaplain prints it out and sends it to government, etc. Connick instructed to send it to VFW, Naval Reserve, Navy League, etc.

*Awards Committee - tabled that proposal for later discussion.*

### **Resolution to ask the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant Persons to request the congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments Renew and ad interim approval of the English Translation of the Mass of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Star of the Sea Mass**

Fr. Sinclair presented the resolution.

Connick motioned to accept the resolution. Furukawa seconded. Furukawa suggested we send this to AOS England/Wales, Canada, Australia, etc. Fr. Sinclair stated that would be excellent. We could all push this.

All approved

Connick moved to close Fr. Lloyd Thiel seconded. All approved

*The General Meeting of the AOS USA ended at 11:05 a.m.*