

Apostleship of the Sea of the United States of America
8th Annual National Conference
Chateau LeMoyne
New Orleans, Louisiana
May 5-8, 2009

The 8th Annual National Conference of the Apostleship of the Sea of the United States of America, held at the Chateau LeMoyne, New Orleans, Louisiana, on May 5-8, 2009, was opened by the President of the Apostleship of the Sea of the United States of America, the Rev. Sinclair K. Oubre, JCL, at 5:05 p.m. on Tuesday, May 5.

Local host and Administrative Board Member Donna Giroir welcomed the members to the meeting and to New Orleans. A letter was read from Archbishop Alfred C. Hughes, Archbishop of New Orleans. A welcome letter was also read from Archbishop Antonio Maria Veglio, who is the newly appointed president of the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Travelers.

Gary LaGrange from the Port of New Orleans welcomed the group to New Orleans. He noted that five of the top fourteen ports in the USA are in Louisiana.

Fr. Oubre explained the contents of the convention packet to the attendees. He also read a letter from His Eminence Cardinal Renato Martino, who recently retired as president of the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Travelers.

Fathers Falkenthal, Oubre, and Sipe will prepare resolutions and Deacon LaPoint and Carol Waud will prepare a message to seafarers.

A discussion concerning where to hold our national conference in 2010 surfaced great interest in holding the conference on a cruise ship.

A constitutional change was introduced to allow for more than one representative of the administrative board to come from the same geographic region.

To conclude the day, following a break, the members viewed the film *Porampo: Pirates of the Malacca Straits*.

Wednesday, May 6

Msgr. Jacques Harel has retired from his position at the Holy See. Members will have an opportunity to send a video greeting to him in thanksgiving and appreciation for his dedicated service to AOS.

There was a discussion concerning the R1 visa (religious workers) and the F1 visa (students) in

relationship to the TWIC (transportation worker's identity card). Possession of a TWIC does not allow an individual to escort a visitor to a ship. Multiple muster stations may be useful in escorting mariners from ships.

Members attended special topic workshops, choosing from (1) Cruise Ship Seminar; (2) Fishing seminar; or (3) Special Filipino Ministry.

After Mass and the lunch break Sr. Doris Goudeau spoke about the religious history of New Orleans, especially concerning Blessed Henreitte Delille. Some members participated in a walking tour of New Orleans in the afternoon.

Thursday, May 7

On Thursday morning, Sr. Myrna Tordillo, sc, AOS National Director employed by the USCCB, delivered greetings from Bishop J. Kevin Boland, the Episcopal promoter of the AOS-USA. Sr. Myrna spoke about the National Day of Prayer and Remembrance for Mariners, declared by the USCCB in 2005, and observed this year on May 21 in Washington, D.C. She also reported on the National Maritime Day observance scheduled for May 22.

Articles for Catholic Maritime News are sought, with the suggestion that these be submitted by email to Sister Myrna.

The need for a wider distribution of promotional materials for the Mary, Star of the Sea liturgical celebrations was mentioned. Perhaps the liturgy office of the USCCB might be helpful in disseminating these materials.

Dwayne Boudreaux, and inspector for the ITF (International Transportation Federation) spoke, and outlined five keys issues:

- (1) contractual law; wages issues and/or repatriation issues; he abandonment of vessels
- (2) injuries; need to seek medical help if it is a potentially career ending injury
- (3) death cases; ensure that life insurance is paid
- (4) oil dumping cases; mariners who are court witnesses in these matters get tied-up in Court work for months; applying for grants and the review of grants accepted
- (5) terminal access, for port workers to get to ships

Deacon LaPoint gave a financial briefing. Key to his presentation was the note about the high cost of doing the national conference, which is about twice the income it produces.

Ms. Doreen M. Badeaux, secretary general of the AOS-USA, spoke about her work for AOS-USA. Her job started in July of 2003, principally to assist the cruise ship priest program. Hurricane Ike did major damage and disrupted her work extensively, but she has graciously moved our office to her own residence so that the work of AOS-USA may continue. Doreen thanked the steel workers union which owns the building space we occupy. The group has been very kind to us during this difficult process.

The group heard a scriptural presentation by Dr. Basil Davis from Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans. He spoke about St. Paul and his theology of the cross. This topic had been chosen by the administrative board in recognition of this being the Year of St. Paul.

Father Reynolds presided and preached at Mass, which ended the morning. Members had lunch on their-own.

In that afternoon Dr. Davis presented on St. Paul and his sea voyages. Both his presentations were enthralling and he was widely applauded for his two presentations.

In the afternoon Fr. Oubre spoke about the new Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People's Manual for Chaplains and Pastoral Agents of the AOS. This updates a 1990 document, with a new structure and a new introduction, and incorporates ecumenical insights. It has eight parts and ten appendices.

Fr. Falkenthal spoke about the course he can offer for those who wish to train others to visit ships; specifically, a ship welfare visitor's training course. This is to certify trainers to teach the course to others, sponsored by the International Committee on Seafarers' Welfare. There is no charge for the course apart from transportation and housing.

Fr. Falkenthal also reported that the Archdiocese of Miami offers "Catholic Conversations on the Scriptures," an on-line Catholic Bible Study which is lectionary based.

The Knights of Columbus offers a series for people who desire to become Catholic and who live at sea and cannot participate in a parish based preparation program.

Friday, May 8 (through the kindness of Doreen Badeaux, as Fr. Reynolds had to depart)

Fr. Sinclair opened meeting at 9:00 a.m. Doreen Badeaux read the list of current members present, with voting rights.

Fr. Bill Reynolds moved to pay a membership to AOS-USA for Captain Richard Phillips; Sally Bostwick seconded the motion, which was approved.

Fr. Sinclair introduced presentation of an initiative presented by the Board by Fr. Bob Sipe and Fr. Henry Hernando, regarding the Fair Treatment of Seafarers. This is a pastoral initiative to insure that all seafarers and ministry personnel will be aware of seafarers' rights to fair treatment in cases

of accidents and alleged crimes.

Pertinent items will be sent to all Port Captains and AOS Centers. Request input from membership by May 20.

Fr. Sinclair explained that these materials are available, but he is not seeing them on ship, and we need to get this information out to them, so seafarers know their rights and responsibilities. Deacon Patrick suggested that the letter explain where to get the items. Deacon Joseph Connick suggested the second paragraph (AIM) include “religious factors”.

Fr. Sinclair introduced proposal from Fr. Richard Barclift regarding availability for replacement ministry in parishes and ports for Port Chaplains starting September 2009

President’s Report

Fr. Sinclair presented President’s Report

Fr. Sinclair spotlighted the work on R1 Visas with MARAD (Maritime Administration) and the work with CAMM (Council of American Master Mariners) on Criminalization of Seafarers. The report was accepted.

Fishing Report - reviewed and accepted

Seafarers Health Report - Carol Waud

She spotlighted the need for more members to join this committee and assist in its work.

Great Lakes and Rivers Report - Fr Bob Sipe

Fr. Sinclair asked about the water level. Fr. Bob said the water level is going down, and it is forcing them to bring in lighter vessels into many ports, although this is not affecting Duluth. Ballast water is an issue for them.

The report was accepted.

Piracy Resolution

Fr. Sinclair reviewed Board resolution on piracy, stating he hoped that the full assembly would endorse it.

Fr. Sinclair suggested adding a segment regarding:

Acknowledging call for arming crew, rejecting calls for arming of merchant mariners, but an openness for placing trained naval or private security personnel on vessels.

Sally’s suggestions:

It is not our place to tell Navy what to do. Should not use term incompetence, it is insulting

Third URGES paragraph: take out word “incompetence”

Amendment to Resolution

Joining together with others in maritime community against arming mariners, but supporting trained security teams onboard. “URGES, governments to bring the pirates to justice in a court of law.”

Motion to accept resolution as amended by Patrick LaPoint, and seconded Edmundo Vinluan; motion carried.

Resolution: Criminalization of Seafarers: (Updates are in blue on the screen).

Fr. Henry: suggested the word “Issued” should be “Issue” in the first blue paragraph.

Deacon Connick took issue with the resolution stating that this is law, and AOS USA can’t write a resolution speaking out against it. Sally agreed that we can’t tell lawmakers how to change a law.

Fr. Sinclair stated that the Seamen’s Manslaughter Act is an outdated law.

Fr. Jan Kubisa said, if there is an existing law and it is bad, and we don’t fight it, then we accept it.

Fr. Tom Falkenthal asked for a break

Fr Sinclair called the group back in to session. Fr. Tom Falkenthal motioned to table the issue; Edmundo Vinluan seconded motion. Brother Anthony Ornelas agreed to table it till next year until more members can be present. Sally Bostwick suggested we may need to partition this resolution into three different resolutions. All approved the motion to table the resolution.

Constitutional Amendment

Presently reads “Only one (1) elected member from any one Archdiocese, Diocese or Religious community....”

Proposed

“No more than three (3) elected members from any one”

Discussion:

A motion by Carol Waud to change the number from “No more than three (3) elected members” to “No more than two (2) elected members” passed.

The vote to adopt the amendment (as just amended) passed.

Message to Mariners - Carol Waud

Rafael Baptista motioned to accept; seconded by Fr. Jim Boyd.

Rafael Baptista suggested adding a paragraph on pollution. Lawrence Whiting suggested using “mariners and fishers” in the text, which was thus amended (and approved) to read:

We include all **fishers and seafarers** in our daily prayers, and we stand by you as advocates in your workplace, whether on vessels, docks, maritime academies, training schools, or oilrigs. We offer our services and facilities in caring for your spiritual, emotional and material needs while you are in a port in a faraway land.

Fr. Tom Falkenthal asked for clarification as to discussion regarding Certification Committee Question.

The minutes of the 2008 General meeting were reviewed.

Fr. Tom Falkenthal motioned that we reaffirm the resolution concerning certification that was adopted at the last meeting and communicate this reaffirmation in a letter to the National Director. Seconded by Carol Waud.

Lawrence Whiting suggested that the resolution should have been sent in writing separately to Sr. Myrna. Motion passed.

Fr. Sinclair welcomed Gloria and Michael Callais, from Abden Callais Offshore in Houma, LA. They own the Holy fleet, consisting of the Pope John Paul II, Sr Mary Roland, Bishop Oscar Solis, Sister Claire, Pope Benedict XVI, Mother Theresa, etc.

Brother Athony Ornelas motioned to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Edmundo Vinluan. Motion carried

Reports from the 2009 Annual Conference

Apostleship of the Sea Certification Committee Report 2009

Committee Chair- Karen Parsons SFO

Committee Members- Deacon Glenn Teske

Rev. Sinclair Oubre

Rev. Rivers Patout

- 1- All original records sent to Karen Parsons by Deacon Glenn, former Chair of the committee, have been destroyed in Hurricane Ike (September 2008).
- 2- Using photocopied records from the AOSUSA office Karen pieced together a history of certified chaplains. In the photocopies there are no records prior to 1993, although we know there were certified chaplains prior to that date.

<u>Chaplains Certified in 1993/Expires 1999</u>	<u>Port</u>	<u>Status</u>
Deacon Bob Balderas	National Director	exp

<u>Chaplains Certified in 1994/Expires 2000</u>	<u>Port</u>	<u>Status</u>
Rev. Xavier K	Savannah	not in ministry
Rev. Nicanor Sta Maria	San Juan	not in ministry
Karen Rushen	Detroit	not in ministry
Br. Gerry O'Malley	Anchorage	deceased

<u>Chaplains Certified in 1995/Expires 2001</u>	<u>Port</u>	<u>Status</u>
Sr. Rachel Smith	Oakland	not in ministry
Rev. Charles McTague	Newark	deceased
Deacon Dale Wamstad	Jacksonville	not in ministry
Msgr. Jim Dillenburg	Green Bay	expired
Rev. Sinclair Oubre	Pt. Arthur	expired
Rev. Rivers Patout	Houston	recert. in 2003

<u>Chaplains Certified in 1990/96/Expires 2002</u>	<u>Port</u>	<u>Status</u>
Karen (Lai) Parsons	Galveston	recert in 2002 recert in 2008

<u>Chaplains Certified in 1999/Expires 2005</u>	<u>Port</u>	<u>Status</u>
Deacon Glenn Teske	Green Bay	recert in 2006

<u>Chaplains Certified in 2003/Expires 2009</u>	<u>Port</u>	<u>Status</u>
Msgr. John FitzGerald	Baltimore	Due to recert

<u>Chaplains Certified in 2004/Expires 2010</u>	<u>Port</u>	<u>Status</u>
Rev. Daniel Walsh, C. S. Sp.	San Diego	not in ministry

AOS-USA
FISHING COMMITTEE
May 5-8, 2009
New Orleans, Louisiana
Captain Pietro Parravano

1. FISH COUNCIL BANS CALIFORNIA & OREGON COMMERCIAL SALMON FISHING FOR 2009: California and Oregon salmon fishermen will suffer through a second straight year without a salmon season. On 8 April 2009, the federal Pacific Fisheries Management Council (PFMC) issued a complete ban on commercial salmon fishing off California and nearly all the Oregon coast for 2009. Those commercial fishermen, environmental groups, and other

stakeholder groups met the predictable decision with no objections in attendance at a recent PFMC meeting. The closures were the inevitable result of the widespread collapse of California Central Valley Chinook stocks, which have always been the bread and butter of the ocean fisheries for the two states.

Weeks prior to the Council's official announcement, most salmon stakeholders had already recognized the writing on the wall. The 2008 ban on salmon fishing resulted from a dangerously low return of only 87,881 Chinook salmon in the Sacramento-San Joaquin River system in 2007. In 2008, Chinook salmon returns in Sacramento-San Joaquin River system declined to a record low of 66,286 fish. Last year's numbers fell far short of the council's minimum conservation goal of 122,000 returning salmon. Referencing the inadequate salmon returns, the PFMC did not propose a 2009 commercial salmon season as a potential option in its March 2009 outline.

California fishermen have suffered huge economic losses due to decreasing salmon runs in recent years. In 1978, there were nearly 5,000 active commercial salmon fishing vessels in California and by 2007 the state harbored only 601 active vessels. Nearly 2,263 fishermen or workers in allied industries lost their jobs after 2008's ban on commercial salmon fishing. The total economic losses to fishing communities and fishing-related businesses for 2008 were estimated to be more than \$250 million for California alone. Oregon suffered its own additional losses.

Lack of a commercial salmon season has forced many California and Oregon fishermen to rely on disaster relief funds, while they fight to bring the environmental policy reforms necessary to bring back healthy salmon numbers. Coastal communities that once relied on salmon for a livelihood are dissolving due to the financial stresses imposed by dwindling salmon runs. According to one fishermen present at the PFMC meeting, the "youngest crewmember in my port is 49 years old." Without healthy fish populations, the California and Oregon salmon fishing culture will continue to fade out as fewer and fewer youth are introduced to the profession. Much of the coastal infrastructure necessary for a healthy salmon fishery is also collapsing or close to the breaking point in both states.

The only bright point is that this year's salmon fishery in Washington State, because it is influenced mostly by Columbia River salmon stocks and not those from the California Central Valley, will be more like a normal season than last year, though still somewhat depressed in places.

2. ILLEGAL, UNREPORTED, UNREGULATED FISHING AND PIRACY: The European Commission has said it is ready to investigate and take action against any European boats or European-owned fishing companies that fly flags of convenience that engage in illegal fishing off the coast of Somalia. Abdirahman Ibibi, the deputy prime minister and minister of fisheries and marine resources in the new Somali national unity government, said that an estimated 220 foreign-owned vessels were still engaged in unlicensed and illegal fishing in Somali waters, most of them of European origin. Illegal fishing over the last two decades by European boats and European firms that operate boats that fly flags of convenience - when the nationality of the owner is different from the country of registration - as well as the regular dumping of toxic waste in Somali waters by Swiss and Italian companies has been described by analysts and development and green NGOs as the twin root causes of the current piracy crisis. As global powers ratchet up the naval pressure off the coast of Somalia and the European Union prepares to play host to a major international conference on the growing scourge of piracy, very little attention is being paid to the other 'piracy' in the area - the decades of European illegal fishing and dumping of toxic waste in Somali waters. A 2005 report from the Marine Resources Assessment Group (MRAG) for the UK government shows that the Somali economy loses an estimated €73 million a year due to illegal fishing. Other estimates put the figure as high as €230 million a year. On an annual basis, anywhere from 700 to

more than a thousand boats have fished illegally since 1991 in the country's waters.

It is not only Europe that is responsible: ships from Taiwan, China, South Korea, Thailand, Yemen and Kenya have also engaged in illegal fishing, according to Somali experts, but since 2006, this has declined as it is too risky to get close to the coast. Spanish Prime Minister Jose Luis Zapatero put an end to the practice in the same year, as his government said it could not provide protection. But Somalis did not turn to armed conflict at sea only as a way to combat illegal fishing. This irregular, self-styled coast guard also set out to put an end to widespread use of their waters as essentially an exceedingly cheap landfill, scrap yard, toilet and nuclear storage site all rolled into one by foreign ships that have been dumping industrial, medical and even radioactive waste. As early as 2005, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) warned that the vicious tsunami of the previous December had broken up tonnes of rusting barrels of such waste illegally that had been dumped in the country's waters for years. Nevertheless, while illegal fishing and toxic waste dumping together combine with state failure as the root causes of the piracy, it is important not to romanticize the pirates as some Robin Hoods of the waves, warns Ali Abdulahi, a Somali analyst and CEO of a local management advisory firm, Amsas Consulting. "Somalis have been catapulted into piracy by the illegal fishing and toxic waste dumping," he told EUobserver. "However, there are two types of pirates, the first is a criminal element and the second are the original fishermen who have been displaced by the illegal fishing. But when you combine the two, it is very hard to distinguish one from the other, given the thousands of boats involved. Without solving the root causes of the piracy, it will not go away."

Articles on the piracy:

<http://www.salon.com/opinion/feature/2009/04/24/pirates/index.html>

<http://euobserver.com/13/27983>

<http://euobserver.com/13/27244>

<http://euobserver.com/?aid=27966>

3. JOINT OCEAN COMMISSION INITIATIVE CALLS FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION TO ADDRESS OCEAN CONCERNS IN FISHERY, CLIMATE, ENERGY AND ECONOMIC POLICY:

On 7 April, I was one of the Commissioners that delivered the report from the Joint Ocean Commission Initiative (JOCI), "Changing Oceans, Changing World: Ocean Priorities for the Administration and Congress." The recommendations incorporate input from leaders at some of the most respected and influential ocean and coastal policy and science organizations in the country.

The report identifies specific actions the Obama Administration and Congress should take within two to four years to improve ocean and coastal policy, management, science and funding, emphasizing their contributions toward addressing pressing national challenges of climate change, energy security and reviving the economy.

The impacts of climate change, such as sea level rise, ocean acidification, and increased coastal flooding and erosion accompanying more intense storms threaten private and public infrastructure and ecosystems, decreasing revenue from coastal industries and generating staggering costs for recovery efforts. Economic activity in coastal watershed counties, where well over half the nation's population resides, contributes approximately 68 percent, or \$7.8 trillion, of the nation's

GDP. Ocean-dependent industries such as fishing, shipping and offshore energy generate approximately \$138 billion for the United States each year, which is 2.5 times more than the agriculture industry. These contributions will likely be in jeopardy as climate change impacts along our coasts become more prevalent.

The Joint Initiative's recommendations in "Changing Oceans, Changing World: Ocean Priorities for the Administration and Congress" include specific directives to establish a national ocean policy, strengthen the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, reauthorize the Coastal Zone Management Act, integrate ocean science into broader climate change, energy and economic initiatives, and renew the nation's leadership in international ocean policy. These actions will require increased funding for ocean science, management and education, and would have widespread benefits.

For a full list of the specific recommendations included in the Joint Initiative's "Changing Oceans, Changing World: Ocean Priorities for the Administration and Congress," please visit www.jointoceancommission.org.

4. SALMONAID FESTIVAL; BERKELEY, CA BENEFIT TO FEATURE LIVE MUSIC, AUCTION: From 1900 to 2300 HRS, guests can enjoy live music and a live auction while talking with local fishermen. The event will be held at La Pena Cultural Center in Berkeley, CA. SalmonAid is a place where commercial, recreational and Tribal fishermen, conservation organizations, chefs, restaurants, scientists and more come together to celebrate wild salmon, wild rivers, and healthy communities. The theme of the 2009 SalmonAid, to be held 20 and 21 June, is "Restore Rivers, Recover Salmon, Rebuild Jobs!" Suggested donation for the benefit event is \$25. Visit www.salmonaid.org for more information.

5. COOKING FOR SOLUTIONS GALA IN MONTEREY, CA: On 15 May, the Monterey Bay Aquarium will host the culinary celebration of the year, featuring spectacular gourmet dishes prepared by celebrity chefs and 60 outstanding regional restaurants; organic and sustainable wines from 55 premium West Coast wineries; and a book signing with The French Laundry's Thomas Keller, honored Chef of the Year. A silent auction benefiting the Aquarium's Seafood Watch program will feature outstanding culinary adventures, great wines and many one-of-a-kind items. Admission ticket includes a souvenir wineglass and an event program with recipes from participating chefs. The event goes from 1930 to 2230 HRS and costs \$150 for general public/\$120 Aquarium members. More information is at www.montereybayaquarium.org.

6. AMERICA'S RIVERS AND FISH CONTAMINATED WITH PHARMACEUTICALS: Recent studies released by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the United States Geologic Survey (USGS) have uncovered a new threat to the water quality of U.S. rivers. Pharmaceutical residues that were once in such minute quantities as to be immeasurable by scientist have now been documented in 5 major U.S. rivers. The research of EPA and USGS adds to a growing body of international scientific evidence suggesting that pharmaceuticals are passing through wastewater treatment plants and into river ecosystems.

The two federal studies released by the EPA and USGS focus on the link between upstream pharmaceutical companies and downstream contamination. At one treated sewage outfall location, federal scientists measured the muscle relaxant metaxalone at concentrations hundreds of times higher than the threshold necessary for an environmental impact review of the substance by the EPA. The highest concentrations of dissolved pharmaceuticals are found at wastewater treatment plant intakes that are fed by large drug companies.

Companies such as Pfizer do not test wastewater for potential contaminants before it is conveyed off-site for treatment. Scientists from the EPA examined sewage at a wastewater treatment plant in Kalamazoo, Michigan that receives Pfizer, Inc.'s wastewater. Data recorded by Kalamazoo's Public Services Director showed high concentrations of lincomycin entering the plant, an antibiotic drug that was being manufactured by Pfizer near the time of testing. Kalamazoo's water treatment plant was fortunately able to remove the majority of the lincomycin before it was released into local waterways.

Five rivers in or near Chicago, Dallas, Philadelphia, Phoenix, and Orlando that receive large amounts of wastewater discharge from wastewater treatment plants were found to host contaminated fish. These fish were contaminated with a wide range of common medications and chemicals that are used and excreted by local citizens. Among those drugs discovered in fish tissue were the cholesterol drug gemfibrozil, the hypertension medication diltiazem, and the antidepressants Zoloft and Prozac. Previous research has pointed towards the detrimental effects on reproductive behavior that bioaccumulated antidepressants can render to fish.

A 2006 U.S. Census report recorded 1,886 pharmaceutical companies existing in the United States. Despite the obvious environmental and human health threats that ingestion of prescription drugs and chemicals pose, federal agencies such as the EPA have yet to establish acceptable aquatic limits for these compounds. The EPA's most recent sampling of fish and surface water is part of the National Rivers and Stream Assessment that will guide the EPA in further pursuit of this water quality issue.

For a 20 April 2009 story from the Associated Press, go to www.sltrib.com/ci_12182699. For a 26 March story from the U.S. News and World Report, go to http://health.usnews.com/articles/health/healthday/2009/03/26/fish-in-us-rivers-tainted-with-common-medications_print.htm.

7. SENATOR BOXER REINTRODUCES COMPREHENSIVE OCEANS LEGISLATION: U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer reintroduced the National Oceans Protection Act on 22 April, Earth Day 2009. The legislation, first introduced in 2005, outlines a policy to protect the oceans and Great Lakes by promoting research and education and improving coordination and collaboration between, for example, federal agencies, state managers, and local governments.

Senator Boxer said, "Our oceans affect nearly every aspect of our lives—our food, our health, our climate, our economy—but they have become increasingly endangered. This bill [S. 858] provides a comprehensive approach to ocean management that will ensure that Americans can enjoy the beauty and majesty of our oceans for generations to come."

According to the press release from Senator Boxer's office, some of the key components of the bill are the creation of a National Ocean Policy and a Presidential advisory committee to oversee its execution. The bill would also establish "Regional Ocean Partnerships" with broad representation from all levels of government and agencies that would implement the National Ocean Policy. Funding for these entities would come from a postage stamp and from "new or emerging activities in Federal waters," such as wind and wave energy.

8. UN FORMALLY DECLARES 8 JUNE "WORLD OCEANS DAY": World Oceans Day is finally official, 16 years after the idea was originally proposed. Creating a day to celebrate was first suggested at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Museums, aquariums, conservation groups and other organizations have celebrated the day annually ever since then, but it took thousands of emails and petitions to make the designation official. The UN is planning festivities for this summer. For the press release, see

<http://www.transworldnews.com/NewsStory.aspx?id=83850&cat=12>.

9. THE SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERIES MANAGEMENT COUNCIL: Has decided to close both the recreational and commercial fisheries for red snapper in federal waters from Florida to North Carolina. The closure would take the form of a 180-day ban, with the option to continue the ban for an additional 6 months if stocks did not rebound sufficiently. The fishing ban must now get approval from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to be enacted. NMFS released a 2008 stock assessment estimating that “the total population of spawning females in the Atlantic has dipped to 375 metric tons — about 3 percent of what's deemed a healthy population,” according to an Associated Press report.

The closure could be disastrous for coastal towns whose businesses depend on a robust charter industry. Recreational anglers account for about three quarters of the total red snapper catch in the Atlantic. Many of these recreational fishermen utilize head boats or charter vessels, the operation of which provides the foundation for a major tourist economy. These towns are now left to wonder whether their businesses could survive the ban. The potentially swift implementation of the ban and its indefinite length make budgeting for the closure difficult.

www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5hgZ_ab0_zXZVvCvdLx7ubRA3KVPwD96NONKG0. For the 8 March Florida Times-Union article, see www.jacksonville.com/jim_sutton/2009-03-07/story/future_of_snapper_an_emotional_topic.

10. U.N. ALLIES WITH GLOBAL SHIPPING COMPANIES TO END ALIEN INVASION:

The International Maritime Organization (IMO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Global Environment Facility (GEF), and four private shipping companies have banded together to form the Global Industry Alliance. According to one estimate, 228 marine species are commonly transported in ballast water or on the exterior of marine vessels from port to port. These foreign stowaways are known as invasive species and they have become an increasing threat to marine ecosystems worldwide.

The IMO has found international agreement on the severity of the problem. In 2008, the IMO put into force an international ruling that shipping industries would treat the outside of their ships for species like barnacles that can attach themselves to ship hulls. Another treaty to tackle the other issue of ballast water must still be ratified by 30 countries before it can be enforced. Although the international ballast water treaty is still pending, the shipping industry is already developing several new technologies to counter the invasive species threat. The use of heat, biodegradable chemicals, electrochemical control, and ballast-free ships are all potential solutions that are currently being tested. Perhaps the most promising of these technologies is the introduction of ballast-free ships. Ships equipped with this ballast system would continuously run seawater through the ship via a massive plumbing system, rather than carry the same water from one port to the next.

For an 11 March 2009 article from the Worldwatch Institute, go to www.worldwatch.org/node/6035. A copy of the IMO treaty on ballast water and invasive species can be found at www.imo.org/Conventions/mainframe.asp?topic_id=867.

11. SCAN A CAN, MEET A FISHERMAN: Oregon State University (OSU), the Community Seafood Initiative and Oregon commercial fisherman have teamed up to create Pacific Fish Trax. With the Pacific Fish Trax pilot project, consumers at the two participating New Seasons Market stores can scan the bar code of specially labeled packages of albacore tuna to see information about the fish, the fisherman who caught the fish, the boat used to catch the tuna, and the processor that

packaged it. Once home, the consumer can go online to find even more educational multimedia related to the fish they purchased. The pilot project began on 20 February.

The eventual aim of the project is to more accurately manage fisheries using real-time data collected daily by fishermen and analyzed by fisheries scientists. <http://oregonstate.edu/dept/ncs/newsarch/2009/Feb09/fishtrax.html>.

12. DILUTION MAY NOT BE THE SOLUTION FOR FISH FARMS: Until recently, the effects of aquaculture wastes on the seemingly limitless ocean environment were seen as insignificant. Waste flow models employed by aquaculture industry officials and permitting agencies were based on sewage outfall pipes. These waste flow models were ill equipped to accurately model the true dynamics of fish farm waste flow. Data based on these models reinforced the archaic cliché that “the solution to pollution is dilution.”

In response to the inadequacy of current aquaculture waste flow models, Oliver Fringer, an Assistant Professor at Stanford University, has utilized new Stanford software to more accurately model the flow of fish farm waste. Oliver created a mock coastal marine area using the SUNTANS software to demonstrate the multitude of waste flow variables that the software will account for. This software will be applied to geographically specific models to ensure that results are regionally specific. Factors such as cage design, rotation of the earth, and variable currents can all be considered with the new program. Shifting currents could mean the difference between waste dispersal out to sea or countywide beach closures.

The development of the SUNTANS software comes at a crucial moment in aquaculture. The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council recently voted to begin permitting offshore aquaculture in the Gulf of Mexico. This controversial decision was argued against by many on the grounds that excess fish waste could create more “dead zones” -- areas where there is not enough dissolved oxygen in the water to support plants and animals -- or wind up polluting nearby public beaches. SUNTANS could be a vital tool in future site placement and permitting along the Gulf Coast and worldwide, wherever aquaculture is proposed.

<http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/greenspace/2009/02/waste-from-fish.html>.
www.imperialvalleynews.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=4386&Itemid=2.

13. MERCURY TREATY IN THE WORKS: The Ministers of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) met on 16 February in Nairobi, Kenya to begin formulating an international agreement to reduce and regulate global mercury levels. In a reversal of previous policy, the United States is now in support of the development of a legally binding global treaty. The strategy aims to reduce international demand for industrial products that incorporate mercury and processes - such as mercury mining operations - while also seeking to cut atmospheric emissions and clean up programs for contaminated sites.

Because of mercury’s ability to travel long distances and remain in the environment for extended periods of time, any one nation’s failure to comply with the regulations could have great international impacts. About 120 countries in total have expressed interest in such a legally binding agreement. Most global mercury is emitted from burning coal, some chemical production, and small-scale mining.

Mercury is a neurotoxin that builds up in the air, water, and soil. It is also infamous for bio accumulating in fish, which eat bacteria, plants, and smaller fish already contaminated by mercury and also absorb the chemical through their gills from contaminated water. Fish have evolved to tolerate mercury levels much, much higher than in the surrounding water. In humans, on the other

hand, mercury exposure can be lethal, especially for fetuses and young children. High levels of mercury can cause damage to the nervous system, lungs, liver, and kidney. Over 6,000 tons of mercury is released into the environment every year.

<http://news.prnewswire.com/DisplayReleaseContent.aspx?ACCT>

14. AUCTION AT THE PORTLAND, ME FISH EXCHANGE: The auction is now using a computer program for it's selling & buying. Instead of raising numbered paddles in the air, seafood buyers place their bids by tapping the space bar on their computer keyboards. With fish catches falling and the region's other seafood auctions in Gloucester, Mass., and New Bedford, Mass., going electronic, the time came for the fish exchange to change its ways. Electronic bidding speeds up the auction and reduces costs. And it's flexible because seafood buyers can be anywhere while bidding.

15. PERFECT STORM HONORS: Capt. Larry Brudnicki commanded the crew of his U.S. Coast Guard ship through two successful rescue missions during the famed "Perfect Storm" of Halloween 1991. Brudnicki, who is being inducted into the U.S. Coast Guard Hall of Heroes, was the commanding officer aboard the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Tamaroa during a rare confluence of storms that conquered a commercial fishing crew and has since captured imaginations as the subject of a book and a Hollywood film. Brudnicki and his crew rescued three people who were clinging to a sinking sailboat off the coast of Nantucket and then went on to save an Air National Guard helicopter rescue crew that ran out of fuel while attempting a mission and crash-landed into the ocean.

16. UNITED STATES FISHERIES ECONOMIC REPORT: U.S. commercial and recreational fishing generated more than \$185 billion in sales and supported more than two million jobs in 2006, according to a new economic report released by the U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service. The commercial fishing industry-harvesters, seafood processors, seafood wholesalers and seafood retailers-generated \$103 billion in sales, \$44 billion in income and supported 1.5 million jobs in 2006, the most recent year included in the report, *Fisheries Economics of the United States, 2006*, which covers 1997 to 2006. Recreational fishing generated \$82 billion in sales, \$24 billion in income, and supported 534,000 jobs in 2006. The report also breaks down the sales, income and job figures for each coastal state. The highest amount of sales generated by the commercial fishing industry was in California (\$9.8 billion), Florida (\$5.2 billion), Massachusetts (\$4.4 billion), Washington (\$3.8 billion), and Alaska (\$3 billion). The most jobs were generated in California (179,000), Florida (103,000), Massachusetts (83,000), Washington (75,000) and Texas (47,000). Fisheries Economics of the United States, 2006 is available online at: <http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/st5/index.html>

17. THE COMMERCIAL FISHERMEN OF AMERICA (CFA) will be meeting in Gloucester, MA May 20-21. Acquiring healthcare for commercial fishermen is the top priority for the organization. <http://www.cfafish.org/>

18. FEDERAL JUDGE REINSTATES FISHING REGULATIONS: A federal judge stepped back from his decision to override National Marine Fisheries Service regulatory policies, reinstating the harsh cutback in fishing effort in the eastern Gulf of Maine that he had suspended in January. U.S. District Judge Edward Harrington granted NMFS' motion to dismiss a civil case brought by the states of Massachusetts and New Hampshire; they argued a 2006 regulatory scheme known as Framework 42 was illegal and too restrictive. Newly appointed NOAA Administrator,

Jane Lubchenco, released \$16M to assist the Northeast fishing industry with the transition to management of the fishery by sectors and catch shares.

GULF COAST REPORT AOS-USA 2009

All of the Seamen's Centers on the Gulf Coast are doing well with the exception of Galveston which is still recovering from Hurricane Ike. The rain just won't go away for Karen and the clouds are not clearing up either. Just last weekend, there was heavy rain in the Galveston, Texas City area and the AOS van was flooded and consequently totaled. So now besides needing lots of repairs to her Center, she is also in need of a van.

All of the chaplains have said that the number of vessels visiting their ports, docks and anchorages have declined in the economic slump that the United States is experiencing right now.

All of the chaplains have received their TWIC cards with the exception of Fr. Lito in Mobile who is still experiencing trouble with being a non-resident. Fr. Lito and Deacon Connick have been visiting the vessels together and Deacon Connick has been able to escort Fr. Lito into the port and onto the ships. The new Harbor Master for the Port of Mobile has been trying to help Fr. Lito with escorts etc.

The Mobile Center is doing well with their canteen and the Mobile folks will be coming to the AOS-USA meeting to provide hospitality for the meeting. This is very generous of them. Fr. Lito and Deacon Connick tried to visit the Carnival Cruise ship Holiday last weekend and were able to get on board but was not able to say Mass for the crew. The captain stated there was too much work to be done.

Fr. Eulalio in Corpus Christi said that an agent had said that their ships have really been reduced in number. An agent told him that their numbers have been reduced almost to half.

The Port of New Orleans has recently had an increase with the number of Chaplains they have. The Archbishop has assigned 4 Deacons to work with Deacon Reggie and

Donna.

Joy Manthey

Ports of Los Angeles, Long Beach, and Port Hueneme (Oxford)
Rev. Henry L. Hernando,
Pacific Coast Representative

This is a follow-up of the October 2008 by the Western regional representative. It was aired in that report: three main legitimate concerns affecting the local maritime industry due to the national economic crisis. As predicted, they came true in three key issues: toned-down volume of cargo; Transfer of business to some “user-friendly” ports: TWIC card-implementation. 3 Ts:

First, on marked decrease or lack of cargo-carriers’ movement in many berths as containers are stock-piling and car lots not moving. Fewer ships docked at the Los Angeles / Long Beach ports’ complex, compared to previous years. In the last quarter (Oct-Dec) of 2008, ex. gr. only 1329 ships came, 90 fewer than the 1419 visits of year 2007. Likewise, this first quarter has only 1235 ships docking, down from the same timeframe (Jan-Mar) of 2008 with 1339 visits. In 3 years’ period, Los Angeles ports lost 1000 ships’ visits from 6080 (’06) to 5000 for fiscal year. It surely filters down to the workforce that used to have 1100, down to 600 workers, over-all. It’s a one-third loss of what it used to be. Only the cruise ships and tankers keep their averages.

Secondly, the fear of moving out or relocating ships to some ports with less fees, is realized. A classic example is the partial transfer or relocation of “Cosco” maritime operations from Long Beach ports to Port Prince Rupert, B.C. , Canada for economic reasons and shorter land route to Atlantic seaboard destinations. It’s a practical move that hopefully won’t trigger an exodus.

Thirdly, the TWIC card-implementation has caused a mixed bag of results, beneficial to some but confusing in some cases as there’s no uniformed mode of implementing it. Personally, I’ve positive experience but heard of disturbing reports from some port chaplains and complaints from sailors that need to be heeded and responded as part of growing pains of this new era.

In view of this present snafu, what would be our response, as people of faith, doing this ministry? A theological reflection invites us to step back and take a good look and see a spiritual meaning and not jumping at once to instant solution like sheer economic stimulus for a fast, short-range and temporary palliative answer that could saddle our posterity to forever bail us out of a present situation. The big irony is that despite the “down-sized” port operations and seeming financial loss due to the crisis, POLA still is laden with high revenues by ships’ rented berths, wharves’ fees, tariffs, earning no less than \$8K per visit, and multiply that by the few thousand ships, we wonder why POLA can’t give a token free rent for our space as our Stella Maris Center is the only “non-profit” entity still paying rent, simply because we offer religious services. The economic crisis is a reminder that there’s more to life than just material riches to satisfy the human heart. That’s where our ministry kicks in to help deal with emotional fallout.

Year-End Stats

Our mission is accomplished receiving the more than 1,800 sailors visiting our San Pedro Center, providing for their spiritual and other needs and working in good partnership with ISC for

those 7,500 sailors from the Long Beach, Terminal Is., Wilmington, transporting to and from the ships.

(Re: Fishing Industry: See Pet Parravano's report and Cardinal Martino's "Feb. 18,'09' Letter)

Renovated Chapel

Our Stella Maris Hospitality Center and renovated "Last Supper" Chapel space, now renamed as Msgr. Patrick Gallagher Memorial Chapel has been a steady fixture of a spiritual oasis at Berth 93-A, WCC, San Pedro. It has been a "home away from home" and the sacred site of about 200 Masses, religious services, sacraments, and counseling, as a "floating Church".

Potential

This outreach ministry has much potential for evangelization, formation of lay ministers and possible vocation among the single sailors. It's our hope and prayer as we train some to be so authorized and properly commissioned for a "priest-less cruise", a lesson they can take home with them as extraordinary ministers and lay readers as recipients of lay empowerment.

Collaboration

As statement of solidarity, we work closely with the ISC and Marine Exchange and ITF people to provide total quality service and advocacy for our seafarers. In fact, we have been having Saturday evenings' anticipated Liturgies at ISC Chapel (till lately they closed Saturdays) before we'd take them back (to their ships) in Long Beach. We also celebrated Holy Week "Triduum" religious services as in past years for them to share in the Paschal Mystery like they used to.

Process

Our mission statement "as pilgrim people ministering to seafaring pilgrims" urges us to be a Center to answer their various needs, not only spiritual ones. We have augmented our services from the Chapel, to the Transmittal desk, to the warehouse to handle and ship "Balikbayan" boxes (mainly to P.I.) we provide means for them to send for their families' needs and opening soon our new internet and more phone system at no extra cost for them but a phone card.

Paradox

In our world becoming small due to the high-tech communications, yet there seems a distance between sailors and port workers. Our Center serves as a melting pot, not just a common site for Worship, but a friendly space to socialize in fellowship through snacks, light drinks, just "shooting the breeze", but not to fraternize nor familiarize, keeping professionalism, respect keeping our overseas "USO" Centers as our working model to offer a wholesome R&R time.

Challenge

Our urgent task is to be able to do more for less despite our Chancery's cut back of the yearly subsidy from \$60 K to \$25 K. At least, we got only one Center to maintain with the closing of our Long Beach @ Queen Mary, two years ago. Our only contact with the Long Beach-based sailors would be at ISC or to get aboard the ships. Thank God, TWIC makes it easier for me to get through, an unescorted but it's not always the case for sailors to get through for easy exit.

Ongoing Mission

Remembering those serving before us, the late Msgr. Patrick Gallagher, Fr. Sylvester Thomas, we felt the loss of two volunteers, Al Garrison and Del Kopchak, we owe it to them to continue the

good work they left us: to welcome with open hearts the stranger, so witness to His endless love and our Christian hospitality. Even with a limited budget, we can show His unconditional love and mercy as we fulfill our mission to be Christ to all coming to Him, "who labor and are burdened" and "He'll give them rest" (Matt. 11,28). And He does! "Come and See" (John 1,39)

April, 2009
Rev. Henry L. Hernando

Glossary:

POLA =Port Of Los Angeles
ISC =International Seafarers' Center
TWIC =Transport Worker Identification Credential
ITF =International Transport Federation

Seafarers' Health
Committee Report
AOSUSA Conference

April 1, 2009

This is a recent article from the Seattle Times dated March 22nd 2009. It tells of a hidden component in the sinking of the *Alaska Ranger*. This is a scathing indictment of Japanese fish masters and their responsibility in the loss of life due to harsh treatment of Seafarers is the sole topic of this Committee's report.

The struggle for power on doomed Alaska Ranger

Former crew members who worked for Fishing Company of Alaska allege misconduct by Japanese fish masters, and the Coast Guard is investigating possible violations of U.S. maritime law.

COURTESY OF ERIC HAYNES

Alaska Ranger

Konno walked up behind the crewman and, without warning, shoved him face-first onto the deck. When the crewman protested, Konno "went ballistic on me, and started screaming: 'You are nothing. If I want you off the boat, you're off the boat,' " Clayton Putnam recalled.

Putnam filed a complaint with the boat's owner, The Fishing Company of Alaska. The incident 15

years ago foreshadowed a pattern of misconduct by Konno and other Japanese fish masters working aboard the six vessels owned by the Seattle-based seafood company.

The fish masters are hired by a Japanese seafood buyer as advisers to help Fishing Company of Alaska catch and process Alaska fish. Their role is not to make command decisions aboard the company's ships.

But according to Putnam and a dozen other former crew members, some of the Japanese nationals appeared to flout U.S. maritime laws that require licensed American captains and mates to control the company's fleet during the pressure-packed harvests that unfold in perilous conditions.

Over the years, some of the Japanese fish masters physically assaulted some of the company's American crewmen, repeatedly violated policies that prohibit shipboard drinking and helped oust two American skippers who defied their directives, the former crew members say. Such conduct increased the risks facing the Fishing Company of Alaska crews, who toil in an industry with the highest death rate in the U.S.

Those dangers were starkly evident one year ago when the Alaska Ranger, a 189-foot vessel operated by Fishing Company of Alaska with 47 crew, sank March 23 in the Bering Sea, claiming the lives of five crew members, including Konno. It took a dramatic rescue by the Coast Guard and a sister ship to avert a worse disaster.

In the weeks before the Ranger sank, Konno helped run off its U.S. captain. The Coast Guard is examining Konno's conduct before the sinking, and has launched a separate investigation of the conduct of other Japanese fish masters who work on Fishing Company of Alaska's boats. The company, which operated seven ships when the Alaska Ranger was still afloat, is one of the few in the North Pacific waters off Alaska that still relies heavily on foreign fish masters.

"I have grave concerns that the continued practice of having (Japanese) fish masters control the operation of these vessels could lead to another casualty," said Capt. Mark Hamilton, captain of the port for western Alaska. "I find that practice unacceptable."

Fishing Company of Alaska officials say their licensed American crews always retain command of the company's boats as they head, gut and freeze the Bering Sea catch.

But in interviews, former crew said that power is usurped by some Japanese fish masters.

"They run the boats," said Eric Haynes, a cook who worked for company beginning in 1994 and survived the 2008 sinking of the Ranger. "They run the wheelhouse. They run the deck. They run the (fish) factories. The Americans all have titles, but they answer to the Japanese."

"Fish or die" approach

For years, the government has been warned about the conduct of Fishing Company of Alaska's Japanese fish masters. In 1998, a federal fisheries observer aboard one of the company's factory ships reported that "the Japanese have little concern for safety, but their power in the company enabled them to override concerns of the American officers."

"The Japanese had a 'fish or die,' ... approach to safety concerns. I believe this will lead to the demise of the vessel at some point," the observer wrote in comments obtained by The Seattle Times under the federal Freedom of Information Act.

In 2005, the Coast Guard received reports of three physical assaults by a Japanese fish master against a licensed U.S. mate aboard the company ship Alaska Warrior.

Yet only this year — in the aftermath of the sinking of the Ranger — has the Coast Guard turned its investigative spotlight on the company's Japanese fish masters.

Part of that focus is on Konno and whether he wielded improper influence aboard the Ranger.

"The key is not who was at the helm but who was making decisions," said Capt. Mike Rand, chairman of a Marine Board of Investigation that is expected to release a report later this year about the loss of the ship.

A second Coast Guard investigation was triggered seven months after the Ranger went down. In October 2008, a first mate aboard the company's Alaska Juris radioed the Coast Guard to report that he had been assaulted by an intoxicated Japanese fish master, Eiju Okuda. The fish master allegedly punched him in the head and grabbed the helm of the trawler.

This second Coast Guard investigation could result in civil fines against Fishing Company of Alaska, or possible referral for prosecution, according to Hamilton, the captain of the port in Anchorage.

Fishing Company of Alaska — in a prepared statement — said it would not comment on incidents that may be under investigation by a government agency or subject to litigation.

"FCA also declines to respond to accusations and innuendoes from sources of questionable trustworthiness and motives," the statement said.

Simmering tensions

The Fishing Company of Alaska is based in an office on Seattle's Lower Queen Anne Hill. The business, which this year employs more than 200 crew on six ships, is owned by Karena Adler, a reclusive 55-year-old who lives on Mercer Island.

Adler founded the company in the mid-1980s, less than a decade after the 1976 passage of a landmark American fishery law that gave U.S. vessels first claim to all seafood harvests within 200 miles of the nation's coasts.

Many of the U.S. fishing companies initially used foreign-born fish masters but most no longer used them as the Americans gained expertise in Alaskan waters. Adler bucked that trend, keeping the Japanese fish masters and several other Japanese employees aboard each vessel.

This reliance on the fish master reflects her partnership with a Japanese seafood buyer, Anyo Fisheries, which buys most of the company's catch of mackerel, rock fish and other species favored

in Asian markets.

The Japanese fish masters have brought a fierce work ethic and devotion to fishing that few Americans can match, according to a former Fishing Company of Alaska employee.

"You had to pay them homage because they were the ones that were always going to be there," said Rosie Szymanski, who spent six years working for Adler. "And if they were given that respect, it was not a problem."

But there were some American skippers who couldn't get along with some of their Japanese colleagues, said George Anderson, who served as Adler's port captain from 1985-95.

"Among Americans, you had problems of prejudice and things like that. Some of them just weren't able to bridge the gap."

Anderson said that during the decade he worked for Adler, he would not tolerate a fish master's assaulting an American skipper, and neither would Adler.

Others described tension aboard the company's vessels as licensed American skippers sought to assert control over the Japanese crew.

"There were a number of different power struggles involving Japanese fish masters," said Bill Chace, who served as a Fishing Company of Alaska skipper from 1996-98. "I am a third-generation New England fisherman and could not agree with how things were run. The captain has to be No. 1."

Richard Canty, a former Fishing Company of Alaska captain, said he needed the job and did what was necessary to get along with the Japanese when he first went to work for the company in 1989. But over time, he rebelled.

Once, a Japanese fish master on company factory ship wanted to take the shortest route back to port, despite heavy seas. Canty wanted a slower, safer course. "We got into a shoving match, and I said to (him), 'Keep off my wheel,' " Canty said.

Twice, he said, he was transferred to different boats after quarreling with the fish masters. In 2004, he balked at a fish master's request to throw low-value pollock overboard, which federal rules required to be kept. The fish master called Adler from the ship and asked that Canty be removed.

Canty said he tried to fight back, telling Adler about the dispute and submitting photographs of liquor bottles in the fish master's cabin, a violation of company policy. In the end, Canty lost his job. "She said I was trying to destroy her company."

Fishing Company of Alaska's conservation violations have not escaped scrutiny from federal investigators. Last year, it was fined almost \$450,000 to settle charges of fishing in closed areas and other illegal activity by several of its factory ships. It was one of the largest such fines ever paid for fishery-conservation violations in the North Pacific, according to federal officials.

2 captains leave Ranger

It was 1993 when Clayton Putnam went to sea, landing a job on Adler's Alaska Juris. The 20-year-old greenhorn quickly learned that the Japanese — who ate separately from the Americans — were at the top of the pecking order.

Konno, who would later become fish master of the Alaska Ranger, was then an assistant fish master and a taskmaster who once scoffed at complaints about an electrical short in the fish factory, joking it helped keep workers alert, Putnam said. Then in 1994, a worker was shocked so badly he was rendered unconscious and had to be evacuated from the boat, said Putnam, who left the company that year.

Konno was later promoted to fish master. Aboard the Alaska Ranger, he continued to clash with the American crew. In 2006, he insisted on keeping fish slimed by hydraulic oil, and almost came to blows over it with the captain, Jeff Parker, according to Haynes, the cook.

When the season ended, Parker was replaced by Steve Slotvig, who also had a rocky relationship with Konno.

Konno so despised Slotvig that by late 2007 the Japanese fish master would leave the dining area whenever Slotvig came in, according to Haynes.

A big blowup came in early 2008, weeks before the boat sank, as Konno — who was at the helm — pushed the vessel through unusually thick ice. There was some violent scraping and vibration of the hull, several crew members said, and Slotvig wanted to slow down. Several crew members witnessed the incident.

"Captain Steve told him that 'It's my f'ing boat,' " and that he should be driving it,' " Kenny Smith, a surviving crew member testified at a Coast Guard hearing in Seattle. Konno started yelling at him in Japanese and then spit in Slotvig's face, Smith said.

After that, Konno boasted that he had called Adler, the company owner, and predicted that Slotvig would be booted off the boat when it reached port in Dutch Harbor, Alaska, according to Haynes.

During a Coast Guard hearing last year, Slotvig said he couldn't remember the argument over the ice but did recall other disputes with Konno. He said it was his decision to leave the Ranger in early March just weeks before it sank: "I had been up there a long time, and when he (Konno) got angry with me, I asked to be put on another vessel."

Ship thrust into reverse

Survivors of the Ranger say that Slotvig was far from a perfect skipper, but he was big on safety.

He knew about the Ranger's controllable-pitch propeller — key information that might have helped save lives just weeks later when the Ranger began leaking in the stern and then sank. When the ship's electrical power was lost, and the engines continued to operate, the propeller could put the vessel into reverse. That would make it very difficult for the crew to scramble safely into life rafts.

Slotvig, testifying before a Coast Guard panel, said that he was aware that the propeller could send the boat backward. While at port in January 2008, he tested shutting down the engines using an emergency cutoff in the wheelhouse.

After Slotvig left the boat, he was replaced by captain Eric "Pete" Jacobsen, of Lynnwood. It's unclear if Jacobsen fully understood the risk posed by the controllable-pitch propeller. During the last tense hour before the Ranger sank, survivors recall Jacobsen talking with other crew about whether to leave the engines running. They said Jacobsen never mentioned that a loss of electrical power could send the vessel on a treacherous reverse course.

The electrical power did cut out, and the propeller drove the Ranger into reverse, plunging its stern into the sea. The trawler listed sharply and the crew struggled to abandon ship. Because it was moving backward, the ship's life rafts shot forward and out of reach of some of the crew, according to Coast Guard investigators.

In the chaotic final minutes aboard the vessel, Jacobsen emerged on deck, asking "why the hell are we going in reverse?" recalled Paul Munoz, a crewman who survived.

Konno stayed quiet in the wheelhouse. Witnesses said his survival suit was rolled down to his waist, and he was puffing slowly on a cigarette as if resigned to his fate.

More than half of the 47 crew never reached the life rafts. The sinking threatened to be one of the worst U.S. fishing disasters, but Coast Guard helicopters and a sister ship managed to rescue most of the crew from the sea. Among the five who perished on March 23 were Jacobsen and Konno, whose body was never recovered.

Former crew member Putnam, now 36 and working a desk job, was stunned to learn of the Ranger's fate.

"The Bering Sea is an unforgiving place," Putnam said. "Yet I do feel if the management had not been kowtowing to the Japanese on important safety and operational issues, those men, including Konno, would likely still be alive. I feel like someone needs to speak up about a culture of silence that led to tragedy."

Respectfully submitted,

Carol S. Waud

GREAT LAKES AND RIVERS REPORT

AOS-USA Board Meeting
New Orleans, May 3, 2009
Fr Robert J Sipe, Ports of Duluth/Superior

Traffic on the Great Lakes is down for both for both Lakers (American and Canadian) and Salties (foreign, ocean going) ships. This is due to the worldwide recession and changes in the shipping industry. Ships are larger and often cannot navigate harbors because of lower lake levels

and shallow ports. Container ships are using coastal ports and rail and truck traffic. Expansion of the St Lawrence seaways locks seems on the back burner politically.

DULUTH/SUPERIOR – The Twin Ports of Duluth and Superior remain the most active ports on the Great Lakes and reportedly rank number 15 nationally in gross tonnage. The Twin Ports Seafarers Center serves the ports from the former St Clement Catholic rectory, a small monastery formerly occupied by Benedictine monks. It has one full time employee, the Director Rev Thomas Anderson, a former ELCA Lutheran pastor, and a number of volunteer drivers and ship visitors. The Center provides most of the things provided by coastal seafarers centers, including regular ship visits, two vans for transportation, phone cards, cell phones which are lent to the ships, a used clothing store, internet access, game rooms, lounges, and TV. The main cargoes are grain, coal, taconite (low grade iron ore), betonite (a well drilling compound) scrap metal, and lately many wind electric generators. There are 5-10 lakers weekly, and 2-3 salties. Our ministries prior to this year have been mostly to the salties because of lack of volunteers. This year we have enough to begin to visit more lakers. The needs of the salty crews are much greater because they have almost all foreign crews and have much more difficult working conditions, including longer contracts (6-9 months) and poorer salaries.

The Twin Port Seafarers Center is ecumenical and funded by various church bodies, including Lutheran, Methodist, and Presbyterian, and by regular mailings. There was no Catholic presence at the Center until I came there in 2004 at the encouragement of Fr John Jamnicky, then National Director of AOS. The Bishop of Duluth was happy to appoint me Port Chaplain, but told me that I was on my own as far as funding was concerned, because of budget constraints which caused him to drop several other important ministries. He gave me permission to raise funds from parishes and organizations such as the KCs, CCW, CDA (Catholic Daughters of the Americas). Since that time I have made appeals all over Minnesota. The CDA has been especially helpful in providing ditty bags, knitted caps and scarves. I am now making appeals through the Mission Coop plans in the Archdiocese of St Paul and Minneapolis, New Ulm, St Cloud, and Superior.

Like most other port chaplains on the Great Lakes, I do not receive a salary or stipend, but am able to cover expenses which amount to about \$8000 per year. I live 80 miles from the Twin Ports, and am able to spend 2-3 days a week there. I am able to contribute \$300 monthly to the Seafarers Center budget, and \$150 monthly in cell phone expenses.

GREEN BAY – Deacon Glenn Teske, former AOS Board member, is still active but has back problems, and his wife suffered a heart attack last year. There is no Seafarers Center, but rather a coalition called the Seafarers Ministry of Green Bay. He receives a stipend of \$20 per month. Main cargoes are coal, cement, pig iron, and salt. Most traffic is on lakers with few salties. He does have help from volunteers, and provides ship visits, Christmas boxes, port info, blessings, and presence at port activities. Many of the crews on Canadian ships are Catholic. There have been increasing restrictions on ship access since the TWIC program began. Georgia Pacific has been especially restrictive. It seems that ship captains now have the say on who comes aboard.

MARQUETTE, MICHIGAN – Served by Deacon David Adler, Sr. Very little is going on. There is little support from the Diocese. There are a few lakers coming to port, mostly transporting iron ore, and some tourist ships.

DETROIT – served by Fr Russell Kohler from his parish on the lake front. There is no real port

there now. What few boats stop are heavily restricted by lack of visas and quick turn-around times. Fr Russell meets regularly with the Port Authority, mostly concerning security. Detroit has the largest Arab population in the US, and there is much distrust of them. There are high levels of drugs coming into the city, and high levels of corruption in government, including the former mayor and former port commissioner who were recently indicted. There is much vandalism, arson for insurance, and metal theft. Fr Russell recently had many thousands of dollars in metal stolen from his church building. There is talk of building a terminal for Cruise Ships, which will have gambling casinos.

WAUKEGAN, ILLINOIS – Fr John Jamnicky, former National Director of AOS is now Pastor of St Raphael the Archangel in Antioch, Il., and makes occasional visits to the Port of Waukegan, where he ministers to recreational boats and yacht clubs, Main cargo is cement.

BUFFALO, NEW YORK – served by Msgr John Ducette who has been with AOS for thirty years. At one time there were 5000 boats visiting the port, but now it has been bypassed by the Welland Canal and the St Lawrence Seaway. The port is also handicapped by shallow waters. He is retired from parish ministry and now operates out of his apartment. At one time AOS sent port chaplains \$50 per month, but now he receives nothing. His ministry consists mostly of blessing recreational boats and the fire boat. There may be twenty five boats a year.

ERIE, PA – Msgr Thomas Snyderwine serves the port since 1978. He was a member of NCCS and an officer of that group, which was the predecessor of AOS. At one time he had a Seafarers Center with 22 volunteers, but because of decreased traffic the center was sold. There may be one or two salties a year bringing railroad engines to the port. Big ships now stop at New York. What lakers that come bring sand and gravel Msgr would like to see communication shared about salties coming through the St Lawrence Seaway, their cargoes and destination.

Committee: Merchant Marine

Subject: **A Resolution addressing the Criminalization of Seafarers**

Proposed by: Jon Furukawa, Seafarer Member AOSUSA

WHEREAS there is great concern of the trend by port state control authorities to unfairly treat seafarers by criminalizing masters and seafarers in the event of maritime accidents;

WHEREAS the Baltic and International Maritime Council (BIMCO) has conducted many

investigations into the criminalization of seafarers and identified 44 cases between 1996 and 2006; nine involved the detainment of seafarers prior to them being found guilty of committing a deliberate act or act of negligence;

WHEREAS the Council of American Master Mariners (CAMM) and the International Federation of Shipmasters' Associations (IFSA) have adopted several resolutions concerning this worrisome trend of criminalization of seafarers by port state control authorities; and calling "upon the

International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) and other maritime and regulatory interests to: use professional and civil sanctions, rather than criminal action, to penalize negligence; stop the criminalization of seafarers; ensure flag States protect their seafarers and abide by UNCLOS; ensure flag States carry out independent maritime accident investigations; facilitate greater mandatory use of Voyage Data Recorders; ensure IMO and ILO members States abide by the Guidelines on the Fair Treatment of Seafarers, adopted by the IMO Legal Committee in April 2006 and press for a mandatory Code; ensure flag States exercise effective control and jurisdiction over ships flying their flags”;

WHEREAS the issued of criminalization of shipmasters has not substantially improved and the tendency by Port and Coastal States to arrest and detain Masters and officers without trial following maritime incidents including Captain Karun Mathur *Erika* by France in 1999; Captain Apostolos Mangouras *Prestige* by Spain in 2002; seven crewmembers and the salvage master of the *Tasman Spirit* by Pakistan in 2003; Captain Wolfgang Schröder, *ZIM Mexico III* by the United States in 2006; Captain Mao Cai Sun, Chief Officer Kong Xiang Hu, Second Officer Shun Biao Zhao, Seaman Lang Xian Zheng and two other crewmembers *COSCO Busan* by the United States in 2007; Captain Jasprit Chalwa and Chief Officer Syam Chetan, *Hebei Spirit* by South Korea in 2007; and the world’s source of piracy information Mr. Andrew Mwangura, Head of the East Africa Seafarers Assistance Program by Kenya in 2008

WHEREAS there is great concern that foreign port state control authorities will take retaliatory action against U.S. seafarers; **THEREFORE BE IT**

RESOLVED, that the Apostleship of the Sea of the United States America (AOSUSA), during its 2009 Annual Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana supports the work of CAMM, IFSMA, Nautilus, ITF, BIMCO, ILO and IMO in their effort to fight the trend of port states to criminalize seafarers; **AND**

RESOLVED, that AOSUSA recommends the immediate release and repatriation of the crewmembers of the *COSCO Busan-6*, the *Hebei Spirit-2*, and all charges dropped against Mr. Andrew Mwangura.

RESOLVED, that AOSUSA recommends repealing the archaic U.S. Seaman’s Manslaughter Act.