



Catholic Maritime News

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MESSAGE FROM HIS EXCELLENCY MOST REVEREND AGOSTINO MARCHETTO

Dear readers,

It is with pleasure that I have accepted to write a message for this issue of the “Catholic Maritime News”.



Archbishop Agostino Marchetto was appointed Secretary of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant Peoples on November 6, 2001. He is Titular Archbishop of Astigi.

Fishing and maritime transport are essential activities for the prosperity and development of humanity and seafarers, therefore, are a vital part of our daily life. Their living and working conditions, though, are very difficult: long work contracts, crews which are ever more multi-ethnic and multicultural; increasing of piracy and criminalisation; lack of social protection and separation from their families; ships and crews abandoned with no resources in foreign ports. Moreover, the restrictive measures towards shore leave cut seafarers off from port communities, access to welfare services and even to their families and friends. To all this we must add the signs of economic recession in the world.

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2008 Christmas Message From the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People

Prot. No. 4189/200078/AM

Dear Brothers and Sisters of the Apostleship of the Sea,

Christmas is the family feast par excellence. It is also the feast of sharing and hospitality for all Christians and for men and women of good will.

For us of the Apostleship of the Sea, it is one of the intense moments when our pastoral care marked by hospitality, solidarity and fraternity takes on its full meaning. This is not surprising if we think of the events that night in Bethlehem.

Christians have been celebrating each year the birth of that little child in the manger of a poor stable surrounded by Mary and Joseph. Despite the poverty of the setting, the angels’ song and the joy brought by the shepherds’ warm presence around the newborn baby transformed the place.

The well-off and self-righteous considered the shepherds to be not pure people, of little worth, but they were essential to the economy of the era, somewhat like today seafarers, the invisible port workers! And yet, those shepherds would be the privileged witnesses to God’s irruption into our world and the first to proclaim the great good news.

Their presence already gave the tone to Jesus’ future life. In fact, throughout the Gospels we are struck by Christ’s concern and nearness to the poor, the humble, the sick, the nobodies and the marginalized. He was even criticized and ostracized for eating with sinners and people with bad reputation. At Christmas, the Apostleship of the Sea is called to intensify its presence by giving ever more faithful witness to God’s presence and love for the poor, people passing through and foreigners.

For Christmas, our wish is that the Apostleship of the Sea, through its network of hospitality, fraternity and solidarity, will bring a little joy and light to all those people who are waiting for joy and light on that long night. It is up to each one of us, according to our circumstances, to find the message of hope and encouragement most suited to all the men and women who “walk in darkness”. Like the shepherds, may our fraternal and cordial presence brighten their loneliness and sadness.

We invite you finally to look to the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, the icon of all families, and to entrust all the people of the sea to them.

With our best wishes and prayers for a joyful, serene Christmas and a New Year filled with the happiness in the Lord.

Cardinal Renato Raffaele Martino
President

+Archbishop Agostino Marchetto
Secretary

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

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FROM THE NATIONAL DIRECTOR

In the wake of the global economic crisis, the Leaders of the Group of Twenty gathered in Washington, DC on November 15, 2008 in a two-day summit on "Financial Markets and the World Economy" and issued a Declaration assuring the world to "enhance our cooperation and work together to restore global growth and achieve needed reforms in the world's financial systems". The Declaration points to "the root causes of the current crisis" and underlines "actions taken and to be taken" (cf. Summit on Financial Market and the World Economy, Nov. 15, 2008).



Sister Myrna

As the financial crisis takes a toll on almost every sector, it is reported that the crisis hits the shipping industry. Shipping analysts say "carriers are taking steps to reduce costs and take capacity off-line" (www.scdigest.com/assets, 11/11/08). Another news headline runs, "Shipowners idle 20% of bulk vessels as rates collapse" (Global Research.ca, 11/16/2008).

Are we looking at fewer ships that come to US ports? Will this be temporary or protracted? What does this mean to us who are in the maritime ministry? Would there be lesser ships to visit and fewer seafarers to minister to? Is this a likely scenario that is or will be happening or may be experienced by those who are in the front lines of the Apostleship of the Sea chaplaincies and by our ecumenical sisters and brothers in the maritime ministry? Stats will tell and perhaps numbers may be impacted, but one thing is certain, the quality of pastoral care and outreach to seafarers, fish workers, port personnel and those who travel and work on the seas and waterways remain a constant. In fact as winter creeps in, chaplains, their pastoral teams and volunteers are gearing up to prepare 'shoe boxes', ditty bags, warm clothing for seafarers and most importantly, attend to the spiritual needs of those who will be away from home this time of year and during Christmas.

We thank all those who support the AOS ministry in the local ports, the collaborators, benefactors, friends and volunteers who have been so generous with their time, talent and treasure.

At this moment of so many challenges, it take helping hands to work together for the common good. Even more so, in our pastoral care ministry we are called and commissioned to witness to God's love in word and action through service with the needy ones in our midst. We are, as pointed out in the Manual for Chaplains, "God's co-workers and the maritime world is God's field" and we are reminded that "all Christians are called to give, with patience and humility, reasons for the faith and hope that sustain and give sense to their lives. They do so by being witnesses of the Good News of Jesus Christ, bearing in mind that all witnessing must be altruistic and disinterested" (Manual for Chaplains and Pastoral Agents of the Apostleship of the Sea, 2007).

As the Church enters into a new Liturgical Year with the First Sunday of Advent, she prepares with longing and expectation for the coming of the Incarnate Word in a spirit of conversion and hope. God's love permeates and is transformative to those who are open to His Spirit and wait in faith, hope and love.

On behalf of the Apostleship of the Sea national office, we wish you a blessed Christmas and a hope filled New Year.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

BE CAREFUL WHAT WE SAY!

Imagine a high school student in Kansas or Nebraska surfing the internet for low-cost college opportunities. He or she finds the four military academies, but does not feel they really want to enter the military. Eventually, he or she comes across the United States Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point, New York.

After carefully studying the web site, he or she realizes that with a recommendation from his or her Congressman or Senator, he or she would receive a full, four-year college education, and immediate well-paying job.

With excitement, our high school student takes the recruitment package that was sent to him or her, and presents it to his or her parents.

The materials are first class. There are beautiful, full-color pictures of gigantic ships, and young men and women attentively listening to professors in some finely furnished class rooms.

However, the parents are not really sure. So they go to the web site, and look around for information on the modern seafaring life. They find a plethora of articles on pirate attacks in the Gulf of Aden and the Malacca Straits. They think back on what they know about deep-sea shipping. Scenes from James Cameron's *Titanic*, memories of Capt. Hazelwood and the Exxon Valdez, and Gordon Lightfoot's rendering of the *Wreck of the Edmond Fitzgerald* come to their minds.

Well, being religious folks, they go to the internet, and find web sites for Christian maritime ministries. At one they read:

"These imports arrive at our shores on merchant ships, crewed by seafarers from undeveloped nations struggling to feed their families. The standard crew contract calls for ten months or more service at modest wage rates and few benefits. In ten months, a seafarer runs out of toothpaste and other necessities, but has little time or opportunity to shop, see a dentist, or even call home." And at another, they read:

"Did you know that?..."

- Seafaring is one of the most dangerous occupations?
- 95% of the world's trade is transported by sea?
- Seafarers can spend weeks if not months at a time at sea?
- Loneliness is common amongst seafarers?"

The parents then come back to their child and say, "Honey, we've been thinking about this a lot, and we have decided to get a second mortgage on our house so that you don't have to become a mariner."

In our enthusiasm to condemn the outrages that take place in our maritime industry, we may paint a picture that is so bleak that it neither is accurate, nor recognizes the important service mariners perform for society.

Presently, the maritime industry is facing a crew shortage on both the national and international levels. This shortage will only get worse. The need to recruit high quality young men and women is imperative if we wish to keep the ships running, the cargo moving, and maintain the quality of life we enjoy.

The Apostleship of the Sea and all the other Christian maritime ministries can play an important role in connecting the maritime industry with young men and women in our parish communities. We can offer them a life career with family wages. However, to do this, we will need to be more balanced in our description of the work of a professional mariner.

We do need to continually shine the light on substandard operators. At the same time, we must also spread the word that today's professional mariners provide an invaluable service to the world, are highly trained operators of ships worth 50 million dollars and more, and that there is real satisfaction in getting paid to work at the very place where cruise passengers pay thousands of dollars to be.



Father Sinclair Oubre

BISHOP VICTOR GALEONE GREAT FRIEND OF THE APOSTLESHIP OF THE SEA

Often times those who do the most are rarely recognized for their efforts, perhaps because they show more concern to the cause they serve than to themselves.

Bishop Galeone is one of the holiest men that I have the opportunity to meet in nearly thirty years of my ordination as Permanent Deacon. Much of his life as a priest was spent as a missionary, mostly in Latin America. Since August of 2001 that he has come to our Diocese of St. Augustine as Bishop, he has led and helped the Church in so many ways, in particular our ministry of the Apostleship of the Sea. Not only has he helped us morally with a real fatherly love, but he has supported the ministry financially. In August 2004 with his help through our local Catholic Charities office, the first Apostleship of the Sea Seafarers' Center with a beautiful chapel was built occupying 1700 square feet at Talleyrand Terminal in the Port of Jacksonville, Florida. In May of 2008, a second 1700 square feet Apostleship of the Sea Seafarers' Center was inaugurated at Blount Island Terminal, which is located about fifteen miles from Talleyrand Terminal.



Bishop Galeone and William Betz of Catholic Charities during the AOS Seafarers' Center dedication in May 2008.

Bishop Galeone is a shining example of how Bishops of other Dioceses can support the Apostleship of the Sea ministry to the seafarers that come to American ports. Jesus says: "I was a stranger and you welcomed me". The ministry needs the support of our "Shepherds" so that chaplains and their team can continue to reach out to a highly mobile 'parish community', the seafarers. We are very grateful to Bishop Galeone for his great concern and solicitude to all the faithful entrusted to his care, including the seafarers and those who minister to them. He truly is a great friend of the Apostleship of the Sea Ministry. We are also very thankful to Catholic Charities of the Diocese of St. Augustine for all these years of support to the ministry.

Rev. Deacon Gjet Bajraktari
Diocesan Director for the Apostleship of the Sea
Jacksonville, Florida

Bishop Victor Galeone was installed as the ninth bishop of the Diocese of Saint Augustine on Aug. 21, 2001. He completed his theological studies at the North American College at the Gregorian University in Rome.

He was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Martin J. O'Connor in the chapel of North American College in Rome on Dec. 18, 1960. He received his S.T.L. (Sacrae Theologiae Licentiatu) from Gregorian University in 1961 and his Masters of Education degree from Loyola College in Baltimore in 1969. On his return to the United States in 1961, he served as an associate pastor, as a teacher and principal, as a pastor in several parishes in the Archdiocese of Baltimore, and as a missionary in Peru.

While in the Archdiocese of Baltimore, he was archdiocesan director of the Propagation of the Faith, and a member of the Priests' Council, the College of Consultors for the Archdiocese of Baltimore and the National Board of Directors of the Holy Childhood Association.

(For more information visit www.dosafl.com/index.php)

AOS-USA Administrative Board Met in Savannah

By Rev. William E. Reynolds

The administrative board of the Apostleship of the Sea of the USA held its semi-annual Administrative Board meeting on October 20 and 21 in Savannah, Georgia, at the chancery of the Diocese of Savannah, hosted by the Most Rev. J. Kevin Boland, Bishop of Savannah. The lovely southern weather was surpassed only by the kind and gracious hospitality of Bishop Boland and the entire chancery staff.

Bishop Boland is a cruise ship priest himself, along with his brother, Bishop Raymond Boland, the retired Bishop of Kansas City/St. Joseph. The Boland bishops are one of only two families in which two brothers are members of the episcopacy of the church.

Not only did Bishop Boland host our meeting, but it was with great joy that he was welcomed as the new Bishop Promoter of the AOS in the USA, having been appointed by His Eminence Cardinal George, the president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. This was the first time Bishop Boland attended a meeting of the AOS-USA administrative board, and he asked penetrating questions and offered wise counsel to the board.



Photo Credit: The Southern Cross/Savannah

Also attending the board meeting were all but one of the members, assisted by our legendary Secretary General, Ms. Doreen Badeaux. Those who have attended a meeting of the Administrative Board in the past would note a change in the operating procedures of the board, most notably in the amount of work now done electronically. The board members are constantly encouraged to be environmentally conscious and to reduce the amount of paper consumed in their work. Officers and committee chairs submit their reports as attachments to email communications. This was evidenced by the presence of seven laptop computers on the board-room table. Woe to that member who did not bring an extension cord!

Apostleship of the Sea National Director Sr. Myrna Tordillo, mscs, noted that AOS is active in 49 arch/dioceses with 79 chaplains and chaplain team members ministering to the maritime community in 61 American ports. She reported that the AOS pastoral care touches on the areas of faith formation through sacramental practice, the strengthening of family ties, the promotion of cultural diversity, and advocacy for human life and dignity.

There is always a need for continuing education and training of maritime ministers. This is partially accomplished by the Houston Chaplaincy training program, which occurs in February each year. The Ship Welfare Visitor Course is available to AOS chaplain team members, and is organized and funded by the International Committee on Seafarer's Welfare. Administrative Board member Fr. Thomas Falkenthal has been a trainer in this program to educate those who will in turn educate and train local individuals for port ministry.

The AOS has a presence in the national maritime commemoration events, including the National Day of Prayer and Remembrance for Mariners and people of the Sea, and on the same day, May 22, the National Maritime Day sponsored by the Maritime Administration.

In her report Sr. Myrna noted the challenge that the various hurricanes have presented to maritime ministry and AOS chaplains. Deacon Patrick LaPoint, the national treasurer of the AOS-USA gave customary reports so that the board might dutifully exercise its fiduciary responsibility. One of the newer facets of the financial operations is the ability to pay the annual dues by using PayPal. With a number of members living in foreign lands, and not being able to write checks in US dollars, this has become a great boost to our operations as we no longer have to convert small amounts of foreign currencies to US dollars for deposit. Deacon LaPoint reports that we are steadily repaying our debt to the USCCB. Have you remembered to include the AOS-USA as a beneficiary in your estate?

Profile of a Mariners' Friend: Fr. Eulalio Ibay, Port Chaplain, Diocese of Corpus Christi



Fr. Eul Ibay at Mass.

Tell us about your personal background.

I am Fr. Eulalio Ibay and they call me Fr. Yul. As a young boy I served in my home parish of Our Lady of Peñafrancia in Manila and I came to value serving my pastor and my parish church. Even in my tender age I expressed an interest in the priesthood. I finished my high school at San Pablo Diocesan High School Seminary, Philippines. Then, I pursued my A.B. Religious Education / Philosophy / Sociology at Our Lady of the Angels College (Seminary) and received my Doctorate in Theology from the University of Santo Tomas, Manila, Philippines.

I was ordained priest on April 15th, 1998 at the Abbey of Our Lady of Montserrat, Mendiola, Manila, Philippines. I was given various assignments in my Religious community. I was assigned as Theology Department Chair, San Beda College (2004-2007); High School Principal (2001-2004); Chaplain of the Grade School and Non-Academic Personnel (1998-2001). With God's guidance, I am right now ministering at the Diocese of Corpus Christi, Texas.

Tell us about the Maritime Ministry in the Diocese of Corpus Christi.

It is the task of the Maritime Apostolate of the Diocese of Corpus to offer pastoral care to seafarers who come to the Port of Corpus Christi. The Office of Evangelization, through the Seamen Center and its chaplains and volunteers, makes possible for seafarers regardless of color, religion, or race to find spiritual care, hospitality and practical assistance, thus recognizing the dignity of persons and welcoming the newcomer, in a spirit of solidarity, in unity through diversity.

We know that some of our seafarers make the supreme and ultimate sacrifice: some died while doing their jobs aboard ship, some perished at sea, others suffered accidents in the conduct of their work. Work of a seafarer is no easy job. Oftentimes it is full of risks. But the greater sacrifice made by seafarers is to be "away from their families." Therefore, the Apostleship of the Sea gives seafarers spiritual comfort and assistance, it also provides counseling and para-legal help for abusive and illegal treatments, medical claims on accidents and disability in the line of duty.

(Continues on page 9)



Fr. Eul Ibay with seafarers on board.

Meet the Mariner Interview: Robert F. Kenney

By R. Jon Furukawa, AOS-USA Chair, Merchant Marine Committee

Full Name: Robert F. Kenney

Job Title: Marine Transportation Specialist, U.S. Coast Guard



Robert F. Kenney

1. Tell us about your personal and professional background.

I am an Unlimited Master in U.S. Merchant Marine. After graduating from the State University of New York Maritime College at Ft. Schuyler in 1992 with a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science and a Third Mate's License, I went to sea for 12-years with Military Sealift Command's Atlantic and Pacific Combat Logistics Force fleets. I then came ashore to work for the U.S. Coast Guard's National Maritime Center and was Chief, Examination Branch. I am now working at U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters in the Marine Personnel Qualifications Division. I am married to Sharon and we have three girls: Kaitlyn (7), Meagan (4) and Lauryn (2).

2. How has your faith helped with your profession?

My faith has given me patience to deal with stress in the workplace.

3. When did you become aware of AOS and AOS-USA?

I became aware and joined AOS-USA through your determined effort.

4. What do you have planned for the future?

Raise three beautiful girls and enjoy my life.

5. Tell us how/you'd like to see AOS-USA help mariners. Is there anything you can do?

Continue providing to the mariners programs: call home gift cards, provide climate appropriate clothing, and to interact with other persons.

6. Anything you'd like to say to our AOS-USA membership?

It has been a long time coming and it is a privilege to associate with an organization sharing the same faith, helping those who have shared the same experiences as me.

**MESSAGE FROM HIS EXCELLENCY
MOST REVEREND AGOSTINO MARCHETTO**

Continued from page 1

Work at sea continues to be very hard, and almost every day we witness tragedies both on land and at sea, shipwrecks, disappearances at sea. It is in this context that the Apostleship of the Sea is called to be genuine witness of faith, love and hope that come to us from our encounter with Jesus.

Thanks to the devotion, generosity and commitment of so many chaplains, pastoral agents and volunteers, AOS in the USA has spared no effort and initiative to improve its outreach and commitment to the People of the Sea, regardless of their origin, colour and creed. From these pages I would like to thank and commend each one of you. You are the pillars of the AOS, you are the ones who bring the Gospel into the maritime world.

While recommending you the use of the recent published "Manual for Chaplains and Pastoral Agents of the AOS" (as an extract of the Proceedings of the Gdynia Congress, cf. People of the Sea, no. 106, Suppl.-I), I would like to remind that prayer for one another and for those we are called to serve must always be the rock of our common endeavour.

May the Lord bless you for all you have accomplished and fill you with his Grace, so that you continue to work with joy and patience for the Kingdom of God.

+Archbishop Agostino Marchetto
Secretary of the Pontifical Council
for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People

We really regret the error...

- The July issue of Catholic Maritime News was inadvertently placed as Volume 1, Number 1. It should have been Volume 67, Number 2.
- On page 2, the AOSUSA Board member for the Gulf Coast was written as Fr. Rivers Patout. Instead it is Capt. Joy Manthey.

Seafarers Ministry Training 2008

Hong Kong, 31 October

By Hennie la Grange, General Secretary of the International Christian Maritime Association

The Seafarers' Ministry Training (SMT) of 2008 concluded on Sunday October 26th in Hong Kong. This year's SMT was held at the Mariners' Club in Hong Kong.

Seventeen students from various member societies of ICMA attended, including the Apostleship of the Sea, the Deutsche Seaman's Mission, the Mission to Seafarers, and *Seamen's Church Institute of New York and New Jersey*.

The farewell was an emotional one, after having spent two weeks sharing their experiences on seafarers' ministry and learning from professionals in the field on how best to tackle the challenges of seafarers' ministry.

Here are some of their comments:

- The seafarers' have come near to me. And I have come near to a united pastoral community.
- The training on seafarers' rights, MLC 2006, and the ISPS-Code was very valuable. I am motivated to tackle the problems that continue to occur in my port.
- Meeting seafarers is now my top priority.
- Learning about pastoral communication has been the most important for me.
- I am looking forward to a next level of training.
- The module on the ministry to fishers was the only subject not directly relevant to my ministry.
- The lecture on inter-religious dialogue was challenging.
- I doubted my calling to this ministry as I was feeling ineffective. I am now re-focused and re-committed to seafarers' ministry.
- Learning about pastoral counselling was the most challenging for me. Meeting here with chaplains was a privilege for me.
- The passion of the lecturers who minister to seafarers has inspired me. The passion that the ICMA community has for this work has rubbed off on me.
- As I meet with opposition to my ministry, I was unsure if I should continue. I now have no doubt that I should continue to care for seafarers and their families.
- The training was fun from day one! Experiencing first-hand this multi-cultural group of chaplains was enlightening. I have renewed conviction to continue with my ministry.
- I am not a trained theologian. People are suspicious of my intentions and make allegations against me. I feel I have now found my place in this ministry. I have made wonderful friends here who will support me.



They also said that they now have a need for more training:

- I need more training on how to handle emergencies. I want to know how to respond to seafarers in crisis.
- A practical course on pastoral ship visiting would be useful.

The Executive Committee of ICMA noted the high standard of the 2008-SMT and congratulated Rev. Martina Platte and the Hong Kong team for a job well done. (Continues on page 9)



Seafarers Ministry Training 2008

Continued from page 8

Brother Anthony's concluding statements to the group were:

This is a tough ministry. Don't take it to heart when seafarers give you a hard time.

Often, you are their only vent for pent-up emotions. Just having a soda with them, demonstrates that you are offering your presence. You are the only one who meets them without judgement. Be proud of this ministry.

When you go back to meet with situations that are strange to you, you will suddenly realize just how much you had learnt here, more than you know.



Brother Anthony Ornelas, sss, is AOS Chaplain in Houston, Texas. He is the 2009 Coordinator of the Houston Chaplaincy Training Program. Bro. Anthony was invited to participate in the SMT Training from October 14-26 and represented the Houston School in the ICMA Consultative Forum and Annual General Meeting in Hongkong last October 28-29, 2008.

Profile of a Mariners' Friend: Fr. Eulalio Ibay, Port Chaplain, Diocese of Corpus Christi

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Your message to all our AOS friends:

I really believe this ministry has given me more than I could have possibly given it. I have the privilege of providing spiritual care to these people and having my concept of my ministerial priesthood broadened a lot. I feel that makes me a better minister of God.

The Catholic Church is always concern about people who don't have access to normal parish services, so the Church founded a pontifical council for that purpose. It is called the Pontifical Council for Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant Peoples. But we've got to get the laity, both women and men, involved in AOS ministry.

We pray that the Lord keep our seafarers safe from all dangers – physical, moral and spiritual. May the bond of love and unity with their families remain strong despite the loneliness, distance and separation.

Furthermore, we thank them as they work hard to support their families and contribute to the economic uplift of the global economy.

Thank you so much and God bless us all!

Fr. Eul Ibay has taught Christian Doctrine in the College of Law and the Theology Department, San Beda College, Philippines. He obtained his S.T.D., S.T.L., MA and BS with high honors. Fr. Yul has published research studies in Scientia, Faculty Journal of Arts and Sciences and Gaudete, Faculty Journal of San Beda, College, Manila. Among his work experience is Accreditor of the Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities.

Seamen's Salve By Bill Stephens

This article was first published in Filipinas Magazine, April 2008

As a maritime chaplain, Fr. Henry Hernando provides emotional and spiritual support to seafarers who are far from home.

It's a chilly Friday evening and Father Henry Hernando arrives at the International Seafarers Center (ISC) in the sprawling Los Angeles/Long Beach port complex. Despite having put in a full day's work at his own Stella Maris Maritime Ministry hospitality center in nearby cruise ship Pier 93, the maritime chaplain comes here almost nightly to visit with cargo and container ship seafarers – mostly Filipino like himself.

Inside the modest, lively ISC hospitality center, the 65-year-old priest chats with two new faces. "Where are you guys from?" "Cebu.

"Me, too."

"If your crew wants a ship visit, your captain can call me." He adds, although he doubts if it will happen because of the tight schedule and security. These cargo ship seafarers are on a 10-month stint away from their families, and will sail the next day.

At 10 p.m. Father Henry drives some sailors to their ships before going home to his Mary Star of the Sea parish room. He says he doesn't mind the hours.

"I'm touched by the seafarers' sacrifices for their families' future." Next morning, Father Henry arrives at his cozy Pier 93 hospitality center, which has phones, a computer, magazines, snacks, couches, a chapel and a few volunteers. Seafarers, mostly Filipinos, pop in and out. They greet Father Henry, phone home, mail packages and grab rides into town.

Father Henry says when he took this job in 2003, he was excited about helping merchant marine seafarers. Born in the Philippines, the son of a U. S. Navy chief petty officer (CPO), he'd served as a priest in L. A. and as a U. S. Navy chaplain around the globe.

I'd seen in the Navy, how chaplains help morale. Sailors share their homesickness, family worries and job stress with us. Mass, blessings and counseling give them a boost. Being in port is for healing, recuperation, R&R and mending spirits."

Shipping companies increasingly hire Third World crews, especially Filipinos, who are valued for their English, hard work, and adaptability. "They're family-oriented young people, sending money home. They're patient and uncomplaining. But seafaring work can be demanding, confining and lonely. Sailors need emotional support, spiritual uplift, and a seafarers' center to relax."

Father Henry thought his Navy, Filipino and global backgrounds ideal. His L. A. Archdiocese maritime chaplain job is fertile ground for the spiritual renewal of sailors. But the job presents challenges.

With technology, cargo ships have shorter port stays, from a few hours to a few days. The L.A./Long Beach port, America's busiest, is so sprawling it's inconvenient for seafarers to visit hospitality centers.

Since 9-11, port security has tightened. Confusing rules by the Coast Guard, port and terminal, shipping firms, and the security company make it harder for Father Henry to connect with seafarers—aboard their ships and at his center.

"The best solution is to visit the ships in port," says Father. "But the worry over port security is excessive. I've been delayed by security guards. Or, by the time I navigate the red tape, the ship has sailed."

Recently, a ship captain wanted Father Henry to visit but the pier guard didn't have his name. "I'm here to do religious services."

"Your name isn't on the list."

"It's been arranged by ship authorities."

"Sorry. You're not on the visitors' list."

Once, he arrived at a pier to help sailors[who were] upset by a shipboard tragedy. He was denied access because of an investigation. "It's frustrating not to be able to help. U.S. Navy chaplains are first responders to mishaps."

He adds: "Ideally I could visit ships from 5-7 p.m., then drive sailors to Walmart, the ISC or wherever they want to go."



Father Henry

Masses and Blessings

Filipino seafarer Gerald visits Father Henry's office. They talk about his California to Mexico ship route.

The sailor sends his pay home to pay off their house. "It's hard being far from family for months. It's good to have this place."

He came for an emotional boost, conversation, and a ride into town for Filipino food and shopping for his family.

Father Henry gives him a special blessing, which means a lot to those who can't make Mass.

During Mass, Father Henry blesses the handful of Filipino, Indian, and Latin American seafarers. "Lord, protect these semen and their families. We hope they will feel this is a home away from home."

Cruise ship repairman Deje Aballe says attending Mass eases his homesickness for his family in the Philippines.



Father Henry

Over a sandwich, Father Henry says he doesn't proselytize. "We offer a place to relax, phone home, socialize, attend service, receive a blessing, share problems. It's frustrating when only a few show up for Mass."

He's addressing the short port stay/limited access problem by showing up nights at the ISC, and by getting to know port stakeholders.

"The merchant marine industry doesn't recognize the value of a chaplain to help morale. Some view sailors as short-termers. I emphasize the importance of having someone you can talk to. A happy sailor is more productive."

The chaplain cites an Indian captain, a Hindu, who asked him to visit the ship. The captain attended the Mass and said he wanted his crew to be able to worship. "He was ideal."

"Usually, I feel like an outsider in this high-tempo maritime industry zone—despite my Navy experience."

Father Henry, known as the most active chaplain in the port, has had some successes.

In 2004, he learned 13 Filipino sailors were stranded after their ship, *Katerina*, was accused of an environmental violation. He hurried to court, where they'd been hauled in leg-irons.

Father Henry complained to the judge.

"These men aren't criminals. They're your star witnesses to help the government's case against the shipping company."

They were released to Father Henry after promising to testify later. He took them to ISC for temporary lodging. L.A.'s Filipino community later helped house and feed the "Katerina 13" until the trial. When the sailors returned home, Father Henry became a mini-hero to Filipinos.

Another time, a Filipino sailor died on a shipboard accident in port. The crew feared the site. After Father Henry did a religious service and blessed the accident site, the crew regained peace of mind.

Once, a worried Filipino sailor was being transferred to a ship sailing into stormy seas. "After I talked to him, he relaxed."

"I told a depressed seafarer to see the bright side of life and keep going because his family needed him. He later thanked me."

Once a sailor wanted to jump his ship. Father Henry told him. "You'll be illegal, jobless. You need to endure or you'll never have permanent work. Your family is counting on you." He stayed on.

"If seafarers are lonely, I suggest making friends. Worried about family? I encourage them to call. Onboard interpersonal problems? I suggest seeing their supervisor. Sometimes I talk to captains and department heads about morale."

Father Henry says working conditions at sea have improved, but social injustices still occur. If a seafarer reports a serious contract complaint, the priest gives moral support and may offer to confidentially alert a maritime union official of the International Transport Workers' Federation.

Even as he's satisfied with his overall progress, Father Henry has defined his goals for 2008: promote teamwork among local port visitors and chaplains to push for more ship access; create pastoral ship visiting teams and encourage parish volunteers to "adopt a seafarer" into their community, even if just for lunch; promote the Pier 93 hospitality center and add recreational facilities; and lobby for a large, convenient, unified, welcoming ISC hospitality center with restaurant, interfaith chapel, and port chaplain spaces.

"It's hard work," he reiterates. "But I offer something valuable for seafarers' human needs. So I keep sailing for the Lord."

Writer/photojournalist Bill Stephens lives in Lost Angeles. His work has appeared in KoreAm Journal, German Life, Wines and Vines, Small Farm Today and The Nation's Health.

The Apostleship of the Sea National Office is most thankful to Bill Stephens for permission to reprint the article.

HURRICANE IKE

By Karen Parsons

On September 13, 2008 Hurricane Ike struck Galveston Island and surrounding areas. The storm surge was unbelievable and the island was left ravaged. Our Seafarers Center of Galveston was hit hard. It was a week before we were allowed back on the island to check on the Center. My husband, Ed and I were the first two in. We donned protective clothing, rubber boots, gloves, and had masks to protect our lungs but nothing prepared us for what we found there. The bottom floor of the Seafarers Center had been hit by at least 12 feet of water during the storm surge. Everything on the bottom floor had been submerged and tossed about. Even the heaviest objects like the desks, piano, and organ were upside down and jammed against other objects. And everything was covered in the toxic flood sludge. Mold had already begun to grow on the walls and other objects. On the main floor we lost all the furniture, all the office equipment, the files, the books, the television, the eight computers, twenty-four telephones, thousands of letters from seafarers, thousands of ship visit logs, thousands of photos of seafarers and their families and so much more.

The second floor wasn't damaged by the flood but the wind ripped a 30 foot hole in the roof over the chapel and the chapel was severely damaged as well as the stairwell leading up to the chapel. It was overwhelming. Over the next week the shock began to turn to grief. We were in crisis. Our entire board and two staff members also lived on Galveston Island and their homes were severely damaged as well.

We have gone from crisis mode into recovery mode now that some of our board and staff are able to get on the island. Our Vice President of Operations, Jonathan Hale of Gulf Copper, has taken the helm for the clean up and recovery of the Seafarers Center. He was able to get help cleaning out the building from some of his employees. Flood and windstorm insurance will help with the cost of clean up but we will need to raise significant monies to restore the building and make it operational again.

The ships have begun to come back in. Seafarers have walked to the Seafarers Center to find it closed and all the furniture at the curb covered in sludge. The ministry continues with visits to the ships. We just don't have a place to take them right now. We are doing what we can for those we have been called to serve. This will be a long term recovery.

Just a note about my family: Ed and I live about 30 miles north of Galveston. Our home sustained some roof damage and we lost over 150 feet of wooden fence as well as tree limbs. We have been working on clearing the debris and rebuilding the fence, helping neighbors and at the Center. In the midst of it all I ruptured a disc in my lower back and Ed's arthritic knees have been letting him know he's been doing too much. Compared to my co workers and former neighbors in Galveston (where I lived for 15 years prior to marrying Ed) we are blessed with minimum damage. We thank you for your prayers. Please continue them.



Gulf Copper volunteers with Chaplain Karen Parsons



What was once a chapel, with ceiling parts on the floor

Karen Parsons is AOS chaplain of the Port of Galveston-Texas City. She is author of two books, *I am Your Song: A Journey of Faith* and *The Unconditional Love Story: Meeting the People of the Sea*.

IN MEMORY OF ...

Peter Callais (1964-2008)

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You have faith in God; have faith also in me. In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places. If there were not, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back again and take you to myself, so that where I am you may also be” (John 14, 1-4).

Peter Wade Callais, 44, a native of Golden Meadow and a parishioner of Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Cut Off, LA died on Sunday, Nov. 2, 2008. The Mass of Christian Burial was on Nov. 6. He is survived by his wife, Monica Williams Callais; his mother, Gloria Bienvenu Callais; sons, Justin, Isaac and Noah; and two brothers, Charles Michael Callais and Corey Joseph Callais.

He was preceded in death by his father, Harold Joseph Callais; his grandparents, Abdon Callais and Ada Bruce Callais, C. Thomas Bienvenu Sr. and Isaure Blanchard Bienvenu; and one brother, Paul Abdon Callais.

Peter was CEO of Abdon Callais Offshore in Golden Meadow, LA. Peter and his family were featured in the Catholic Maritime News in December 2006 as “they have developed their own means of Catholic evangelization in the Gulf of Mexico”, naming their growing fleet of vessels with Catholic figures such as Pope John Paul II, Mother Teresa, St. Martin de Pores, Bishop Oscar Solis, Fr. John Keller, and Sr. Mary Roland. Fr. Sinclair Oubre pointed out in the article the “family’s strong Catholic faith, their company’s business ethic, and the reasons for giving such obviously Catholic names to vessels that would be working in the oil patches of the Gulf of Mexico” (CMN, Vol. 63, No. 12). In 2007, Peter had an audience with Pope Benedict XVI wherein he presented a model of one of their boats in the “Catholic Fleet”.

On behalf of the Apostleship of the Sea, we extend our heartfelt sympathy to the Callais family, may you be comforted by God’s love in this very difficult time. Our prayers for the eternal repose of Peter.

Prot. N. 4156/2008/AM

Reverend and dear Fr. Oubre,

Only 4 months after the disappearance at sea of Paul Callais, we learn with profound regret the sad news of the sudden death of Peter, the President of the “Abdon Callais Offshore”. Thank you for informing us.

All of us here at the Pontifical Council are shocked with this new tragedy which has filled again the Callais family with grief. Peter has been a benefactor for the Holy See and for the Apostleship of the Sea of this Pontifical Council and we will not forget him.

I ask you to transmit our most heartfelt condolences to his mother Gloria, his wife Monica and all his relatives while we assure them of our thoughts and prayers. We are sure that their faith will help them overcome this terrible loss. May he rest in peace!

Yours sincerely in Christ,

+

Archbishop Agostino Marchetto
Secretary

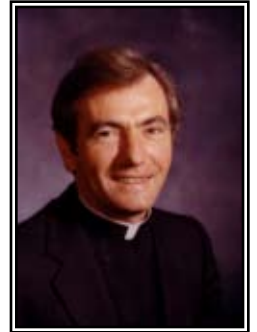
IN MEMORY OF ...

Bro. James Horan, S.J. (1932-2008)

Brother Horan was born in Philadelphia on March 22, 1932, the son of James and Catherine Mullin Horan. He attended Northeast Catholic High School and St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia. He entered the Society of Jesus on Feb. 1, 1955. Brother Jim worked as a printer and tailor and received training in food service management. He then became a cook and food service manager for the Jesuit novitiate in Wernersville, Pa., from 1960 to 1967. He was administrative assistant at Loyola High School from 1969-1991. Upon his retirement in 1991 he served in the Apostleship of the Sea Center, Baltimore.

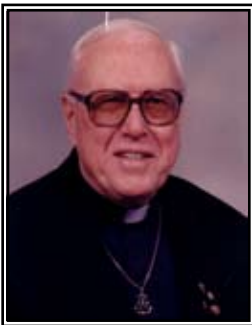
"Within our Apostleship of the Sea family which benefited so much from his [Bro. Jim's] pastoral care of international seafarers as well as his help in getting so many of us oriented into ministering to seafarers, we would like to memorialize the brand new telephone and computer center as the Brother Jim Horan Communication Center", said Msgr. Fitzgerald, Director of the Stella Maris Seafarers' Center in Baltimore.

Bro. Jim died on August 29, 2008. He is survived by his sister Franceline of Connecticut. The Mass of Christian Burial was held at St. Vincent de Paul Church, Baltimore. The Father Provincial of the Jesuit Maryland Province and fellow priests concelebrated at Mass.

Reverend Monsignor Patrick Gallagher (1941-2008)

Patrick Gallagher was born on November 27, 1941 in County Sligo, Ireland. He was the eldest of five children of Michael and Mary Quinn Gallagher. He entered all Hallows Seminary in Dublin in 1960 and was ordained to the priesthood in 1966. On July 19, 1966 he arrived in the United States and his priestly assignments included the Southern California areas of Los Angeles, Brea, Diamond Bar, Oxnard and Inglewood. Monsignor Gallagher was a member of the Archdiocesan Marriage Tribunal as well as the Ventura County representative on the Senate of Priests. He was appointed pastor of Mary Star of the Sea Parish in San Pedro on March 16, 1984 and Director of the Apostleship of the Sea for Los Angeles. In recognition of his dedicated pastoral service, he received the title of Monsignor (Chaplain to his Holiness, Pope John Paul II).

As pastor of Mary Star of the Sea parish for 24 years, he initiated numerous ministries with the support and help of the clergy, staff and volunteers. Under his direction, a Perpetual Adoration Chapel was established. A new parish high school was constructed and dedicated this year. His love for the poor were shown in the many pastoral outreach including the Apostleship of the Sea in the Port of San Pedro. On April 4, 2008, he died after a brief illness. He is survived by his brother John and sister-in-law Kitty, sisters Anne Keane and Sister Francis, a Religious Sister of Charity. Cardinal Roger Mahony, Archbishop of Los Angeles, presided at the Mass of Christian Burial concelebrated by about four dozen priests.

Reverend James Keating (1925-2008)

Father Jim was born on January 4, 1925. He graduated from Quigley Preparatory Seminary in June 1944 and from the University of St. Mary of the Lake/ Mundelein in May 1951. Father Jim was ordained a priest on May 3, 1957. On February 10, 2008 at age 83, Fr. Jim died of renal failure at St. James Hospital in Chicago Heights. The concelebrated Mass of Christian Burial on February 15 was presided by Bishop Thad Jakubowski at St. Michael Church, South Shore Drive in Chicago, where Fr. Jim was a senior priest. He is survived by two sisters, Margaret Gaskin and Patricia King.

Fr. Jim Keating was AOS chaplain for forty years. He was National Director of the Apostleship of the Sea in the USA from 1972-1980. In 1996-2006, Fr. Jim was treasurer of the National Catholic Conference of Seafarers which later transitioned in 2001 into the Apostleship of the Sea of the USA (AOSUSA), a national membership organization of chaplains, pastoral associates, mariners, students, cruise ship priests, affiliates and honorary members.

Fr. Jim received numerous awards including the Archbishop Silvano Tomasi Award for Ministry to People on the Move from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in 2002; City of Chicago Hall of Fame Award in 1998 and the Star of the Sea-Apostleship of the Sea Award in 1983. Fr. Jim Keating's life journey had indeed been one of dedicated service, a "port chaplain who brings God to the docks" (New Catholic World, May 24, 1998).

Message from Cardinal Martino and Monsignor Jack Harel

Dear Friends of the Apostleship of the Sea,

Having arrived at the end of his mandate, Msgr. Jacques Harel, who was during the last five years the Official in charge of the Sector AOS-International of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant people, will leave his post on the 20th October and will be replaced by Rev. Fr. Bruno Ciceri, C.S., in January 2009.

Msgr. Harel will return to his home diocese in Mauritius and will be assigned to a parish on the coast, from where he will continue to serve the People of the Sea. During all these years, Msgr. Harel has spared no efforts to further the cause of seafarers, fishers and their families, coordinating, with the Superiors of this Dicastery, the pastoral outreach of AOS-International with competence and generosity.

Pastoral work and evangelization are an on-going process. Therefore, Fr. Ciceri, who is already known to many of you, will now, with your cooperation, bring forward all this experience.

While we welcome Fr. Ciceri and wish him a fruitful apostolate in his new responsibility, we thank again Msgr. Harel for his commitment and all the services he has rendered, asking God's blessings on him and on his new pastoral assignment.

Cardinal Renato Raffaele Martino
President

+Archbishop Agostino Marchetto
Secretary

Dear Friends,

I have arrived at the end of my five-year mandate and I will retire from my responsibilities at AOS-International, in the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, leaving Rome on the 20th October 2008.

I would like to say goodbye and express my gratitude to everyone with whom I have collaborated during the time I have been in charge of the maritime sector of the Pontifical Council. Along the years, I have been privileged to visit most of the Regions. It has been a great pleasure to come to know you and to be able to work with so many committed, clergy, religious and laity, who so generously give of themselves for the welfare of seafarers, fishers and their families. Thanks to this exemplary commitment to your mission, it has always been a source of great satisfaction to represent AOS at the different forums where the pastoral care of seafarers and fishers and their families was discussed.

I shall be going back to Mauritius, from where I intend to continue to support the work of AOS in the Indian Ocean, I pray for all of us at AOS, for our ecumenical partners and for all the kindred organizations and societies, so that the spiritual and material welfare of the people of the sea and the defense of their dignity and human rights may remain always central to our pastoral engagement. I pray too, that wherever we may be throughout the world, we can continue to accompany faithfully and generously those we are called to serve.

The sea knows no frontiers and, the Lord willing, I sincerely hope that there will be, in the years ahead, many opportunities for cooperation, mutual support and networking. May Our Lady, the Stella Maris, guide us always and may God bless us in all our endeavors to build His kingdom in the maritime world.

Yours sincerely,
Jacques Harel

Seafarers find warmer welcome from USCG

Thursday 9 October 2008

US COAST Guard Commandant Thad Allen's pledge to treat international seafarers with more professionalism and respect has received a tangible third party endorsement, writes Rajesh Joshi.

BIMCO has released results of an anonymous shipboard survey it launched on 220 member ships after getting word of Admiral Allen's pledge in February.

Relying entirely on seafarers' reports, BIMCO found 77% of the respondents who had visited the US since February 2008 had noted an improvement in the attitude of USCG personnel.

Although 30% of the respondents had experienced "unprofessional" or "disrespectful" inspections somewhere in the world within the last 24 months, 95% reported that the most recent inspection in the US "had indeed been professional and respectful", BIMCO said. The results were presented to Adm Allen when he visited BIMCO headquarters.

"I was very pleased to receive this unsolicited feedback from a major representative of the maritime industry we regulate, serve and protect," Adm Allen said.

In an exclusive interview in New York in July, Adm Allen had recounted his impression that treatment of seafarers had "improved" since February, and stressed his intention to keep up efforts to preserve the improvement.

Organisations contacted by Lloyd's List for validation of Adm Allen's words, including the Chamber of Shipping of America, agreed that there was improvement in seafarers' treatment, but the evidence at that point was only anecdotal.

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This article appeared in Lloyd's List on www.lloydslist.com/viewbulletin (accessed October 14, 2008). For more information visit www.lloydslist.com

New Data Show Growing Global Demand for Trained Merchant Mariners

Only months after graduation ceremonies were held on campuses across the nation, approximately 85 percent of 2008 graduates with merchant marine licenses from the United States Merchant Marine Academy and six state maritime academies have found employment afloat in the maritime industry or in the U.S. military, according to data released by the Maritime Administration today.

"This data indicates that the job market for merchant marine officers remains robust. There is a growing, worldwide demand for fully-trained merchant marine officers and licensed mariners. Excellent training combined with ongoing global trade expansion will continue to make the graduates of U.S. maritime colleges among the most qualified and employable mariners in the world," said U.S. Maritime Administrator Sean Connaughton.

Total employment for 2008 licensed graduates is already more than 95 percent. This number includes those who have found shoreside employment in the maritime industry. One of the academies, Great Lakes in Traverse City, Michigan, has placed 100 percent of its 2008 graduates in maritime afloat employment.

The Maritime Administration operates the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy and provides funding and training ships to Maine, Massachusetts, Texas, California, Great Lakes Maritime Academies, and the State University of New York Maritime College. The U.S. Merchant Marine Academy is a federal service academy, and the state maritime academies are all part of their respective state higher education systems. A chart with a more detailed breakdown is available at www.marad.dot.gov



Maritime Administration News Release # MARAD 22-08

Date: Aug. 20, 2008

SAVE THE DATES

AOS-USA Annual Conference – May 5-8, 2009 in New Orleans, LA

More details will be communicated.

We encourage the AOS chaplains and pastoral team, AOS-USA members, mariners and mariner students, cruise ship priests and affiliates to participate. We hope to make the Conference a learning opportunity with colleagues, with input from speakers, a space for networking and sharing best practices, and of course, to enjoy the multicultural sights and sounds that only New Orleans can offer its visitors.

Contact: Rev. Sinclair Oubre, J.C.L.

Tel. 409-982-5111

Email: aos-beaumont@dioceseofbmt.org

NAMMA Conference - June 9-11, 2009 in Houston, TX

For more details contact:

Rev. Lloyd Burghart

Executive Secretary - NAMMA

US: Box 2434, Niagara Falls, NY 14302; CAN: 13-159 Canboro Rd., Fonthill, ON L0S 1E5

NAMMA Phone: 905-892-8818

Mobile: 905-327-0448



AOS participants in the NAMMA Conference August 18-21, 2008 in Charleston, Navy Yard, Massachusetts. Not in the picture is Fr. Tom Falkenthal, AOS Director of the Archdiocese of Miami and newly elected NAMMA board member.



With Fr. Philip Laplante, AOS Chaplain Emeritus of Boston (3rd from right).

SHIP WELFARE VISITOR COURSE REFLECTIONS FROM A PARTICIPANT

By Deacon Reginald Seymour

After receiving an invitation to attend the Ship Welfare Visitor Course Instructors course training provided by the International Committee on Seafarer's Welfare (ICSW) and the Merchant Navy Welfare Board (MNWB), I have completed the training and have been certified as an Instructor for the Port of New Orleans and the Central Gulf Area.

In addition to being a Co-Director of Stella Maris Ministries and a native of New Orleans, I am an ordained Permanent Deacon in the Archdioceses of New Orleans. I have recently retired from the Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (I.C.E.), as the Assistant Special Agent in Charge after over 34 years of Federal Government Service. I am married with six children and 8 grandchildren.

As I walked into the hotel's conference room in the Country Inn Canal Hotel, Panama City, Panama, for the Ship Welfare Visitor Course (SWVC), the very first thing that caught my attention was a very large picture window that captured the view of a freighter, loaded with containerized cargo,

transiting the Panama Canal. The freighter was travelling from the Atlantic Ocean side to the Pacific Ocean side of Panama, after navigating the locks of the Panama Canal. What a marvel to behold. For a moment, I was caught up in the history of the Panama Canal, a rich history that reveals the saga of human ingenuity and courage: years of sacrifice, crushing defeat, and final victory. A history of how so many people with varied ethnic backgrounds came together and worked together, and how many gave their lives in the effort.

Also, I thought about the cliché, "necessity is the mother of invention", and how after the riches of Peru, Ecuador, and Asia were discovered, and calculating the amount of time it took to get the gold and treasures to Ports of Spain, it was suggested that if a piece of land was removed from Panama, it would shorten the trip and lessen the possibility of lost of the riches. For a moment, I was lost in the history of Panama and the Panama Canal. Then returning to reality and the task at hand, the Ship Welfare Visitors Course, my real purpose for being in Panama, I came to the conclusion that I could not have chosen a better location to receive the Ship Welfare Visitors Course. A course that was also developed out of a necessity. A necessity to heighten ship visitors personal safety, give an awareness of port security, port operations, and protocol when dealing with seafarers on board vessels, and dealing with port officials and facilities. A course developed to validated ship visitors, and give

credibility to ship visitors as to their knowledge of the daily operation of the maritime industry. The Ship Welfare Visitor Course and the Ship Welfare Visitor Instructor Course are two well thought out and plan courses. Even after over twenty-plus years of experience relative to dealing with seafarers, vessels, government agencies, and port authorities, the two courses held my attention and I walked away with a substantial amount of new and valuable information. However, the life experiences shared by my classmates was an invaluable learning experience I will never forget. The class was made up of Port Chaplains from Africa, Canada, Panama, Brazil, and the United States. The chaplains were Priest, Ministers, Deacons, laymen, and businessmen. Each brought a unique invaluable experience (favor) to the group. Each person shared their port experience from the perspective of their specific life's expertise. Unforgettable and touching stories were shared by all.

Finally, the course information and location were excellent, the classmate and experiences that was shared I'll never forget, but the most important ingredient in this mixture was the course instructor. I previously indicated that I am a native of New Orleans, and we know a lot about good food, good recipes and good cooking. Also, we know that in order to make a good dish you must have fresh ingredients and the right amount of each ingredient to have a perfect dish. Capt. Damien Crowley was the ingredient that completed a perfect recipe for, if you will, a delicious Gumbo. He is the developer and senior instructor of the Ship Visitor Welfare course. With his many years of experience as an officer on various commercial freighters, work experience with several maritime companies and the maritime university, and his unique ability to teach a difficult subject matter, he made the course an enjoyable experience.

The International Committee on Seafarers Welfare (ICSW) designing, the Nautical Institute accreditation, and the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) funding and support of the Ship Welfare Visitor Course is a worldwide training movement that will change the history of ship visiting, and the mind set and perception of ship visitors in the maritime industry. This is a history making event, and I am very excited to be a part of this history.

Deacon Reginald J. Seymour
Director, Stella Maris Ministries
New Orleans, Louisiana



Chaplain Mike De Toro 2008 Bishop's Award Recipient

The Diocese of Stockton has chosen Mike De Toro as the 2008 Bishop's Awards recipient in the category of the Life of Community Service. "He is being honored for his commitment, service and dedication to Church of Presentation, the Seafarer program and the Diocese. Mike has been an active member of the Knights of Columbus since 1974. Since 2003, he has served in an exemplary capacity as Chaplain for the Port of Stockton, a completely volunteer position. In the past, Mike also stepped-up to the plate when called upon to chair the parish Fall Fest and also the Bishop's Ministry Appeal. Mike continues to reach out beyond the local community and has been instrumental in making the 'Church for Tomorrow Capital and Endowment Campaign' a success", said Msgr. Larry McGovern, Pastor. On October 11, 2008, the Life of Community Service Award was presented to Mike during the Bishops' Award Dinner.

It was highlighted that "volunteering for community and church activities has always been a way of life for Mike". He was a Vietnam veteran for 22 years, at various times he served as "Scout Master, CCD teacher, Usher, Parish President, Eucharistic Minister, Aid, Helper and Confidant. Mike also regularly reaches out beyond the local community by sponsoring 3 young people in the Philippines, providing the financial support to obtain for each of them a Catholic education" and "he is also working with the St. Joseph Orphanage in the Philippines by sending money and supplies on a regular basis". In 2003 Bishop Blaire appointed Mike as AOS Chaplain of the Port of Stockton.



Mike De Toro

The nomination letter runs, "During his [Mike] tenure, he has obtained space for a chapel/office and the Seafarer's Center. He has raised funds for the purchase of recreational equipment, and has solicited the donation of equipment and furniture for the seamen to use at the Center... Mike greets each ship that arrives at the port, provides each individual with a way to contact loved ones back home, assists with medical emergencies and provides Eucharistic services for Catholics on board, or arranges for religious services for those of other faiths". For his outstanding service, Mike received a "City of Stockton award in January, 2005 from then outgoing Mayor Gary Podesto and incoming Mayor Ed Chavez acknowledging his efforts to make the lives of seamen at the Port more pleasant. Mike's favorite time of day at the Port is midmorning, when he has the opportunity to sit down with crew members for a coffee break. Mike brings cookies. Not much of a treat by our standards, but so typically American. This simple act, the giving of time for conversation, a simple treat, the offer of friendship, no strings attached, isn't this what Christ teaches us to do?"

The Apostleship of the Sea national office congratulates Mike for receiving the award. God speed and may Our Lady Star of the Sea guide your path always.

Welcome on board Fr. Lito Capeding, new AOS Chaplain of the Archdiocese of Mobile, Alabama. Fr. Lito will be working with Deacon Joseph Connick at the Catholic Maritime Club. We praise Archbishop Thomas J. Rodi for the appointment and thank him for supporting the Catholic Maritime Ministry in the Archdiocese.

Fr. Lito has also been appointed Parochial Administrator of the Shrine of the Holy Cross and St. John Mission.

A WORLD OF THANKS

We gratefully acknowledge all who contributed articles to the Catholic Maritime News. We value your input and encourage others to send articles by February 10, 2009 for the March 2009 issue.

Thanks to Cezarina Palting, our new AOS volunteer from Germantown, Maryland who assisted in preparing the CMN and to Margaret Marzec, Cultural Diversity staff.



Apostleship of the Sea, National Office
Secretariat of Cultural Diversity in the Church
Pastoral Care of Migrants, Refugees & Travelers
3211 Fourth Street, NE ♦ Washington, DC 20017 USA

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And the Word became flesh, and made His dwelling among us (John 1,14)

*May His tender love embrace you, His grace and truth fill you,
His comforting peace surround you, This Christmas and always.*

Our prayers and best wishes,

Apostleship of the Sea in the United States of America