

**Secretary General's Report  
Annual Meeting of the Membership  
Niagara Falls, Ontario CANADA  
May 11-14, 2010**

The AOS USA National Office is now completing its seventh full year of operation. It was opened July 1, 2003 in order to facilitate the Cruise Ship Priest Program.

Fr. Matthew Mauriello's Cruise Ship Priest Board Representative Report will review the Cruise Ship Priest Program with you as well, so much of my report will concentrate on other office activities.

**CRUISE SHIP PRIEST PROGRAM**

My main duties are to administer and facilitate the Cruise Ship Priest Program. The response from our priests has been phenomenal. This has enabled us to serve large numbers of cruises each year. However, recent events with Celebrity Cruises have radically changed these numbers for 2010.

<b>Number of Ships &amp; Cruises Served by AOS USA</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>Celebrity Cruises</b>					
Ships:	8	8	10	11	11
Cruises with Cruise Ship Priests on board:	317	312	280	290	66 (82% fewer)
<b>Holland America</b>					
Ships:	12	12	14	15	15
Cruises with Cruise Ship Priests on board:	435	441	460	470	470
<b>Norwegian Cruise Line</b>					
Ships	13	15	12	11	11
Cruises with Cruise Ship Priests on board:	32	39	33	31	22
<b>Princess Cruises</b>					
Ships:		16	16	12	Not in program
Cruises with Cruise Ship Priests on board:		22	56	18	
<b>Royal Caribbean International</b>					
Ships:					22
Cruises with Cruise Ship Priests on board:					46
<b>Total Cruises Served by AOS USA Cruise Ship Priests:</b>					
	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
Ships:	33	51	52	49	59
Cruises:	784	814	829	809	604

At the winter board meeting last year, I recommended that in-lieu of attending the Seatrade Cruise Convention this year, we might spend our money more wisely by making a focused trip to the Miami/Fort Lauderdale area. I wanted to meet with Carnival and Royal Caribbean in hopes of getting them onboard, and to meet with NCL to gain a stronger commitment. I was finally able to get a meeting with Carnival and Royal Caribbean this past September. I am happy to report that Royal Caribbean did finally come onboard. We will serve their Easter, Christmas and re-positioning cruises. Carnival is not coming onboard, but I believe the meeting with them was genuine and that we have a better understanding of their reluctance to join. They have a better understanding of what we are actually requesting of them. Having Royal Caribbean onboard is rather crucial, as they are one of the 2 major lines, which owns all the others, and they have had more than their share of charlatans and trouble makers onboard. We are very excited that they are now onboard.

However, in my reports each year, I have stressed that my over riding concern for the program is the lack of cruise lines onboard. I was particularly concerned about Celebrity Cruises, as they are the only cruise line we receive

collection funds from. In mid December 2009, Celebrity Cruises announced a sudden and radical change to their clergy program onboard. They announced that they would place priests onboard for Easter and Christmas Cruises only in 2010. Catholic passengers voiced their displeasure by phone, e-mail, mail, website blogs, etc. Celebrity then softened their stance, and agreed to place priests onboard throughout Lent, as well as Holy Land Cruises. However, this means that 82% of their cruises no longer have priests onboard.

**The implications for the AOS USA Cruise Ship Priest Program are:**

- The loss of 294 cruises with priests.
- This means 294 fewer opportunities for priests to serve onboard
- A devastating loss of access to a priest for the Sacraments and Pastoral Care onboard for crew members and staff onboard Celebrity ships.
- An estimated \$40,000 loss of funds due to the loss of cruise collections on 82% of their cruises.
- The possible loss of significant numbers of Cruise Ship Priest members, and subsequently a significant loss in membership dues.

**MEMBERSHIP**

The second main task that I was given is to handle AOS USA Membership. This includes solicitation of membership renewals, processing new and renewing members, sending out membership packets, keeping the database current, and posting new data to the website for both AOS Port Chaplains and the Cruise Ship Priests. It also entails helping members with their various needs: from new chaplains needing to know about the ITF and other ecumenical agencies, to seasoned chaplains searching for phone numbers of other chaplains around the world, etc.

**Membership Data:**

<u>CATEGORY</u>	<u>Oct03</u>	<u>Apr 04</u>	<u>Oct 04</u>	<u>Apr 05</u>	<u>Oct 05</u>	<u>Apr 06</u>	<u>Sept 06</u>	<u>Jan 07</u>	<u>Oct07</u>	<u>Apr 08</u>	<u>Oct08</u>	<u>Apr09</u>	<u>Oct09</u>	<u>Apr10</u>
Pastoral	63	38	48	38	40	37	42	33	44	36	38	29	33	29
Associate	21	15	16	10	13	15	16	12	14	13	16	15	15	15
Mariner	5	10	12	12	14	16	18	14	16	15	17	20	21	15
Student Mariner	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1
<u>Affiliate</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>10</u>
Total Port Ministry	136	91	109	90	102	92	105	82	102	82	90	82	88	70
<u>Cruise Ship Priest</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>446</u>	<u>620</u>	<u>565</u>	<u>643</u>	<u>593</u>	<u>669</u>	<u>480</u>	<u>645</u>	<u>606</u>	<u>680</u>	<u>662</u>	<u>764</u>	<u>605</u>
<b>Total Members</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>537</b>	<b>729</b>	<b>655</b>	<b>745</b>	<b>685</b>	<b>763</b>	<b>562</b>	<b>737</b>	<b>679</b>	<b>770</b>	<b>744</b>	<b>852</b>	<b>675</b>

**Other duties include:**

- maintain the AOS USA section of the AOS website
- receive requests for information from our port ministry members seeking assistance with everything from contact information for other centers, to suggestions for dealing with difficulties in particular ports, or ideas for working ecumenically.
- Send welcome letters and helpful books on AOS ministry to new AOS assigned Port Chaplains, encouraging them to join AOS USA.
- Gather and distribute maritime news items relevant to port, fishing and cruise ministry and send to members via e-mail, which is now done with a far more professional look thanks to the Constant Contact system. This does take a great deal of time, but I hear from members when we don't post anything for a couple of weeks. It is also distributed to many of our AOS Brothers and Sisters, and Non-Catholic Maritime Ministers around the US and throughout the world. We receive many compliments on our e-news and our work is forwarded by many Non-Catholic ministers to their denominations and Centers.
- Assisting Committee chairs with contact information of members within their domain, and helping them to obtain needed statistics, figures for reports, etc.
- Establishing and facilitating the AOS USA Facebook and Twitter sites. We did away with the yahoo discussion group as this was largely ignored by our membership. These sites are already far more used than the old discussion group. One such member on our Facebook site is our student mariner. In establishing this outlet, it is hoped that this will be a place where young mariners will find us, learn about us, and get involved. Events can be posted on the Facebook site, and "tweets" about issues facing mariners, port chaplains etc can be posted on twitter.
- Representing AOS USA at trade shows, diocesan events, maritime industry events and conferences.

### **AOS USA Office Update**

Lastly, I need to give an update on the restructuring of our office thanks to Hurricane Ike. Ike hit in September of 2008. We are blessed to have a rent free office thanks to the kindness of the Steeleworkers Union Local 4-23. So, fortunately for us, when the roof was torn off and water thrown into our office, we didn't have the headache of having to make the actual repairs. We just had to be patient and try to keep our office up and running while being kicked out for an indefinite time period.

After operating from my home from Sept 2008- July 2009, we finally moved back into the office. I am happy to say, that though we were operating between 2 places, with files stored in a jumbled room at the Union Hall, we did not loss any files, no member files went awol, and all cruises were filled, without a hitch. It took some doing, but we made it.

Texas Wind Storm Insurance accepted our contents claim except for 1 item under \$100. We do have a deductible of \$1,000 but received around \$400. Our insurance did not cover any expenses arising from being out of our offices, so we were fortunate to be able to work mainly from my home.

In closing, I wish to say that I thoroughly enjoy working for AOS USA though this past year was a rough one. My work is never dull and continues to stretch my own boundaries. I enjoy being a part of such an important piece of our Church. I am proud of the way the Cruise Ship Priest Program has taken wings among our clergy. Though it is clearly delightful work onboard most days, our priests are really taking it as serious ministry and are getting an education about port ministry and ministry to fishers.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Doreen M. Badeaux", is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Doreen M. Badeaux  
Secretary General