



Catholic Maritime News

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Message from the Director

AOS: Be Strong in the Lord

The devastating effects of Hurricane Harvey and Irma on human life and properties are food for thought for all. Many lives are lost, people are in fear, shock, and confusion. Many question and ask, Lord, where do we turn to? Faced with the fury of nature, we human beings are helpless but can only turn to God for protection, security and comfort. May all those who experience hardships, distress or displaced from their homes be strengthened and renewed.

The AOS National Office of the United States of America, takes this opportunity to remember in a special way all those affected by Hurricane Harvey and Irma. We pray specially for our AOS families affected by the two hurricanes. We equally appreciate and implore divine blessing on those who dedicate their lives even in time of adversity, to reach out to seafarers, fishers, their families, port personnel and all who work or travel on the high seas. We ask the Almighty Father to show His mercy and compassion toward all those affected, protect and keep them safe from dangerous and difficult situations.

May the Lord Jesus Christ, who promised that he would be with his people until the end of time, guide our steps and help us fulfill our mission. The mission to support and sustain the families of seafarers especially the ones experiencing hardship. May the Spirit of the Lord calm the storm of fear in our hearts, and in our nation. May the solidarity between the different AOS ports and ministries be strengthened as we strive to serve our brothers and sisters, fostering dialogue and empowering others to become agents of new evangelization.

May our Mother Mary, Star of the Sea intercede for us. May all be strong in the Lord and pray for one another for safety. We ask that all God's people may generously reach out and be advocates to those in need.

Yours in Christ,

Sr. Joanna Okereke, HHCJ

National Director – Apostleship of the Sea



Sr. Joanna Okereke, HHCJ



Bishop Brendan J. Cahill

New Bishop Promoter Supports AOS

The Blessing of the Fleet

By Sarita Villafranca Richmond

Editor, The Catholic Lighthouse, The Official Publication of the Diocese of Victoria in Texas

Psalm 107: 23-25 "Those who go down to the sea in ships, who do business on great waters; They have seen the works of the LORD, And His wonders in the deep. For He spoke and raised up a stormy wind, which lifted up the waves of the sea."

For generations, Texas coastal waters have been the base of the largest shrimping industry in the world. The Gulf of Mexico commercial shrimp season for both Texas and federal waters ends 30 minutes after sunset Monday, May 15. The Texas closure applies to Gulf waters 9-200 nautical miles from the Texas coast. The closure happens every year and typically will go until July 15. Right before the waters open Texas shrimpers are sure not to leave home without the blessing of a priest.

There are ceremonies celebrated all along the coast called the Blessing of the Fleet. The Blessing of the Fleet is an annual ceremony that blesses shrimpers and their vessels while bidding them a safe and bountiful trip as they leave the docks for the opening of the Shrimp Season in Texas. Father Dominic Nguyen, Pastor of St. Anthony of Padua in Palacios held their Blessing of the Fleet on June 29, 2017, the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul. After Mass Father Dominic, Father Francis, captains, fishermen and parishioners headed to the docks. The weather was threatening rain, however, all gathered in front of the statue of the Sacred



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Bishop Promoter: Most Reverend Brendan J. Cahill
Bishop of the Diocese of Victoria, TX

AOS National Director Contact: Sr. Dr. Joanna Okereke, HHCJ
3211 Fourth Street, NE, Washington, DC 20017

Phone: (202) 541-3359 ■ Fax: (202) 541-5417
E-mail: jokereke@uscgb.org

www.usccb.org/AOS

We encourage you to visit our website which has user friendly navigation tools. Check out our interactive map with a list of AOS chaplains and contacts, know about news and events and other relevant information.

Contact Catholic Maritime News

We welcome your comments, feedback and suggestions.
Tell us what you think by sending an email to AOS@uscgb.org.

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Apostleship of the Sea of the United States of America (AOSUSA)

is a professional membership association of chaplains/associates, cruise ship priests, mariners, student mariners and affiliate members.

For AOSUSA membership enquiries:

Doreen Badeaux
1500 Jefferson Drive, Port Arthur, TX 77642
Tel. (409) 985-4545 ■ Fax (409) 985-5945

E-mail: AOSusa@sbcglobal.net ■ www.AOS-usa.org

Heart of Jesus where prayers were read and the blessing proceeded.

For captains Gabriel Lopez, Juan Maldonado and Ubaldo Garcia this is a time when they once again leave behind their families, their friends and all the comforts of home to embark on an unknown journey at sea. Gabriel Lopez who is from Guanajuato Mexico has been a captain for 30 years. He shares, "The blessing gives me more peace and confidence for fishing." Ubaldo Garcia is another captain who is also from Guanajuato. He has been shrimping for 20 years.



Fisherman's Memorial



Fr. Nguyen blessing the fleet in Palacios, TX



His wife, Adriana shared, "It is hard to be alone while he is gone for so long. I have the responsibility of our 4 children and don't have family here." Juan Maldonado is from San Luis Potosi, Mexico. He has been a captain for 30 years. The Blessing of the Fleet for him means a lot. He feels that through this blessing God blesses him while on the job and fishing. All three men shared that they work hard to provide for their families. They also shared how they instill this work ethic and the value of having an education in their children. These men have hot, grueling days at sea. The shrimpers typically fish for at least three weeks in the Gulf before returning to port. Shrimpers must fish at night, since the brown or Brazilian shrimp is nocturnal. The work itself is arduous and, at times, dangerous. Gulf shrimping is accomplished from wooden or steel-hulled trawlers measuring, most commonly, from fifty to eighty feet long. The crew of a shrimper, composed of captain, rigger, and header, employs nets either of thirty-six or forty-five feet in length. In the twin-trawl rig, the rig most commonly used, four nets are dragged along the sea bottom. Wooden "doors" keep the mouths of the nets open as the tickler chains at the bottoms of the nets stir up the shrimp and drive them in. A shrimp captain is an experienced fisherman and pilot who is entrusted by a trawler owner with fishing equipment that may be worth more than \$300,000.

Blessings of the Fleet have been given and once again it is time for the shrimpers to return to work the often tremulous waters of the Gulf of Mexico. We keep them in prayer and ask God to bless them with bountiful catches and a safe return. The Catholic Lighthouse, reprinted with permission.



Left: Fr. Dominic Nguyen and Fr. Francis Nguyen

Below: Shrimp Boat Captains and parishioners of St. Anthony of Padua Church in Palacios who participated in the blessing of the fleet.



National Maritime Day Observance 2017

By Jason Zuidema

Each May 22, the United States celebrates National Maritime Day to honor the many sacrifices and contributions of the U.S. Merchant Marine and the United States maritime industry. The day was fixed on May 22 to remember the first steam powered ship to sail from the United States to Europe; the SS Savannah departed Savannah, Georgia on May 22, 1819, arriving in Liverpool 29 days later. Each year the U.S. Maritime Administration hosts an observance ceremony in their headquarters' a few blocks South of the Capitol in Washington.

The invocation and benediction were given by Bishop Mario E. Dorsonville-Rodríguez, auxiliary Bishop of Washington. He prayed for a blessing on all seafarers and those in the maritime industry.

The keynote speaker was The Honorable Elaine L. Chao, the new Secretary of Transportation for the United States. Her presence was welcome as the first person in her position coming from a maritime background. Mrs. Chao said, "We will never forget that America's merchant mariners are the first to be sent in times of need."

Additional speeches were given by General Darren W. McDew, Commander of U.S. Transportation Command, Lisa Wieland, Director of the Massachusetts Port Authority, and Vice Admiral Charles Ray, Deputy Commandant for Operations, U.S. Coast Guard. No doubt, the most special part of the ceremony was the presence of six WWII merchant marine veterans.

That same afternoon, many maritime industry leaders gathered at the National Press Club in Washington for the annual Safety at Sea Seminar convened by NAMEPA and followed by the AMVER awards. The Seminar was especially concerned with issues of seafarers' welfare, particularly seafarers' stress, fatigue, mounting paperwork, and cyber threats. Among the speakers was North American Maritime Ministry Association president, Rev. Marsh Drege. Rev. Drege talked about the various initiatives of seafarers' ministries around North America, but especially the daily work of chaplains to bring comfort and support to seafarers when they are in port.



Archdiocese of Mobile Celebrated Maritime Memorial Day

by Lito Capeding

MOBILE – Monday, May 22, 2017, is a National Day of Prayer and Remembrance for Mariners and People of the Sea. The day is observed in conjunction with National Maritime Day in the U.S. and has been celebrated since 1933 to honor those who serve as merchant mariners and to recognize the benefits of the maritime industry. On Monday, May 22, the Apostleship of the Sea celebrated Maritime Memorial Day to remember all who serve in the maritime industry and especially who have passed away. Mass will begin at 12:10 p.m. at the Cathedral-Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, 2 South Claiborne St. in Mobile. Following Mass there was a brief reception and light lunch in



the Portier House at 307 Conti St. At 2 p.m. ministers boarded a Duck Boat to be transported to the Mobile River for a wreath-laying ceremony in honor of those who have died. The Duck Boat accommodated up to 20 people.

The Apostleship of the Sea is a ministry of the Catholic Archdiocese



of Mobile serving the spiritual and temporal needs of the maritime industry and these seafarers who call on the Port of Mobile. The Catholic maritime apostleship was established in 1948 under the tutelage of Archbishop Thomas Toolen. The ministry currently serves the approximately 1,500 vessels that visit the Port of Mobile each year.

Many fishing and boating communities throughout the world have been blessing their fleets for centuries.

Most Rev. Gregory Aymond, Archbishop of New Orleans participated in the blessing of the boats at Shell Beach, Saturday July 29, 2017
Below: boats decorated for the blessing and celebration.



Deacon Norbert Billiot, Archbishop Gregory Aymond, Deacon Wayne Lobell



Message for Sea Sunday 2017

(9th July 2017)

Dear chaplains, volunteers, friends and supporters of the Apostleship of the Sea,

In our daily lives, we are surrounded by and use many objects and products that at some stage of their journey towards us have being transported on vessels. It is difficult for us to imagine behind these objects the faces of the many seafarers who have secured a smooth sailing for the vessel to deliver safely these commodities in the port.

On Sea Sunday we are invited to recognize and express our gratitude to this force of more than 1.5 million seafarers, (the majority of them coming from developing countries), who with their hard work and sacrifices are making our life more comfortable by transporting, between nations and across the seven seas, almost 90 per cent of the goods.

Though their contribution is essential to the global world economy, many are challenges experienced by these people and many are the difficulties affecting their life and dignity. Here, I would like to recall some:

In spite of the great progress in technology, that has improved communication between seafarers and their loved ones, the long months away from the family are still a huge sacrifice that often reflects negatively on the family life. Mothers are left alone, forced to play multiple role with children growing with an absent father. It is important that in our pastoral ministry, we pay special attention to the families of seafarers by initiating and supporting the creation of seafarer's wives groups to provide mutual care and assistance.

The use of social media would allow the crew to be connected with many people around the world, but disconnected and isolated from each other on board because everyone is isolated in the virtual world in which is seeking refugee during free moments. Our function especially during visits on board is to try to create a "human connection" and strengthen the "human communication" among crewmembers to prevent loneliness, isolation and depression that could lead to suicide which, according to a recent UK P&I Club research, is the top cause of seafarers' death.

Because of the increase of the threat of terrorism, new security measures are further restricting in some ports the going ashore of seafarers and sometimes even the access to the vessel on the part of welfare visitors. Notwithstanding that we understand the need of making the ports "a secure place" for the people and the goods, on the other hand we must make sure that no one will be discriminated and prevented to go ashore because of nationality, race or religion and advocate for the fundamental right of the crews to "have access to shore-based facilities and services to secure their health and well-being" (MLC 2006, Title 4, Regulation 4.4).

In spite of the adoption and entry into force in August 2013 of the MLC 2006, that establishes the minimum international requirements of the human and labour right of seafarers, too many are still the cases of crews cheated out of their salary, exploited and abused on their work, unjustly criminalized for maritime accidents and abandoned in foreign ports. While it is our duty to provide all the necessary assistance and support to the crews which are experiencing hardship and difficulties, on the other hand we would like to call on all the maritime authorities to be more vigilant and attentive in intervening to prevent abuses and redress any wrongdoing.

Even though the treat of piracy around the maritime routes has decreased, compared with few years ago, the danger of arms attacks and hijackings are still very high in some geographical areas. We would like to invite the maritime community not to let down the guard and to implement all the necessary measures that will guarantee the safety and the protection not only of the cargo but most of all, of the crew.

Finally, I would like to focus our concerns on fishers and fisheries who will be the focus of the XXIV World Congress which will be held in Kaohsiung – Taiwan this coming October. Similarly to seafarers fishers spend long time at sea, often sail on fishing vessels that are not seaworthy, their profession is considered one of the most dangerous in the world but they are entitled to lesser wages and benefits than those enjoyed by the seafarers. The fishing sector is plagued with cases of human trafficking and forced labour, and Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing.

During the Congress, with the assistance of qualified speakers, we will increase our awareness and attention to these particular issues; we will strengthen our network with the objective to increase cooperation between the Apostleship of the Sea of the different nations; we will share resources and best practices to develop specific skills, particularly in the fisheries sector.

I renew my invitation that this Congress be attended not only by the experts, but by the largest number of chaplains and volunteers, because fisheries and fishers are a concern of the Apostleship of the Sea and not just only of those who are personally involved.

In concluding, let us ask Mary, Star of the Sea, to sustain our service and dedication to seafarers, fishers and their families and to protect all the people of the sea until they reach the "safe port" of heaven.

Cardinal Peter K.A. Turkson
Prefect
DICASTERY FOR PROMOTING HUMAN INTEGRAL
DEVELOPMENT



National Day of Prayer and Remembrance for Mariners and People of the Sea May 22, 2017



Sharing knowledge and resources



*Celebrating with prayer and the Mass of the
Blessed Virgin Mary, Star of the Sea in
gratitude for Bishop Boland's ten years of
faithful service to the Apostleship of the Sea*



Saying goodbye and thank you with love



Sharing together**At farewell Mass, Bishop honors seafarers and those who minister to them**

By Rhina Guidos

Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- During his final Mass as bishop-promoter of the Apostleship of the Sea, retired Bishop J. Kevin Boland of Savannah, Georgia, paid homage May 20 to the largely unseen workers whose labor affects “what we wear, what we eat, what we use.”

He also lauded the work of priests, religious sisters and laypeople who tend to the spiritual and practical needs of seafarers or those who work in ports.

At the Mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington marking the National Day of Prayer and Remembrance for Mariners and People of the Sea, which officially falls on May 22, Bishop Boland said he recognized that “I’m participating in a lot of swan songs” but said “this is pretty special one.”

In an interview with Catholic News Service, he said he treasured his tenure working with “the priests, sisters and laypeople who run port ministries for the ships coming in day after day, week after week, and that provide services to those people, who help them get calling cards so they can call home, take them shopping,” try to help them when they’re sick, or in trouble while away from home, along with tending to their spiritual needs.

He became bishop-promoter of the Apostleship of the Sea ministry that reaches out to seafarers, fishers, their families, port personnel and all who work or travel on the high seas Feb. 28, 2008.

“There’s all sorts of elements in what we call the ministry to the seafarer,” Bishop Boland said. “He (the seafarer) is one of the most important people we have in the world because of the type of work that he does and he does it under very difficult circumstances.”

The National Day of Prayer and Remembrance for Mariners and People of the Sea that the U.S. bishops instituted in 2005, he said, encourages Catholics in the country to support, remember and pray for the seafarers, for fishermen, port personnel and all those who work in the maritime industry. The ministry shows the Catholic Church’s care and concern to those who cannot participate in regular parish life because of the nature of their work.

In the United States, a variety of chaplains, religious as well as lay ministers and volunteers, carry out the ministry in 58 maritime ports, representing 47 dioceses, he said. “The seafarer is challenged because every port of call is his home,” he said, and every “seaport is his cathedral.” Those who minister to them



through the Apostleship of the Sea strive to see that Catholics and other seafarers “will always find God’s presence at the seaport cathedrals of the world,” he said.

Scalabrinian Sister Myrna Tordillo, who was the national director of the Apostleship of the Sea from 2007 until 2014, worked with Bishop Boland when he began his term. Though he didn’t know much about the work before he started, Bishop Boland began by asking the chaplain near the port in Savannah questions about the day to day of his work, she said.

“He’s hands-on (and) wanted to learn,” said Sister Tordillo, adding that he was supportive of chaplains, particularly their engagement with workers and volunteers from a variety of faiths, as they “continue to attend to the pastoral needs of the seafarers, and to collaborate ecumenically whenever possible with other Christian maritime groups for the well-being of mariners.”

Bishop Boland was a great supporter of the ministry’s chaplains and volunteers, who not only provide spiritual care for seafarers “but much of their work is also about extending practical assistance (such as providing ways for seafarers to be able to communicate with families back home) as well as advocating for the rights of seafarers” when they are not paid, advocating for health care for them or when they’re abandoned by their crew in a foreign land, said Sister Tordillo.

“He has a critical role in really supporting the work of the (ministry) chaplains and volunteers by his ministry of presence and as the face of the U.S. Catholic bishops in the maritime apostolate,” Sister Tordillo said, “and also to remind the bishops especially in dioceses with maritime ports to make every effort to have an Apostleship of the Sea ministry, which is a hidden ministry to many.”

Sister Joanna Okereke, the current national director of Apostleship of the Sea, said the bishop’s efforts during the last decade “truly touched many lives” and helped improve conditions in many ports.

“You’re a wonderful example to follow,” said Sister Okereke, a Sister of the Handmaids of the Holy Child Jesus, thanking the bishop during Mass.

Bishop Boland in his tenure, said Sister Okereke, encouraged other bishops to recognize the “needs of people of the sea that are present in their respective dioceses and encouraged them to direct resources to meet their pastoral needs.”

Bishop Boland also took part in notable events such as the prayers in 2010 for the 11 oil rig workers who died during the BP oil spill, the worst oil spill and environmental disaster in U.S. history, off the Gulf of Mexico. Their bodies were never found. In 2012, he also blessed several wreaths and rose petals for a ceremony in Boston for the 100th anniversary of the blessing of

the Titanic. The wreaths and petals were taken to the “site of the ship’s sinking and laid upon the water by the U.S. Coast Guard,” said Sister Okereke.

He also gave great support to groups who worked to place a marble relief of Our Lady Star of the Sea in 2015 at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington. The bishop made it clear through the years “that people of the sea are our brothers and sisters with spiritual needs, and that we need to accompany them in their joys and trials in life,” said Sister Okereke.

Bishop Boland joked that he only got the job as bishop promoter because he was speaking with a group of bishops one day and told them a story about a plaque in the city hall of Savannah and told them that “the USS Savannah, which was a steamship, had left the port of Savannah to go to Liverpool, England. It was the first steamship to cross the Atlantic and they said ‘That guy must know something.’”

Bishop Brendan J. Cahill of Victoria, Texas, will take over as bishop-promoter of the Apostleship of the Sea when Bishop Boland ends his term in June.



Most Rev. J. Kevin Boland, former Bishop Promoter of the Apostleship of the Sea, Sister Joanna Okereke, HHCJ, Current National Director of the Apostleship of the Sea, Sr. Myrna Tordillo, mscs, national director of the Apostleship of the Sea from 2007 until 2014, and Dr. Jason Zuidema, Executive Director, of the North American Maritime Ministry Association



The Apostleship of the Sea at NAMMA 2017

By Deacon Paul Rosenblum

The Apostleship of the Sea was well-represented at the 2017 Annual Meeting of the North American Maritime Ministry Association held in New Orleans from August 8-11. Twenty AOS-affiliated administrators, port chaplains, seafarers' center directors, and ministry volunteers attended the conference.

The theme of this year's conference was "Caring for the Future of Maritime Ministry." The conference began with an ecumenical worship service at the historic Cathedral of St. Louis. The Most Reverend Gregory M. Aymond, Archbishop of New Orleans, delivered the homily. His encouraging words got the conference off to a wonderful start. Over the next several days we heard from industry and government representatives who gave us their visions of the future of maritime ministry and what is needed to continue to serve the People of the Sea. We also heard talks focusing on caring for ourselves and each other so that we could be effective ministers to the seafarers. Finally, we heard the inspirational story of Shwe Tun Aung, former seafarer and current ITF inspector, whose perseverance in the face of dire conditions did so much to better the lives of Burmese seafarers and their families.

The AOS family gathered together many times during the conference. Mass was celebrated each morning. Bishop Brendan Cahill, newly appointed Bishop Promoter for the AOS in the United States, Fr. Andrew Thavarajasingnam, AOS Canada National Director, and Fr. Bruno Ciceri from the AOS at the Vatican, served as celebrants, with other priests concelebrating each morning. This was a wonderful way to begin each day. Thursday evening, we held our "business" meeting. Fr. Bruno

spoke about the status of AOS in the newly reorganized Vatican curia, and the upcoming AOS World Congress in Taiwan. Karen Parker, AOS North American and Caribbean Regional Director, Sr. Joanna Okereke, AOS United States National Director, and Fr. Andrew reported on their activities during the previous year. Bishop Cahill, who many of us met for the first time at the conference, presented his vision and priorities for AOS. There was a productive discussion of the relationship between AOS and the membership organization AOS-USA. Doreen Badeaux and Capt. George McShea of AOS-USA clarified the history and mission of AOS-USA. Following the meeting we all enjoyed dinner at a local seafood restaurant.

AOS continues to take an active leadership role in NAMMA. Sharon Emerson was reelected as Secretary and Karen Parker was reelected to the Board of Directors. Deacon Paul Rosenblum was newly elected to serve on the board.



Archbishop Gregory Aymond addresses NAMMA

Finally, special thanks go to Deacon Pat Dempsey and Deacon Wayne Lobell who served on the local organizing committee and who provided all the necessary vestments, vessels, and materials for daily Mass. Special thanks also go to Toni Lobell, Mason Green, and Susan Green for their work shuttling attendees from the airport to the conference hotel. Their service is greatly appreciated.

Photos featured on these two pages are courtesy of NAMMA



Participants in the North American Maritime Ministry Association (NAMMA) Conference 2017 held in New Orleans, LA - Aug. 8-11, 2017
"Caring for the Future of Maritime Ministry"

NAMMA Conference in New Orleans Focuses on Planning for Future of Port-Based Seafarers' Welfare

By Dr. Michael Skaggs

Over 120 delegates from seafarers' welfare organizations around North America and the Caribbean gathered in New Orleans August 8-11, 2017, to consider the annual conference's theme, "Caring for the Future of Maritime Ministry." NAMMA members and other attendees heard dynamic presentations from legal professionals, industry representatives, and welfare providers; from both the engagement of attendees feedback gathered on the final day, it is clear that the 2017 conference was an enormous success. "We knew when we assembled the program that this would be a great conference, especially on the theme of caring for the future of maritime ministry" said Jason Zuidema, NAMMA Executive Director. "I'm very, very pleased to see our attendees found the sessions useful, but also engaging and productive as they return to their ministries. This is precisely what NAMMA wants to achieve for its members." Attendees heard from a robust group of presenters on multiple aspects of maritime ministry and caring for its future.

Speakers treated a wide variety of topics in seafarers' welfare. Douglas Stevenson of the Center for Seafarers' Rights of the Seamen's Church Institute of New York and New Jersey presented the 2017 results of the annual Shore Leave Survey. Although 2017 revealed a marked decrease in the number of seafarers denied shore leave from 2016, the results - 9.5 percent of seafarers - remain far too high. David Heindel, Secretary-Treasurer of the Seafarers' International Union, spoke on the formation and continued importance of the International Transit Workers' Federation (ITF) ship Inspectorate in 1971. Luca Tommasi, Project Manager for the ITF Seafarers' Trust, introduced attendees to a number of new initiatives contributing to seafarers' holistic health. These include a new version of the Shore Leave app, portable communication pods, Seafarers' Emergency Funds, and the vehicle replacement program. Christian Mollitor, Vice President of Liberian International Ship & Corporate Registry and Kevin Humphreys of Wärtsilä spoke on the importance of seafarers' welfare in their ongoing work.

On particular display this year was the global nature of maritime ministry. Rev. Canon Stephen Miller, of the Mission to Seafarers - Hong Kong, spoke on the Mission's extraordinary range of services provided to seafarers in East Asia - including, especially, the Philippines, long the global powerhouse of shipping labor. Regina Borges de Paulo, Felix Albuquerque, and Bahman Amizarodi, Sailors' Society chaplains from Brazil, spoke on the work of caring for seafarers in their region of South America. They welcomed the contact with their North American colleagues and urged continued conversations about the issues that confronted seafarers' welfare across the Americas.

Keynoting the conference were Captain Gregory Todd, Chaplain of the United States Coast Guard, and Dr. Loretta Rivers, Professor of Social Work at New Orleans Baptist Seminary. Captain Todd focused especially on servant leadership, which provides welfare provides the opportunity to both model self-care and its necessity and ensure that those under their responsibility care for themselves. Dr. Rivers noted that self-care includes any action we choose to improve our physical, mental, or emotional well-being, thereby enabling us to minister more effectively to others.

The local planning committee worked diligently to ensure that the conference included ample opportunities to appreciate New Orleans, including an ecumenical prayer service at the historic Cathedral-Basilica of St. Louis, with a homily by Archbishop Gregory Aymond; a dinner cruise aboard the steamboat Natchez; and group visits to Global Maritime Ministries. "We're so grateful the planning committee did a truly excellent job planning this year's conference," said Rev. Marsh Drege, who was re-elected as President of NAMMA at the conference. "We've met in New Orleans before, but that was before Katrina. Knowing the devastation the city suffered in 2005, it's uplifting to see how far it's come in the last 12 years, a vibrant reminder of the importance of port cities and the resilience of their people." Resilient, too, are the chaplains and volunteers that comprise NAMMA; while theme of the conference aimed to encourage them to care for the future of maritime ministry, it is clear that seafarers' welfare is in good hands.

Dr. Michael Skaggs is Director of Programs for the North American Maritime Ministry Association, a professional network for port chaplains. You can connect with NAMMA at namma.org or facebook.com/maritimeministry/



Patrick Dempsey, Maritime Deacon and Director of Stella Maris Seafarers' Center, Most Rev. Gregory Aymond, Archbishop of New Orleans, Sr. Joanna Okereke, National Director, Apostleship of the Sea, Most Rev. Brendon Cahill, Bishop of Victoria, Bishop Promoter of the Apostleship of the Sea, Mrs. Toni and Deacon Wayne Lobell, Maritime Deacon and Seafarers' Center Co-Director.



Apostleship of the Sea, National Office
Secretariat of Cultural Diversity in the Church
Pastoral Care of Migrants, Refugees, and Travelers
3211 Fourth Street, NE, Washington, D.C. 20017

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UPCOMING EVENTS



Ship Photo Courtesy of NAMMA

SEPTEMBER 27, 2017

Feast of Our Lady Star of the Sea,

October 1-7, 2017

*XXVI World Congress of the Apostleship of the Sea
Ambassador Hotel, Kaohsiung, Taiwan*

NOVEMBER 21, 2017

World Fisheries Day

FEBRUARY 18 - MARCH 2, 2018

Houston Maritime Ministry Training Program