



# Catholic Maritime News

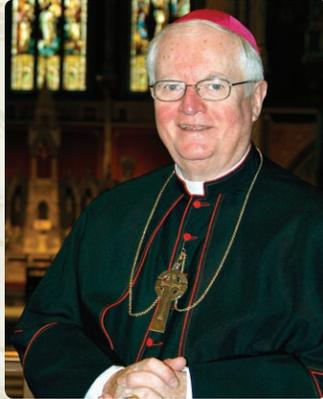


WINTER 2014

VOLUME 77

## A Christmas Message

By Bishop J. Kevin Boland



This past September I accompanied 17 bishops on a prayer and peace pilgrimage to the Holy Land. We celebrated Mass at special locations: Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, Annunciation in Nazareth, Visitation at Ein Karem, and at the Mount of Beatitudes in close proximity to the Sea of Galilee.

There is something special about the Sea of Galilee. Standing on the shoreline I blessed myself with the water. This was the place where Peter and many of the apostles first heard the call of Jesus: *"come follow me and I will make you fishers of men."*

These same waters tested the faith of Peter. Jesus reached out and took him by the hand to protect him from drowning. The waters of Galilee were essential to the people that lived in that region. In our time the oceans and waterways are essential for the people of the global earth.

This Christmas we extend greetings, gratitude and admiration to men and women seafarers. Without you the economy of the world would be stifled and life could come to a standstill.

We pray that during this Christmas season your lives would be enriched as you reflect on the life and times of Jesus. At birth there was "no room at the inn." Mary and Joseph, with fear in their hearts traveled with child to Egypt to protect his life. At 12 years of age in the Temple he reminded us: *"I must be in my Father's house"*.

We are aware of the loneliness of your journey. Your separation from family and friends. The built in dangers of many aspects of your work. Time and tides wait for no man. As you voyage, the majesty of God's creation is ever present.

During this holy season reach out and embrace Mary, the Mother of Jesus. Embrace her child Jesus, her husband Joseph and request them to assist you in bearing up with the vicissitudes of life.

May you and your family have a blessed and holy Christmas season. We thank you for what you do in making possible a vibrant world community. We thank you for who you are – part of God's family.

AMEN.

## PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR THE PASTORAL CARE OF MIGRANTS AND ITINERANT PEOPLE

### World Fisheries Day Message

(21<sup>th</sup> November 2014)

*"Fishing is in fact one of the oldest and arduous human activity and it is generally poorly paid or rewarded. The forms of fishing are as many and varied almost as the kind of fish that they catch. Like all seafarers, fishers most of the time are sailing and spend very little time with their family and, on account of their way of life, they are often marginalized and deprived of the ordinary pastoral ministry".<sup>1</sup>*

On the annual celebration of World Fisheries Day, the Apostleship of the Sea (AOS) International would like to draw attention to the fishing sector that provides employment and livelihood for circa 58.3 million people, of which 37 percent are engaged full time.

In this day, I would like to call on all the national and local AOS to renew their commitment to establish a significant presence in fishing ports and develop specific programmes to make fishers and their families an integral part of the local Christian community, giving them the opportunity to express themselves and their needs without being isolated.

#### Ratification of the Work in Fishing Convention (2007) C 188

Fishing is recognized as one of the most dangerous profession in the world with hundreds of lives lost at sea every year and many more affected by occupational hazards. Fishers can be easily exploited, abused and become victims of trafficking and forced labor, as it has been reported and documented in the mass media. Once ratified, the Work in Fishing Convention (2007) C 188, adopted at the 96<sup>th</sup> International Labour Conference of the International Labour Organization (ILO), will be a useful tool, if not to totally eradicate these circumstances at least to improve them by bringing additional protection and benefits. As a matter of fact, the objectives of the Convention are to ensure that all fishers engaged in commercial fishing operations have decent working conditions on board of the fishing vessels with regard to accommodation and food; occupational safety and health protection; medical care and social security.

<sup>1</sup> PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR THE PASTORAL CARE OF MIGRANTS AND ITINERANT PEOPLE, *Manual for Chaplains and Pastoral Workers of the Apostleship of the Sea, 2008*

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**Bishop Promoter:** Most Reverend J. Kevin Boland  
Bishop Emeritus of the Diocese of Savannah, GA

**AOS National Director:** Sr. Myrna Tordillo, mscs  
3211 Fourth Street, NE, Washington, DC 20017  
Phone: (202) 541-3035 ■ Fax: (202) 541-5417  
E-mail: mtordillo@uscgb.org

[www.usccb.org/aos](http://www.usccb.org/aos)

AOS National Office web address has been changed. **If you have linked to us previously using the old [www.aos-usa.org](http://www.aos-usa.org) address, please remember to change your link to [www.usccb.org/aos](http://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. If you want to know about Mass schedules in parishes around the country, there is even a link to [MassTimes.org](http://MassTimes.org).

## Contact Catholic Maritime News

We welcome your comments, feedback and suggestions.  
Tell us what you think by sending an email to [aos@uscgb.org](mailto: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](mailto:aosusa@sbcglobal.net) ■ [www.aos-usa.org](http://www.aos-usa.org)

## Christmas at Sea



In his poem *"Christmas at Sea"*, Robert Louis Stevenson, a Scottish writer born in 1850, gave a vivid description of life at sea in winter and the dangers of sea and the weather -

*The sheets were frozen hard, and they cut the naked hand;  
The decks were like a slide, where a seaman scarce could stand;  
The wind was a nor'wester, blowing squally off the sea;  
And cliffs and spouting breakers were the only things a-lee...*

*All day we tacked and tacked between the South Head and the North;  
All day we hauled the frozen sheets, and got no further forth;  
All day as cold as charity, in bitter pain and dread,  
For very life and nature we tacked from head to head...*

A son of a light house engineer and an avid traveler, Stevenson conveyed from a seaman's perspective what it was like to steer a ship during winter time, how hard the crew worked and the sense of loneliness of being away from loved ones, in sharp contrast to the joyful celebration of Christmas at home -

*The bells upon the church were rung with a mighty jovial cheer;  
For it's just that I should tell you how (of all days in the year)  
This day of our adversity was blessed Christmas morn,  
And the house above the coastguard's was the house where I was born...*

This Christmas, many seafarers on ships plying the seas are away from home, family and friends. Apostleship of the Sea chaplains and many maritime chaplains and their teams are making ready to welcome seafarers who come to port. As has been a happy tradition, visiting seafarers will receive Christmas shoe boxes filled with winter caps and scarves, toiletries and holiday cheers from ship visitors. More importantly, Seafarer' centers are always 'a home away from home' and even more so this Christmas.

The Holy Father reminds us: *"Jesus Christ is always waiting to be recognized in migrants and refugees, in displaced persons and in exiles, and through them he calls us to share our resources, and occasionally to give up something of our acquired riches"* (Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for the 101<sup>st</sup> World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2015).



Welcoming the stranger and offering hospitality is an integral part of who we are as Christians. Responding to the Gospel message *"I was a stranger and you welcomed me"* (Matt. 25:35), is a concrete example of putting faith into action. In welcoming seafarers and all people of the sea, we welcome God into our lives.

Now as to Robert Louis Stevenson's poem, it had a happy ending for the ship and her crew because the ship was maneuvered into safety: *"And they heaved a mighty breath, every soul on board but me. As they saw her nose again pointing handsome out to sea..."* Stevenson by the way, made Samoa his residence until his death. A Presbyterian, he was a staunch defender of Fr. Damien of Molokai against unjustified criticisms from a local clergy.

Sr. Myrna Tordillo, mscs

# World Fisheries Day Message

Continued from page 1.

The Convention will enter into force 12 months after the date on which ten Members, eight of which are coastal States, will ratify it. As of April 17<sup>th</sup> 2014, the Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (No. 188) has been ratified by: Argentina, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Congo, Morocco, and South Africa.

It is necessary that AOS around the world continue to lobby at regional and national level for its ratification. Meetings, seminars or workshops should be organized to present, explain and inform government people, fishers and fishers' organizations on the structure and contents of the Convention and have it ratified. Until this goal is achieved, fishers will continue to be abused, exploited and die at sea.

## A new approach to fishing

Our oceans and their resources are under an enormous pressure. A report from the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) indicates that 30 percent of the world's fisheries stocks are currently being overexploited, depleted or are recovering from depletion.

This is caused by a number of factors such as: by-catch of species (marine mammals, seabirds, turtles, etc.) unintentionally caught in fishing gears; discards as part of the catch to be returned to the sea as their marketing is prohibited or not commercially viable. Fishing, especially trawling, also has a direct impact on the habitat in which it takes place. To all this we have to add the climate changes, the illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, pollution and the use of dynamite and cyanide.



Since time immemorial, fishing has been a source of food for humankind and made major contributions to fishing nations' economies, employing millions of people worldwide and feeding millions more. However, as we have reached a critical point, it is necessary to practice responsible fishing and respecting nature; the risk is that within a limited period of time many coastal communities that are relying on fishing for their subsistence and economy, will lose their source of livelihood. As Pope Francis reminds us: *"This is one of the greatest challenges of our time: changing to a form of development which seeks to respect creation. [...] This is our sin: exploiting the land and not allowing it to give us what it has within it."*<sup>2</sup>

May the Blessed Virgin, often prayed and invoked with different appellatives by fishers and their families, continue to extend her maternal protection to all the fishing communities and support the AOS Chaplains and volunteers involved in this apostolate.

Antonio Maria Cardinal Vegliò, President  
† Joseph Kalathiparambil, Secretary

<sup>2</sup> POPE FRANCIS, *Meeting with the world of labour and industry in the Great Hall of the University of Molise in Campobasso, 5 July 2014*

## Aloha from Deacons Kin Borja and Vince Wozniak, AOS Honolulu

We owe our heartfelt gratitude to His Excellency Larry Silva, Bishop of Honolulu for appointing us to the ministry of the Apostleship of the Sea for our great State. During our most recent summer gathering, Bishop Larry asked the deacons to consider volunteering for this ministry. Prior to this, Deacon Edward Vargas held the position until his death earlier this year. Deacon Vargas paved the way for us to follow in his footsteps.



Our State of Hawaii being located where we are at would probably bring more shipping vessels than normal. We have tour ships, cargo ships from practically all over the world, and fishing vessels docking on our harbors. This definitely brings many opportunities for us to minister to those wishing to have spiritual presence of our Lord as they spend time in Hawaii.

Hawaii being one of the most sought after destinations, people traveling would be more comfortable in their journeys knowing that there are people here who would help them with their spiritual contemplations and meditation. What a combination.

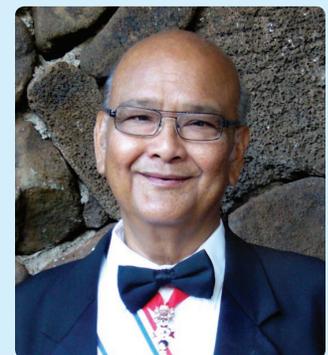
Deacon Kin shared his experience with one of a tour ship passenger who died on board the ship and he presided over a prayer service before the deceased was cremated. The family continued on their tour knowing that their loved one was spiritually cared for on his final journey home.

With Bishop Larry's strong support and encouragement, we, too, are elated to be in this ministry. We are ready for whatever spiritual services are needed by the passengers as they tour/visit our beautiful Islands of Hawaii.

Mahalo Nui Loa



Deacon Vince Wozniak



Deacon Kin Borja

# AOS and the Port of Savannah

By Fr. Richard Young

I have been the Catholic Port Chaplain at the Port of Savannah since October of 2003 and have never had a job or a priestly ministry that I have loved more. As all of us involved in port ministry know, every day is different—we board a ship or answer a call, usually not knowing what to expect. How many times I have gone to a ship thinking it will be a short visit and I end up helping them for eight hours! And there is always another ship!

When I first started, I remember sometimes feeling frustrated since everything was new, with so much to learn: international calling, keeping our cell phones charged, remembering which ship I had left our cell phones on in order to retrieve them before the ship sailed, the locations and I.D.'s and security requirements of each terminal, which stores had the best prices and how to get to them and get the seamen back on time, knowing which phone cards to have for which country, not to mention learning about all the different countries and cultures and climbing gangways and ladders. And now SIM cards, top-ups, modems, WiFi, text messages and all the rest! Sometimes I used to wonder why a priest had to do all this.

Now I know. My first year I was on a ship on Holy Saturday night feeling tired and sorry for myself, wondering why I was alone in a dirty mess-room on an old ship at 10:00 p.m. I asked a guy in the hall if anyone was Catholic and would like Holy Communion. "After all, it's Easter," I said. He left saying nothing. I prayed a Hail Mary to myself



and prepared to leave, but when I turned around, there were seven guys from Kiribati standing there ready to receive communion. Since then I have given countless communions on ships, on the docks, in our trailer at the container port, at the International Seamen's House downtown, in my van, at church and in my house. I have friends now on almost every ship; my phone rings and I hear, "Father, we are here!"



Fr. Richard Young during a communion service with crew of cargo ship Star Ismene

I think the Apostleship of the Sea is one of the best-kept secrets of the Church. Most people have no idea what we do or even why it's important. I have had people tell me they thought I hob-nobbed with rich and ate caviar with the captains! I have been asked why I always seem to be waiting at the Wal-Mart with unsavory-looking characters or arriving at the rectory late at night looking unkempt and wearing a safety vest. The economy of our city and state depend on them, and many make very little money, support large extended families, are away from home often for a year at a time, and are not paid when they are at home in their countries. Many work in dangerous conditions and suffer abuse. The priests, deacons and volunteers of the Apostleship of the Sea are the seamen's only contact with the outside world and are often the only ones who can intercede for them. **What great blessings, graces and love we receive for the corporal and spiritual works of mercy that God permits us to do!**

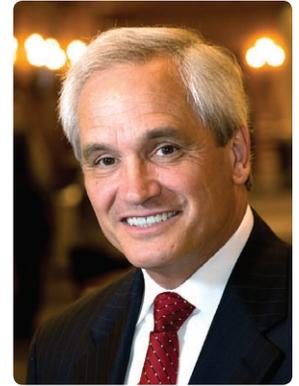


Port ministry in Savannah started in 1833; the Savannah Port Society was incorporated in 1843 and began operating the International Seamen's House. **Ours is an ecumenical ministry supported by the Independent Presbyterian Churches, the Savannah Baptist Association, and the Catholic Diocese of Savannah.** We have three fifteen-passenger vans plus my seven-passenger van to transport the seamen. There is no charge for this or for any of our services. We have the old Seamen's House building downtown near the private bulk ports on the river and, inside the container terminal, a large trailer with kitchen, phone lines, computers, Wi-Fi, and pool table. **Our goals are simple: bring Christ to all by our presence, offer a friendly welcoming face and a respite from the ship, facilitate contact with their families, send money home, and take them shopping. For those who cannot leave the ship, we go shopping for them.** In short, just like everyone else in the Apostleship of the Sea, we try hard here in Savannah.

Richard Young, Catholic Port Chaplain  
Port of Savannah • [fr.richard.young@gmail.com](mailto:fr.richard.young@gmail.com)

## Ebola and the Maritime Industry

by Joe Cox



Most of us as human beings have been faced with circumstances which we would dearly love to do something about only there seems to be no resolution in sight. These days, the Ebola epidemic is one of those circumstances. The amount of press coverage is extraordinary as well it should be given the enormity of the consequences if action is not taken or the actions taken do not have the desired effect.

We in the maritime industry are not directly involved or are we? There has been a substantial amount of unwarranted reaction to this epidemic including one story that reported longshoremen refusing to load a ship that was bound for West Africa! Authorities are questioning, appropriately, persons who have recently been in the area and have travelled to other parts of the world. Seafarers are included although there is the natural protection of ships given the length of certain voyages that extend beyond the incubation period of the disease. It may be good to review the background.

The Ebola virus we are experiencing today is the largest and most severe outbreak of Ebola since the discovery of the virus in 1976 in terms of the number of human cases and fatalities. The outbreak began in Guinea in December 2013, but was not detected until March 2014 after which it spread to Liberia, and Sierra Leone. Subsequently, limited incidents of transported exposure have occurred in Nigeria, Senegal, and the United States. Ebola causes a viral hemorrhagic fever disease and has a high mortality rate. Symptoms include: fever, headache, joint and muscle aches, weakness, diarrhea, vomiting, stomach pain, lack of appetite, and abnormal bleeding.

When reviewing the effects of the disease on the maritime community, i.e. seafarers, it is well to remember that symptoms may appear anywhere from 2 to 21 days after exposure to Ebola although 8-10 days is most common.

Ebola is transmitted through direct contact with the blood or bodily fluids of an infected symptomatic person or through exposure to objects (such as needles) that have been contaminated with infected secretions. It is not a respiratory disease, so it is not transmitted through the air, although the prevention of exposure to respiratory droplets is recommended. It is not a food-borne or water-borne illness. Individuals who are not symptomatic are not contagious. In order for the virus to be transmitted, an individual would have to have direct contact with an individual who is experiencing symptoms. Therein lay the common sense approach that should be considered by the maritime industry. Notwithstanding the frantic over reaction by some, it is simply not possible to stop all trade to and from the region. Ships making port calls in the region may want to consider the advisability of shore access privileges. Ship personnel and agents may also want to consider how to limit personnel activity on board.

In reviewing potential actions, both from a national and company perspective, we should be reminded there are thousands, if not hundreds of thousands of human beings who are directly exposed to the disease. Most of us cannot be involved in the medical aspects of the response. We can however make ourselves knowledgeable about the disease and the low probability, not zero, but low, of exposure. As in many other human endeavors we stand watch. As this is a major impact on a large portion of fellow human beings, maybe our correct response, and one open to all of us, is prayer. If we cannot use our hands to help those in need, we can definitely use our knees and our joined hands. Lord, take care of them; they are in peril.

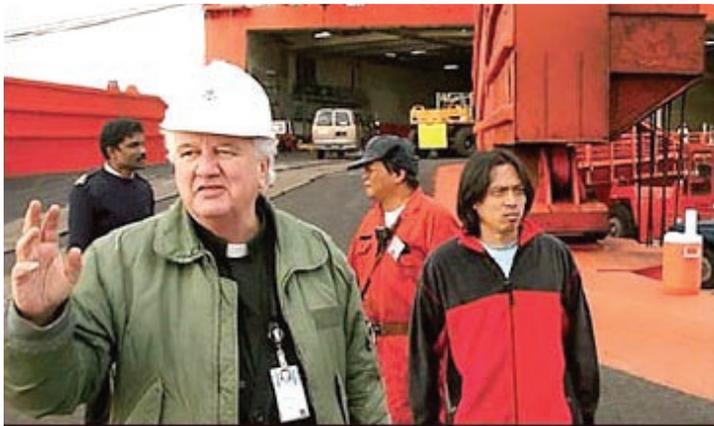
Joe Cox is President and CEO of Chamber of Shipping of America

# Archdiocese of Baltimore • Apostleship of the Sea Ministry

October, 2014

Dear Friends of the Seafarers,

I am so proud of our volunteer Ship Visitors. **They are the heart of the seafarer ministry.** Our Ship Visitors are very busy driving the vans into the Port and going to the piers and aboard the ships. Once aboard they receive a warm welcome from the crewman standing the Quarter Deck Watch. The visitor's presence is announced over the public address system and the visitor is escorted to the Crew's Lounge, Dining Room or Kitchen area (nothing fancy). Often they visit the Master (Captain) of the ship. The Ship Visitor places white and blue bags from A.O.S. on a lounge table. A blue bag contains Bibles, rosaries, medals, scapulars', catechisms, Catholic books, magazines, catechetical pamphlets and booklets. A white bag contains secular magazines and paperback books. "*National Geographic*" is the favorite. The crew comes to the lounge to procure discounted telephone cards. They take the bags and then the contents are shared among the crew while at sea. Many non-Catholics and non-Christians are curious to read them. This is a great evangelizing event.



**"COME, YOU WHO ARE BLESSED BY MY FATHER.  
INHERIT THE KINGDOM PREPARED FOR YOU FROM  
THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD. FOR I WAS...A  
STRANGER AND YOU WELCOMED ME." MATTHEW 25:34-35.**

The Ship Visitors are a great help in taking seafarers to doctors, pharmacies, optical shops, even hospital emergency rooms. Trips to banks and post offices are important. Money orders sent home give a sense of security to the seafarers. If needed, the Ship Visitors can contact the local Seafarer Union representative to address work issues. And of course, there is Wal-Mart and Best Buy for special items that are more expensive back home. And Ship Visitors exercise the important "ministry of presence" and the "ministry of listening". They view and admire photographs of family and loved ones, and when invited they share meals with the crew. Crew members are happy when swapping stories with the Ship Visitors while riding in the vans.

Shawn Day, retired from the Navy, now a high school teacher in Glen Burnie is a Lay Minister of the Eucharist and can celebrate a Scripture and Communion Service with the Seafarers aboard the ship. More Lay Eucharistic Ministers will be trained.

The seafarers have the opportunity to tell the Ship Visitor about their needs during their short time in port, and especially during the few hours they might have ashore. The Ship Visitors are certified by and wear badges from the Homeland Security Department to escort foreign national seafarers off the ship, down the pier, and out of the Port Gate in the United States, provided they have the proper passports, visas, and shore leave papers from the Ship's Master. Before entering the Port the Master sends to the Port a list of his crew. A Homeland Security background check is quickly run on every crew member. To leave the ship a seafarer must pass the background check and can leave the ship only if escorted by the Ship Visitor. Upon leaving from and returning to the Port the Ship Visitor must stop at the Port Gate and hand the paperwork to the Security Guard and wait to have it checked in or out. The Security Guards at the gate have immediate access to the security background check that was conducted before the ship entered the Port. The paperwork is returned to the seafarers at the gate and they must keep it on their person all the time they are in the U.S.A. and escorted by the Ship Visitor. Without the proper paperwork on them they cannot return to the Port! Even with the paperwork they must be escorted by the Ship Visitor in Stella Maris van!

More on the ministry to "Welcome Christ in the Stranger" that Ship Visitors do when not in the Stella Maris Center itself in the next newsletter. Then an insight into the work of the other volunteers that are not Ship Visitors will follow.

In Mary, Star of the Sea,

Rev. Msgr. John L. FitzGerald, Ph.D.  
Captain Chaplain Corps, U.S. Navy (ret.)

**"LET LOVE BE GENUINE... LOVE ONE ANOTHER WITH MUTUAL AFFECTION...  
CONTRIBUTE TO THE NEEDS OF THE SAINTS; EXTEND HOSPITALITY"  
(ROM 12:9-13)**



*"O Mary, Star of the Sea,  
safeguard all seafarers!"*

ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE • APOSTLESHIP OF THE SEA MINISTRY  
320 Cathedral Street Baltimore, MD 21201 Phone: (443) 845-7227  
aosbalt@gmail.com www.AOSBalt.org Fax: (410) 288-5504

# Message of His Holiness Pope Francis For the 101<sup>st</sup> World Day of Migrants and Refugees (2015)

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Jesus is "the evangelizer par excellence and the Gospel in person" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 209). His solicitude, particularly for the most vulnerable and marginalized, invites all of us to care for the frailest and to recognize his suffering countenance, especially in the victims of new forms of poverty and slavery. The Lord says: "I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me" (Mt 25:35-36). The mission of the Church, herself a pilgrim in the world and the Mother of all, is thus to love Jesus Christ, to adore and love him, particularly in the poorest and most abandoned; among these are certainly migrants and refugees, who are trying to escape difficult living conditions and dangers of every kind. For this reason, the theme for this year's World Day of Migrants and Refugees is: **Church without frontiers, Mother to all.**

The Church opens her arms to welcome all people, without distinction or limits, in order to proclaim that "God is love" (1 Jn 4:8,16). After his death and resurrection, Jesus entrusted to the disciples the mission of being his witnesses and proclaiming the Gospel of joy and mercy. On the day of Pentecost, the disciples left the Upper Room with courage and enthusiasm; the strength of the Holy Spirit overcame their doubts and uncertainties and enabled all to understand the disciples' preaching in their own language. From the beginning, the Church has been a Mother with a heart open to the whole world, and has been without borders. This mission has continued for two thousand years. But even in the first centuries, the missionary proclamation spoke of the universal motherhood of the Church, which was then developed in the writings of the Fathers and taken up by the Second Vatican Council. The Council Fathers spoke of *Ecclesia Mater* to explain the Church's nature. She begets sons and daughters and "takes them in and embraces them with her love and in her heart" (*Lumen Gentium*, 14).

The Church without frontiers, Mother to all, spreads throughout the world a culture of acceptance and solidarity, in which no one is seen as useless, out of place or disposable. When living out this motherhood effectively, the Christian community nourishes, guides and indicates the way, accompanying all with patience, and drawing close to them through prayer and works of mercy.

Today this takes on a particular significance. In fact, in an age of such vast movements of migration, large numbers of people are leaving their homelands, with a suitcase full of fears and desires, to undertake a hopeful and dangerous trip in search of more humane living conditions. Often, however, such migration gives rise to suspicion and hostility, even in ecclesial communities, prior to any knowledge of the migrants' lives or their stories of persecution and destitution. In such cases, suspicion and prejudice conflict with the biblical commandment of welcoming with respect and solidarity the stranger in need.

On the other hand, we sense in our conscience the call to touch human misery, and to put into practice the commandment of love that Jesus left us when he identified himself with the stranger, with the one who suffers, with all the innocent victims of violence and exploitation. Because of the weakness of our nature, however, "we are tempted to be that kind of Christian who keeps the Lord's wounds at arm's length" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 270).

The courage born of faith, hope and love enables us to reduce the distances that separate us from human misery. Jesus Christ is always waiting to be recognized in migrants and refugees, in displaced persons and in exiles, and through them he calls us to share our resources, and occasionally to give up something of our acquired riches. Pope Paul VI spoke of this when he said that "the more fortunate should renounce some of their rights so as to place their goods more generously at the service of others" (*Octogesima Adveniens*, 23).

The multicultural character of society today, for that matter, encourages the Church to take on new commitments of solidarity, communion and evangelization. Migration movements, in fact, call us to deepen and strengthen the values needed to guarantee peaceful coexistence between persons and cultures. Achieving mere tolerance that respects diversity and ways of sharing between different backgrounds and cultures is not sufficient. This is precisely where the Church contributes to overcoming frontiers and encouraging the "moving away from attitudes of defensiveness and fear, indifference and marginalization ... towards attitudes based on a culture of encounter, the only culture capable of building a better, more just and fraternal world" (*Message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2014*).

Migration movements, however, are on such a scale that only a systematic and active cooperation between States and international organizations can be capable of regulating and managing such movements effectively. For migration affects everyone, not only because of the extent of the phenomenon, but also because of "the social, economic, political, cultural and religious problems it raises, and the dramatic challenges it poses to nations and the international community" (*Caritas in Veritate*, 62).

At the international level, frequent debates take place regarding the appropriateness, methods and required norms to deal with the phenomenon of migration. There are agencies and organizations on the international, national and local level which work strenuously to serve those seeking a better life through migration. Notwithstanding their generous and laudable efforts, a more decisive and constructive action is required, one which relies on a universal network of cooperation, based on safeguarding the dignity and centrality of every human person. This will lead to greater effectiveness in the fight against the shameful and criminal trafficking of human beings, the violation of fundamental rights, and all forms of violence, oppression and enslavement. Working together, however, requires reciprocity, joint-action, openness and trust, in the knowledge that "no country can singlehandedly face the difficulties associated with this phenomenon, which is now so widespread that it affects every continent in the twofold movement of immigration and emigration" (*Message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2014*).

It is necessary to respond to the globalization of migration with the globalization of charity and cooperation, in such a way as to make the conditions of migrants more humane. At the same time, greater efforts are needed to guarantee the easing of conditions, often brought about by war or famine, which compel whole peoples to leave their native countries.

Solidarity with migrants and refugees must be accompanied by the courage and creativity necessary to develop, on a world-wide level, a more just and equitable financial and economic order, as well as an increasing commitment to peace, the indispensable condition for all authentic progress.

Dear migrants and refugees! You have a special place in the heart of the Church, and you help her to enlarge her heart and to manifest her motherhood towards the entire human family. Do not lose your faith and hope! Let us think of the Holy Family during the flight in Egypt: Just as the maternal heart of the Blessed Virgin and the kind heart of Saint Joseph kept alive the confidence that God would never abandon them, so in you may the same hope in the Lord never be wanting. I entrust you to their protection and I cordially impart to all of you my Apostolic Blessing.

From the Vatican, 3 September 2014

FRANCISCUS

# Serving our US Merchant Marine!

By Doreen M. Badeaux  
AOS-USA Secretary General

The Apostleship of the Sea of the United States of America (AOS-USA) is the professional association of Port Chaplains, Cruise Ship Priests, Catholic Mariners, and all those who support Catholic maritime ministry.

One of the major focuses of AOS-USA is to ensure that US Merchant Mariners are not forgotten in our ministry. There are times when port chaplains may think that US mariners don't "need" us. But they are part of the People of the Sea according to Saint John Paul II, in his **"Motu Proprio Stella Maris."**

On Labor Day weekend, the U.S. crew onboard the *M/V Capt. Stephen L. Bennett* arrived at the Port of Orange, Texas. The entire crew was getting off that weekend, and needed rides to the airport, rental car offices, and the bus station.

Orange does not have public transportation, so it is vital that the Port Chaplain and local Seafarers' Center reaches out to them. Fr. Sinclair Oubre, the AOS Port Chaplain for the Diocese of Beaumont and I reached out to them in conjunction with the Port Arthur International Seafarers' Center. That Friday night, we transported several young men and women, and their luggage to rental facilities in Beaumont and Orange, a bus station in Port Arthur, etc.

Early Saturday morning, we were back at the Port of Orange at 4:00 am to escort more of the crew to the airport.

The Captain, Jeremy Allen, was so grateful for the help. It was his birthday, and he would be traveling until 11:30 pm, but as he said, *"Sitting in airports is not really how I'd like to spend my birthday, but I'm going home, not leaving... so it's OK!"*

This crew did a great deal of good for the world on their trip. They are part of the Food for Peace Program, and brought much needed food to other parts of the world. But to do so, they put their own lives at risk. During their 118 day humanitarian voyage, they took on armed guards as they sailed through the Gulf of Aden into pirate infested waters, visiting ports in East Africa and South Asia; the ship sprung two leaks in the hull along the way; and they were in Israel when tensions



Doreen Badeaux with Captain Jeremy Allen



started growing. Two days after leaving the Port in Israel, missiles hit the port where their ship had been.

This was not the first time AOS - Beaumont interacted with Capt. Allen and the crew of the Bennett.

In 2013, Capt. Allen decided that the people in these countries were also in need of clothing. He asked if we could help gather clothing and shoes and deliver them to the ship when it arrived in Galveston.

Capt. Allen stated, *"The genesis of the idea to bring some clothing and shoes to Africans on a PL-480 ship came about ten years ago when I was a junior mate on the MV ASCENSION. We were on my first trip to Africa and I was struck by the fact that everyone I met who worked on the ship was asking me to give them my shoes before we left. The assumption was that I had many pairs, being a rich American, and that to give them the shoes off of my feet would be no hardship to me. In addition to this, I saw that most of the people working on the ship, and gathered on the dock, were lucky to have flip-flops for shoes, and many had none at all. In addition to this, I noticed that most had hardly more than the shirt on their backs."*

*Thoughts of this experience returned to me when I became Master of the MV CAPT STEVEN L BENNETT and we were scheduled to make a PL-480 grain run to East Africa. While I was sure that I could find a closet or two on the ship in which to carry clothing donations, the logistical issue of the first and last miles was where I would need help. That's when I turned to AOS-USA."*

Capt. Allen happily reported that the last of the donated clothing was distributed on this trip.

Yet, some non-governmental organizations have proposed reforming the Food for Peace Program, to exclude "Greedy US Merchant Mariners". These entities propose moving it to a cash program, thereby laying off US Mariners and tying up US ships.

**But I personally saw these men and women, and I spoke to them.** These were NOT greedy people. They work for less pay than they would on other ships, yet they talked about "their mission" to suffering countries.

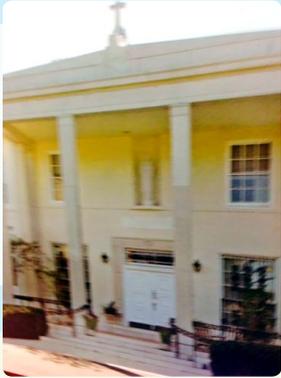
They spoke excitedly when telling us about their stay in Israel, when the Captain decided to give them a day off, so they would have time to visit Jerusalem and Bethlehem. And I saw the photos on their phones as they pointed and said *"And look... this is the exact place where Jesus was born!"*

In short, it was a great honor to serve these men and women who treated their experience of bringing food to the less fortunate, while putting their own lives in peril, as "just another day at work." I saw them as "Christ-bearers" making the beatitudes real in the lives of strangers.

# Apostleship of the Sea • North America and Caribbean Region

## SAVE THE DATE!

Apostleship of the Sea • North America and Caribbean Region



### Regional Meeting March 9 - 12, 2015 at the Archdiocese of New Orleans Retreat Center

Within this beautiful setting AOS port chaplains, center directors, and volunteers will come together to pray, share and learn thus enhancing the ministry in which we are all involved.

In the chapel at the Retreat Center we will share in Morning and Evening Prayer and in the Eucharist. On Monday evening we will also have a special Lenten presentation to open the meeting.

We will have six sessions covering subjects that you gave to us through the questionnaire sent out a few months ago. The tentative schedule includes sessions on Chaplains' Spirituality, Seafarers' Spirituality, Building Intercultural Competence for Chaplains, Community Participation, and Interaction with Port, Civil, and



Church Authorities.

There will be presentations, small group discussions, and panels to bring this meeting alive.

Part of the packet will include a resource exchange so if you have any places you use to receive materials for ship visits such as the National Catholic Register information I sent to you a couple of weeks ago, please let me know so that I may include it in the packet. Where to get rosaries, homily sharing for shipboard Masses, Catholic catechetical materials, holy cards, calendars, etc. is the idea.

Registration for the Regional Meeting will take place in December. You will receive a registration packet from me with the information about the meeting. Please mark your calendar now for this important Regional Meeting. Monday, March 9 beginning at 3 pm through breakfast and closing session Thursday, March 12.

Our Regional Meeting Planning Committee is working hard to insure this meeting will be well worth your time.

**May Our Lady Star of the Sea bless all those who go down to the sea in ships, their families and those who care for them.**

*Karen M. Parsons OFS, Regional Coordinator, Apostleship of the Sea North America and Caribbean  
221-20<sup>th</sup> Street, Galveston, Texas 77550  
Telephone: (281) 881-8489  
Email: kmp1103@yahoo.com*



The Apostleship of the Sea National Office is very grateful to H.E. Archbishop Thomas Rodi, of the Archdiocese of Mobile for appointing Deacon James Bullock and re-appointing Deacon Joseph Connick to AOS Mobile ministry and assist Fr. Lito Capeding.

# NAMMA Focuses on Developing Resources for Member Ministries

by Jason Zuidema, Executive Director, NAMMA



In the past year, NAMMA has put renewed focus on developing the capacity of its members to bring seafarers' welfare. Like many other non-profit organizations in the years after the economic problems of 2008, seafarers' welfare providers struggled to pay the bills. Compounding the problems were changes in port traffic, especially the reduced time ships spend in ports. Many center directors had to make difficult choices about downsizing, amalgamation or reducing staff. In any organization such change is difficult, but especially in historic missions with beloved buildings and faithful chaplains and ship-visitors.

Yet, across the network of seafarers' welfare providers in North America, whether in NAMMA or its partners, lots of positive energy has been spent to get missions back in the black and help the local port and civic communities understand the value of a dedicated seafarer ministry. Missions that were previously struggling, are now in the black. At the recent NAMMA conference we heard a great panel by center directors who told the stories of success in amalgamation, expansion and fund-raising. Though most in the audience echoed the challenges in building capacity in the last decade, many saw positive movement—it was a joy to bring together these conversation partners.

A big push by NAMMA throughout the year was to develop Internet-based resources that could easily be shared via social media. Besides the regular NAMMA email newsletter, our website was redesigned and we began sharing a significant number of news stories, photos, and videos via our Facebook page, Youtube channel ('nammaorg'), Twitter (@namma\_org) and on Flickr (NAMMA). New videos and photos are being posted daily. These resources range from simple reminders of seafarers' welfare, to significant training videos on topics that can help staff and volunteers dig deeper into the maritime world.

Yet, our most important activities this year were the many opportunities we had to get to know one another better. These were done by visits of the Executive Director to local centers, but also in the coordination of events at the Connecticut Maritime Association's SHIPPING 2014 conference, including great speeches by internationally-acclaimed journalist Rose George (author of *Ninety Percent of Everything*). We did a sort of conference within a conference by having a day-long seminar for seafarers' welfare providers on the idea of 'port levies' or voluntary contributions ships make on entering the port that go to support the local welfare providers. These contributions are not standard—in some ports the system works well, but elsewhere it needs some work. Hence, the daylong seminar was helpful for those who wanted more information.

A second activity was our annual conference, held this year in Corpus Christi, Texas, in August 2014. With more than 75 in attendance, including many sponsors and other port personnel on panels, the conference was a great success. We were honored to have the area port director from Houston, Mr. Dave Fluty, and also the local Congressman from Texas, Rep. Blake Farenthold. Mr. Farenthold has proposed a bill to extend the 29-day rule to a 90-day rule. It was great that our members got a chance to ask him questions and better understand the implications of his proposal.

In all, NAMMA has had a great year helping to support seafarers' welfare providers across North America. We are thrilled that we have the privilege to do so in an ecumenical context where each group feels safe to raise issues and seek answers to common problems.





Announcing

## the 15th Annual AOS-USA Conference!

April 21 - 23, 2015

To be held at the AMO Star Center in Dania, Florida.

The Star Center is the Training Center for the American Maritime Officers,  
who cordially welcome each of you to attend!

For more information contact AOS-USA:

PH: 409-985-4545 • [aosusa@sbcglobal.net](mailto:aosusa@sbcglobal.net) • <http://www.aos-usa.org/>

# BONJOUR MONTRÉAL!



ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
SEPTEMBER 28 - OCTOBER 2, 2015



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AOS-USA FALL BOARD MEETING

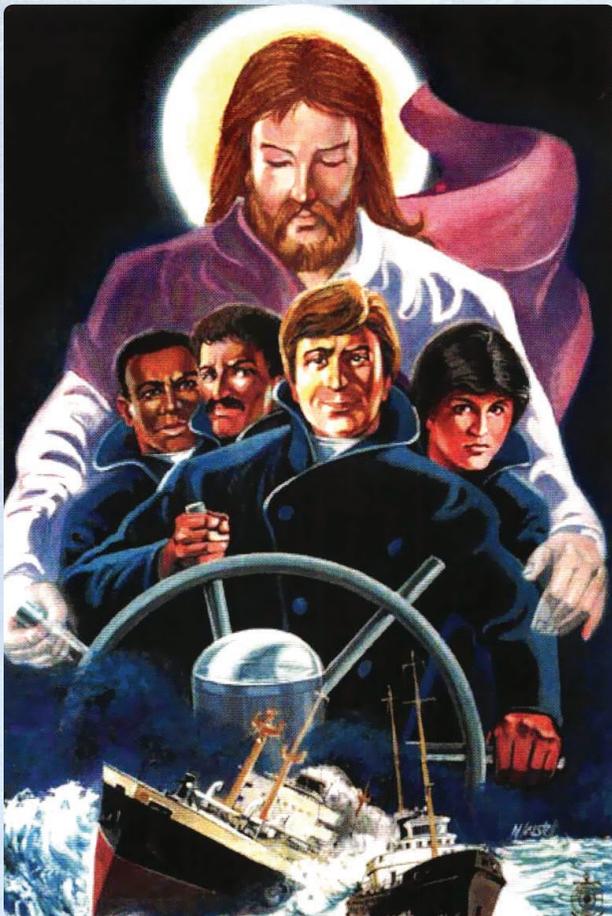
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## Mariner's Prayer

Our Lady, Star of the Sea, Mother of God and Our Mother, you know all dangers of soul and body that threaten seafarers.

Protect your sons and daughters who sail the seas, and protect also their families that await their return.

Star of the Sea, Mother of the Church, give light and strength to those priests and laypersons who bring the love of your Divine Son among seafarers.

Fill their hearts with a supernatural and life giving zeal for the apostolate.

Star of the Sea, light shining in the darkness, be a guide to those who sail amid the storms and dangers of life. Stir up in their midst the hearts of ardent apostles and bring all to the safety of heaven's port. AMEN.

## Fisherman's Prayer

Dear God, be good to me, the sea is so wide and my boat is so small. AMEN.