Pope names Italian Archbishop Veglio to head migrants’ council

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- Pope Benedict XVI has named Archbishop Antonio Maria Veglio to be the new president of the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Travelers. The 71-year-old Italian archbishop had served for the past eight years as secretary of the Congregation for Eastern Churches. Archbishop Veglio succeeds Cardinal Renato Martino, 76, who had headed both the Council for Migrants and the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace for the past three years. In announcing Archbishop Veglio’s appointment, the Vatican said the pope was accepting the resignation of Cardinal Martino for reasons of age, but it said nothing about any change in the cardinal’s status as president of the justice and peace office. Archbishop Veglio, ordained to the priesthood in 1962, entered the Vatican diplomatic corps in 1968. He served at Vatican embassies in Peru, the Philippines, Senegal and Great Britain as well as in the offices of the Vatican Secretariat of State.

The Apostleship of the Sea in the USA welcomes Archbishop Antonio Maria Vegliò and prays for him as he assumes leadership of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People. In addition to the above named embassies, Archbishop Veglio’s broad experience and service in the Vatican embassies including Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Senegal, Cape Verde, Mali, Lebanon, and Kuwait will be very beneficial and bear much fruit for the Pontifical Council and the universal Church. Archbishop Vegliò is a priest for 47 years and a bishop for 23 years.

The Apostleship of the Sea in the USA takes the opportunity to extend gratitude and best wishes to Cardinal Renato Raffaele Martino, past president of the Pontifical Council for wisely guiding the Pontifical Council and for promoting and developing the pastoral care of migrants, refugees, travelers and people on the move.

The Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People has responsibility over various sectors of human mobility such as “migrants, exiles, refugees, displaced people, fishermen and seafarers, air travelers, road transport workers, nomads, circus people, fairground workers, pilgrims and tourists, as well as those categories of people who, for various reasons, are involved in human mobility, such as students abroad, and operators and technicians engaged in large projects or scientific research at the international level who are obliged to move from one country to another” (www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/migrants).

“The Pontifical Council, ‘an instrument the Pope uses to fulfill his universal mission’ (P.B., Introduction, no.7), ‘brings the pastoral concern of the Church to bear on the special needs of those who have been forced to leave their native land or who do not have one. It also sees to it that these matters are considered with the attention they deserve’ (P.B., art.149).”

It thereby promotes the pastoral care of people involved in human mobility:

• ensuring that at the particular Churches such people “receive effective and special spiritual care, even, if necessary, by means of suitable pastoral structures” (P.B., art.150);
• through the Apostleship of the Sea, over which it exercises “ultimate direction” (P.B., art.150);
• paying attention to matters regarding human mobility (P.B., art.149);
• working to ensure that Christian people “become aware of the needs” of people involved in human mobility, especially on the occasion of World Migration Day (P.B., art.150:4);
• and ensuring that Christian people “effectively demonstrate a fraternal attitude” (P.B., art.150:4) to people on the move around the world, and
• “work to ensure that journeys which Christians undertake for reasons of piety, study or recreation contribute to their moral and religious formation” (P.B., art.151).” (www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/migrants)
The Apostleship of the Sea of the United States of America (AOSUSA) is a national membership organization of chaplains and pastoral team, cruise ship priests, mariners, student mariners, associate and affiliate members.

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I had the pleasure of making a brief family visit in the Philippines last Christmas and see my seventy eight year old mom and other family members. Being a missionary, the last time I was there was almost five years ago.

One of the highlights of my trip was a visit to Palompon Institute of Technology, a chartered state school offering undergraduate and graduate courses in education, arts and sciences, engineering, maritime and shipping administration. The Institute draws many maritime students from near and far towns of the province of Leyte and the region, and is proud of its commitment to quality maritime education. The Institute has striven to be consistently on the list of maritime schools that have fully complied with Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers Convention (STCW 95) requirements in accord with the assessment by the Philippine Commission on Higher Education. Since the Institute was located in my hometown, it was even more compelling to go there. It was an opportunity to be updated of a local maritime school’s educational program and training.

My interest was fueled for the most part by a common knowledge that while Filipino seafarers are by far the largest national group in the merchant shipping industry, majority are employed by international shipping companies as ratings such as AB’s, wipers, oilers, cooks, OS’s. “Filipino seafarers account for 28 percent of the estimated one million seafarers who man 10,000 commercial ships and maritime vessels worldwide, records of the International Maritime Organization show” (Gloria Grejalde, GMA News TV 2008). This statistic dwarfs another reality, that there are competent and qualified Filipino officers who serve the international shipping.

There is an obvious link between turning out quality seafarers and quality and excellent maritime education and training. In a globalized and technology advanced shipping environment, seafarers have to be competent and at par in operating fully automated ships. Maritime graduates can and should be well prepared and trained. Maritime schools must equip future seafarers with theory and application, training and skills that will make them competitive in the labor market as professionals.

Since the year 2000 the Philippines is on the “white list” of the International Maritime Organization. The white list is a list of countries assessed to be properly implementing the revised Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers Convention. This amended convention “sets out clearly defined minimum competency requirements for all seafarers and takes into account developments in technology since the original 1978 Convention was adopted”.

Worldwide, the Philippines has the most number of maritime schools at 101 scattered around the country including branches of the same school. The Russian Federation has 38 merchant marine schools; Denmark accounts for 31 maritime schools, the United Kingdom has 27; India has 25; Malaysia has 20; Japan has 18 merchant mariner schools; the Netherlands has 16; the USA has 14; Spain has 13; Canada and Germany have 12; Australia and Italy both have 11 and others have 10 or less maritime schools (cf. www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List of maritime colleges; accessed March 2009).

(Continued on Page 4)
AOS-USA Adopts Statement on Piracy

For many years, seafarers and deepsea fishermen have been the victims of piracy attacks. Sailing through the Malacan Straits, working off the coast of Nigeria or transiting through the Gulf of Auden, mariners and fishermen faced deadly attacks in carrying out their daily duties.

These attacks are reported extensively by the International Transport Workers Federation, the International Shippers Federation and the International Maritime Bureau’s Piracy Reporting Center. However, only a small portion of the maritime took note of these attacks, murders and assaults on the high seas.

Only after a cruise ship was fired on by pirates with rocket propelled grenades, another cruise ship escaped being hijacked, the hijacking of a crude oil tanker and a ro-ro vessel that just happened to be smuggling guns to Southern Sudan, did the general public take note. Much to their surprise, these modern pirates looked nothing like Johnny Depp.

The Apostleship of the Sea has been concerned about the dangers pirates pose to our seafarers. At the 2007 AOS World Congress, the delegates voiced this concern in their final statement. Chaplains and ship visitors noted that “...harassment in the workplace, lack of job security and social justice, civil unrest, war and piracy...” threaten mariners and fishermen.

With the rise in piracy off the Gulf of Auden, I went back to our resolutions from previously AOS-USA meetings. It was time to let people again know our position and concerns. However, to my surprise, AOS-USA had never formally addressed the issue of piracy. I asked the chairman of our Merchant Marine Committee, Jon Furutaka, to draft a resolution. He vetted it by our mariner members, and then by the Administrative Board. The week of January 18, 2009, we released the statement.

This turned out to be a serendipitous moment. On Sunday January 18, Pope Benedict XVI drew the world’s attention to piracy at the noon Angelus:

“I would like to add a special word for sailors and fisherman, who for some time have been experiencing great uneasiness. Besides the usual difficulties, they are also suffering from the restrictions of bringing chaplains on board, as well as from the dangers of pirates and the damage of illegal fishing. I express my nearness to them and the wish that their generosity in being of assistance at sea be compensated by greater consideration.”

Below is AOS-USA’s resolution on piracy. I hope that it will be a document that will call for your reflection and prayer. I also hope that you can pass it to members of your local maritime community.

The Apostleship of the Sea of the United States of America Resolution: Inadequate Response to Somali Pirates

WHEREAS, the mission of the AOSUSA is to be a spiritual and theological resource to the Roman Catholic Church in the United States of America. The purpose of the AOSUSA is to teach and witness to the Word of God and to serve God’s people; especially seafarers, maritime personnel and people of the sea; by fostering their growth and renewal, through prayer, study, Christian service and Christian service.

WHEREAS, for nearly 17 years, pirates in Somalia threaten the lives of seafarers and the security of world trade; the pirates are now attacking ships on a daily basis with assault rifles and rocket propelled grenades; and currently holding 15 vessels and 300 seafarer hostages.

WHEREAS, ships - which carry 80% of world trade - are the lifeblood of the global economy; and the indifference to the lives of merchant seafarers and the consequences for society at large; transiting the Gulf of Auden and the Red Sea/Suez Canal is a vital Asia to Europe sea lane affecting not just those countries to which cargoes are destined but all global seaborne trade;

WHEREAS, since 9/11, the international shipping community has had to comply with new security requirements to address concerns about terrorism and various new cargo security requirements; yet when pirates attack merchant vessels, the response of many flag states is that it is not the governments’ problem and ships should hire armed guards for protection;

WHEREAS, piracy is a criminal act and the arming of merchant ships will put the lives of ships’ crews in even greater danger and escalate the pirates’ level of violence;

WHEREAS, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, Article 105, states ‘On the high seas, or in any other place outside the jurisdiction of any State, every State may seize a pirate ship or aircraft taken by piracy and under the control of pirates, and arrest the persons and seize the property on board’. The rights of States to act against criminal acts at sea are reinforced by the IMO Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Maritime Navigation.

WHEREAS, there have been five U.N. Security Council Resolutions this year: 1851 (2008), 1846 (2008), 1838 (2008), 1816 (2008), 1814 (2008), the response by governments and their naval forces is inadequate; the pirates are operating with impunity, and governments stand idly by, consistent with current rules of engagement provided by participating governments;

WHEREAS, the world’s leading nations, with the naval resources at their disposal, are unable to maintain the security of one of the world’s most strategically important seaways, linking Europe to Asia via the Red Sea/Suez Canal;

(Continued on Page 8)
From The National Director Continued

The Philippines’ first formal government maritime institution was created in 1820, the Escuela Nautica de Manila (now called Philippine Merchant Marine Academy). The explosion of “maritime schools offering different maritime courses was noted during the early and mid-70’s when demand for overseas seafarers rose dramatically” (www.marina.gov.ph/MaritimeManpower 2002, accessed March 2009).

It is often perceived that many Philippine maritime schools are “diploma mills” producing maritime graduates who do not meet the skills requirements and international standards of competency. There is a glut of maritime graduates in the Philippines who are jobless. Why is this so? According to a government agency, the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) Situationer Report 1999-2004 on Maritime Manpower Sector in the Philippines, some of the problems and challenges in the maritime sector are:

“A. Lack of apprenticeship and employment opportunities onboard domestic and foreign ships. There are a lot of maritime schools in the country that do not have their own training vessels. A lot of these cadets rely on the apprenticeship opportunities being afforded them by the local shipping industry and a few foreign or private scholarship programs. A lot of those who take up maritime degree courses find it hard to finish their undergraduate degrees and only finish the academic requirements of the course. A number of these non-graduate, when given the opportunity to be employed as ratings onboard ships, continue to do so, no longer aspiring for officer positions since they have not yet completed the necessary on-the-job training requirements of their maritime courses. Worse, even graduates also sometimes prefer to go onboard as ratings since those are the only available job on board”.

The Situationer Report further states that there is a diminishing comparative advantage of Filipino seafarers because of “questionable standards of the maritime schools and the quality of the graduates”. In addition, most graduates and officers would rather work onboard international vessels because of much better salaries and benefits than what the domestic shipping companies offer.

Addressing the roots of the problem, that is, improving the quality of maritime education and affording cadets excellent training and skills in compliance with the “requirements and standards of the local and international maritime community” will ensure global competitiveness for seafarers.

The visit to Palompon Institute of Technology provided insights on its particular maritime educational program and training and what is being done to address quality education standards. A courtesy call with the Institute’s president Dr. Delia Combista was followed by a gathering with eight hundred students taking up baccalaureate degrees in maritime engineering and marine transportation. My presentation was about the experience of the Apostleship of the Sea in the USA and the maritime chaplaincy’s role in pastoral outreach to seafarers who come to US ports. After my presentation, the chairman of the Marine Transportation Department, Crisologo Motril, gave me a tour of the maritime building and the on-site construction of what will be a well equipped 2-storey dormitory that will house maritime students and officers in training. It makes sense to me, that good accommodations and housing facilities for students will help to enhance learning capabilities. The Institute’s maritime education program, according to Motril is certified by the Det Norske Veritas of Norway, having satisfactorily complied with the rules of Norway’s maritime academies. The Institute is also a recipient of an assistance package of the Royal Association of Netherland Shippers (KVNR) and the Shipping Transport College of Rotterdam. This tie up with the Netherlands group under the auspices of Netherlands Shipping Training Center (NTC), results in upgrading the curriculum, cadet training and placement on board vessels of the of Dutch shipping companies that are members of KVNR, provision of equipment and shipboard rotation for maritime faculty.

The upgrading of maritime education and training has been happening in other parts of the country. Private and government maritime schools are linking up with international shipping companies and consortiums. The Commission on Higher Education in coordination with relevant government agencies and the private sector, especially foreign shipping companies and entities, develop a special integrated education program and training. For example, the Norwegian Training Center in the Philippines, established by the Norwegian Shippers Association (NSA) is in “partnership with the University of Cebu to train 300 local cadets as high quality ship officers. Qualified maritime students “avail of full scholarships, inclusive tuition, board and lodging, and book allowances. It also allows scholars to take advantage of 10 to 12 months shipboard training abroad internationally plying NSA vessels during their apprenticeship where they will get a monthly allowance of $450 and are exposed to job opportunities onboard Norwegian controlled vessel” (www.uc.edu.ph/demand-for-rp-seafarers-grows; accessed March 2009).

It is interesting to note that these two European countries’ shipping consortiums are investing in the formation of quality seafarers that will move up to be officers. Recognizing a global manning crisis and responding with concrete solutions both short and long term by going to countries that have potentials for producing prepared and skilled seafarers through upgrading maritime education and providing excellent training will benefit the international shipping industry.

As the global economic downturn has seen new shipbuilding cancellations, scrapping and vessels idled, when the economy improves, demand for quality seafarers and officers will continue to be a problem. While the USA recognize the manning crisis, it has to look at solutions beyond its shores, if it is unable to have enough supply of officers, and the model offered by the Netherlands and Norwegian groups is something to look at.

Apostleship of the Sea talk at Palompon Institute of Technology

It was a fine morning of December 17, 2008 when Sister Myrna Tordillo, National Director of the Apostleship of the Sea in USA, a native of Palompon, Leyte came and gave a talk about Apostleship of the Sea at the Palompon Institute of Technology. The talk held at the Institute’s gymnasium, was addressed to all the first year to third year maritime students aiming for degrees in Bachelors in Marine Transportation and Bachelors in Marine Engineering.

That event gave the students awareness of the Catholic Church’s efforts in line with the ministry and pastoral care to reach out to all seafarers and fishworkers, their families and port personnel regardless of their faith, nationality and color. The students gained information that there is such an outreach by chaplains and their pastoral team in different ports in various countries who are willing to render help and service to seafarers. Because of the seafarers’ lifestyle and nature of work, there are many challenges such as limited access to church and religious services while on board; long separation from families in their home country; labor, visa and security issues that compound situations for seafarers. Ever away from their home parishes, seafarers need someone whom they can relate to and some place to feel welcome, ease and comfort where they can strengthen their ties without the feeling of being alone or isolated.

(Continued on Page 12)
AOS-USA Annual Meeting
When the Saints Come Marching In!

May 5-8, 2009
Chateau LeMoyne Hotel
French Quarter
New Orleans, Louisiana
Phone: 504-581-1303
Fax: 504-586-9509
www.hi-chateau.com

Henriette Delille
Servant of God & to be Beatified in May, 2009

Major Workshops:
Cruise Ship Priests:
Steve Millslagle - Celebrity Cruises
Sarah Rose - Holland America Line
Fishing in America:
Margaret Curole - Commercial Fishermen of America
Ministering to Filipino Seafarers:
Sr. Myrna Tordillo

St. Katharine Drexel
Founder of Xavier University of New Orleans

Major Presentations:
Dr. Basil Davis:
St. Paul & his Theology of the Cross
St. Paul & his Sea Voyages
Sr. Doris Goudeaux:
The Life of Sr. Henriette Delille, Servant of God
Rear Admiral Joel Whitehead:

St. Frances Xavier Cabrini
Foundress of a convent, school and orphanage in New Orleans

Registration: $150. Payable to AOS-USA, 1500 Jefferson Dr., Port Arthur, Texas 77642. Room reservations are made to Chateau LeMoyne. Rooms have been blocked for the event. Time will be set aside to discover New Orleans, the French Quarter and St. Louis Cathedral.

Join us in the city that has given us saints and sinners, pirates and vampires, vamps and tramps, jazz and blues, and just a lot of Laissez les bon temps roulez!!!

Conference opens at 5:00 p.m., Tuesday, May 5, & concludes at 12:00 noon Friday, May 8.
### APOSTLESHIP OF THE SEA OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

8th ANNUAL MEETING  
May 5-8, 2009 
at the  
Chateau LeMoyne  
French Quarter  
301 Rue Dauphine  
New Orleans, LA 70112

### INDIVIDUAL REGISTRATION FORM

Name: ________________________________
Address: ____________________________________________________________________
City: _____________________________ State ______ Zip code ________________
Phone: (       ) ________________ Fax: (       ) ________________ Cell: (       ) ________________
Port Name: ________________ Religious Community or (Arch)Diocese_________________
E-Mail: ____________________________

AOS-USA MEMBER: YES ☐ NO ☐

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Conference Fee ………………………………….………$150.00 _____ $_____

(If a registration is cancelled a non-refundable fee of $50 will be retained.)

TOTAL………………………………………………………………………………….… $_____

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**For those who will be able to attend only 1 day, or who would like to invite someone just for the day, the rate is as follows:**

Day Rates (for attending …………………$52.00 per day _____ $_____

TOTAL……………………………………………………………………………$_____

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Make Checks Payable to: AOS-USA
Send to:  
Miss Khiem Nguyen  
Apostleship of the Sea USA  
1500 Jefferson Drive  
Port Arthur, TX 77642

Registration Deadline: Friday, May 1, 2009

Site for 2009 AOS-USA Annual Conference  
Chateau LeMoyne – French Quarter  
301 Rue Dauphine  
New Orleans, LA 70112


Rooms are reserved under the name: AOS-USA Annual Conference  
Rates are: $113.00 (single) or $137.00 (double) or $161.00 (triple), or $185.00 (quad) +TAX  
Room rate includes continental breakfast.

All participants must make their own hotel reservations.

There will be a minimum of paper documents distributed at the conference. Members are encouraged to bring a laptop computer. Free Wi-Fi access is available at the conference.
Each time I enter The Catholic Seamen’s Club, I pause to pray in the Chapel where it is quiet and the light from the window shines off the statues, the altar and crucifix. Every so often we find that a homeless man has entered the chapel and he can be seen absorbed in prayer on his knees before the window which is observable from the street.

In my prayers I remember the staff, what we are doing now and what we plan to do in the future. My prayers includes asking for a blessing on all who enter our doors; a blessing that each one could take as they walk out on First Avenue; and finally I pray for all who are at sea at that moment throughout this wide world. Somewhere out there, there is fearful weather with forty-foot waves. There are Mariners scrambling to close hatches and slipping across flooded decks to save their vessel from taking on water. Witness “The Deadliest Catch,” if you can, about our coast’s Alaskan waters.

TheCaptains of each ship, although busy with final roll-call and supplies, welcomed me and directed me to the Mess. There I met the crew who were made up of men from Africa, Mexico, Central and South America, Russia and from across the United States. The bag of gifts that I brought went fast; 278 gifts were given in all. The crew members were grateful for the personal attention each of us paid them. Their thanks were simply, “Thank you.” We really try to understand the life of the seafarer and that was our theme for the 2009 Memorial Walk.

Our Center is blessed to have such a long history as A.O.S. Seattle. Our first facility was built in 1940 and we moved to the current location in 1955. Since then we have hosted the ships of the Armed Forces and civilian ships, and have provided accommodation, meals, and a variety of other services to seafarers. We have a long history of serving those who have left their families, friends, and loved ones behind to work in the dangerous waters of Puget Sound.

Our Center is open 365 days a year with such a small staff we are blessed to also work with Lutheran Maritime Ministries which is made up of men from Africa, Mexico, Central and South America, Russia and from across the United States. The bag of gifts that I brought went fast; 278 gifts were given in all. The crew members were grateful for the personal attention each of us paid them. Their thanks were simply, “Thank you.” We really try to understand the life of the seafarer and that was our theme for the 2009 Memorial Walk.

Several years ago, we instituted a Volunteer of the Year Award which is awarded in early June to honor our talented, hard working and generous volunteers. We begin with the celebration of Mass followed by dinner, cake, and an Awards Ceremony. This award concept was the fruit of the Houston Chaplaincy School Project Plan. At the Center there is a wall with a 4”x6” color photograph of each honoree.

In November, we celebrated the lives of all seafarers throughout the world who died at sea this past year with our 3rd Annual Cruise Ship Luncheon fundraiser. We host the luncheons for 2009 on the 2nd and 3rd days of each month. The luncheons run smoothly even in hard times and are held monthly from September through May. Our grand finale this past year was at the end of May when the Archbishop rejoin us for our 2nd Annual Cruise Ship Luncheon fundraiser. Some of these luncheons are attended by almost 300 people so volunteers are truly our life blood.

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In November, we celebrated the lives of all seafarers throughout the world who died at sea this past year with our 3rd annual United Port Ministries Memorial Walk. The walk started as we processed from the Center with our individual banners on down to the pier. Upon reaching the pier, we prayed, sang and tossed a wreath into the water for the Unknown Seafarer. Also at the pier we tolled the bell for each category of seafarer. We included victims of cyclones, hurricanes, piracy, as well as for the crew that work on cruise ships, tankers, fishing vessels, cargo ships. Then we proceeded back up to the Center for hot soup and fellowship.

The Captains of each ship, although busy with final roll-call and supplies, welcomed me and directed me to the Mess. There I met the crew who were made up of men from Africa, Mexico, Central and South America, Russia and from across the United States. The bag of gifts that I brought went fast; 278 gifts were given in all. The crew members were grateful for the personal attention each of us paid them. Their thanks were simply, “Thank you.” We really try to understand the life of the seafarer and that was our theme for the 2009 Memorial Walk.

Because the Center is open 365 days a year with such a small staff we are blessed to also work with Lutheran Maritime Ministries which is made up of two Lutheran pastors and one ship visitor. One chaplain was in China for 30 years and is fluent in conversing with Chinese seafarers. This past Christmas Day, we welcomed 2 crews and since many were Chinese, the Lutheran Chaplain led the prayer in Chinese. Praise to God! ~ A Home-away-from Home. We have free holiday dinners for all of our retired fishermen, merchant mariners and Navy folks, and are always delighted to get a crew from a vessel in port.

We are reminded of a big loss to our little family with the passing of Jim Burnham, volunteer cook and street musician. He gave us his all in this past year. In late November, he helped Ricardo prepare a free holiday dinner and spent the day guiding other volunteers in serving the Thanksgiving Dinner. Less than 3 weeks later, he passed “across the bar” on the feast day of Our Lady of
Guadalupe and we celebrated his life in our chapel on the feast day of St. John of the Cross.

These days there are fewer people coming to our Center, down to under 5,000 per year and there are fewer vessels coming to Seattle’s Port as evidenced by the numbers we track over the years. We were visited by 867 ships this year. This is down more than 200 ships in the past two years, although contacts have risen by almost 400. This year we had 12,479 contacts. These numbers are evidence of the increased volume of need for seafarers and the lack of visas or shore leave which increases demand on the ship visitor.

Many seafarers now have cell phones. We supplied them with phones this past year, but now they ask for SIM cards! So we are slowly finding out which SIM cards to supply and how to re-activate them! The seafarers always seem to be a step ahead of us with their needs because of their desire to keep in touch with their loved ones. All this reminds me that I still have to get two headsets and another web-cam for our computers.

We have a wide Maritime World to keep in touch with… from the Container and Bulk Ships to the Fish Factory Ships and the increasing number of Cruise Ships.

The economy will dictate our activities for the next two years. Maybe my prayer on entering our Center each day will be different and highlight looking for the Stella Maris, that Star of the Sea, to show us the way.

WHERE AS, many countries are stakeholders in the maritime industry and international trade in Gulf of Aden and not fulfilling their responsibilities: The countries whose economies depend on free trade flowing through these waters, especially the European Union, the countries of Austral-Asia, the neighboring countries of East Africa and the South West Asia in particular the United Kingdom, France, The Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Japan, China, South Korea, India, New Zealand, Australia, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Iran; the flag states of the merchant ships, especially flags of convenience in particular Panama, Liberia and European Secondary Registries; the actual country of ownership of the vessels in particular the United States, many western European countries and Japan; and the country of citizenship of the seafarers in particular the Philippines, India and China.

WHERE AS, Alfred Thayer Mahan wrote: “the necessity of a navy, in the restricted sense of the words, springs…from the existence of peaceful shipping, and disappears with it.”

BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE APOSTLESHIP OF THE SEA OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

RECOGNIZES, the unique opportunity, for many adversarial countries, to work together in a common goal;

URGES, governments to commit the necessary maritime law enforcement or navy vessels now, and to ensure they have the freedom to engage against acts of piracy in the Gulf of Aden;

URGES, governments to issue clear rules of engagement to allow maritime law enforcement or naval forces to intercept and take appropriate action against violent pirates, and the oceangoing ‘mother ships’ from which the pirates are operating, as permitted by UN Security Council Resolutions and existing international law about the rights of states to repress criminal acts on the high seas;

URGES, governments to bring the pirates to justice in a court of law and not allowed the pirates to resume their criminal activities unimpeded because of governments’ unwillingness or incompetence to take the necessary action;

URGES, the United Nations and the UN Security Council to immediately take appropriate action; and the greater urgency is required by governments and their navies, particularly those stakeholder countries with the responsibility to protect their merchant seafarers, their vessels, their economies and restore security to this critical trade artery.
Update on the AOS USA Cruise Ship Priest Program

By Doreen M. Badeaux, Secretary General

The AOS USA Cruise Ship Priest Program has now begun it’s 6th year of operation. During that time, much has been accomplished, and learned.

We have 4 Major Cruise Lines with written agreements. The key component of this agreement, is that the individual cruise line will strictly utilize priests from the approved list. These cruise lines are Celebrity Cruises, Holland America Line, Norwegian Cruise Line and Princess Cruises.

Most of your priests are retired right?
Throughout the past 6 years, 1,187 priests have served as Cruise Ship Priests on behalf of AOS USA. Currently 700 priests are on the approved list. What is the difference in these numbers? Many priests serve each year, whereas others come and go every other year or every 2 years. Others served for a year, only to find that they did not have enough time, and have vowed to come back, once retirement allows them more luxury of time.

An interesting finding is that less than 1/3 of our priests are actually retired. This amazes people who say, “but isn’t there a priest shortage?” Well yes, but even during a shortage, everyone deserves and needs a vacation, and many priests are still very happy to provide daily Mass and other services even while taking some time off.

Also, there are many priests who serve in seminaries, colleges, health care institutions, and other non-parish oriented ministries, which have greater flexibility of time at such times of the year as Christmas and Easter. This is a tremendous factor in our ability to staff the demand for priests during Christmas and Easter.

This Christmas alone, we provided priests for over 56 cruises. In fact, we also assisted AOS Great Britain, by supplying 3 priests for Christmas Cruises onboard their P&O ships.

OK…but how hard do they really work? They just say Mass once a day and that’s it, right?
This is a question that is often posed to us, and one that I personally take issue with. The ministry onboard cruise ships is every bit as sincere and important as ministry to inmates, the shut in, merchant seafarers, those hospitalized, those in the armed forces, etc. Wherever the Church has people, Her ministers are needed.

Very often, priests return with stories of “fallen away” Catholics who spoke to them onboard sharing life stories, asking questions, making their confessions, and ultimately came back into the Church.

One priest had a man confess to him about having a mistress in addition to his wife. The priest took the time to give him a ‘mini-retreat’ while onboard, which included daily Mass, readings and reflections, several one-on-one counseling sessions.

Other priests have been there to minister to a dying or extremely sick loved one, and were there with the family when the deceased or sick was flown off the ship. One gentleman was taking a cruise with his entire family, for his 50th Wedding Anniversary, when he suddenly passed away of a heart attack. Can you imagine the work that one priest had in trying to truly be there for that family? And here they were at sea. Not in their home. Not in their familiar environment. But THEIR Church WAS there!

OK…but the priest is really just there for the passengers right?
Absolutely not! The reason AOS USA was so keen on shouldering the responsibilities of the Cruise Ship Priest Program on behalf of the AOS and the USCCB, was precisely because of the difficulty that our Port Chaplains often have in accessing and caring for cruise ship crews. The idea of having a priest traveling onboard, who would have access to the crew for Sacraments and Pastoral Care was ideal!

It is true that many of the priests were new to maritime ministry in the beginning and may not have had the knowledge about maritime workers and their needs that a long time port chaplain may have had. However, I sincerely believe that most priests are there for all the souls around them. They have a keen sense of responsibility, especially for those who are busily providing services to those around them. We have found that most of our priests have become extra sensitive to the needs of the crew members, and take extra steps to provide services to them. Many purchase prayer cards, rosaries and other items, with their own funds, and bring them to the crew. Many priests tell me of the joys of saying Mass for fervent Catholics at the crew Mass, and wish that their own parishioners could see how appreciative some people are for the Sacraments.

Some priests have been able to discuss marriage processes with crew members interested in Catholic Marriage, and have taken the time to contact the crew members’ priests back home to assist them in working through the marriage preparation process.

And most of all they have been a listening ear for crew members, who are lonely, tired of having to smile at all the passengers, and just needing a little extra TLC.

And thanks to the Cruise Ship Priest Program, many more priests are now aware of the work of the Apostleship of the Sea, and are assisting in spreading the news of the work that we do to our own parishioners and cruise passengers.
By: Father Bob Sipe, AOS Chaplain of Duluth

I am a diocesan priest at the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis in Minnesota. I retired from my parish in Forest Lake, Minnesota in 2004, and now live in northern Minnesota at the family cabin on Lake Pokegama in Grand Rapids at the western end of the Mesabi Iron Range in the Diocese of Duluth. I now help out in parishes throughout Minnesota.

Shortly before I retired I received a mailing from the Apostleship of the Sea of the USA seeking priests interested in serving as cruise priests. On a cruise I had made several years earlier in the Greek Islands there was a priest on board offering daily Mass and so I was fascinated by the possibility of serving as a cruise priest. I attended a meeting of AOSUSA in Traverse City, Michigan at the Great Lakes Maritime Academy. I did not realize that it was the first meeting of AOSUSA to which prospective cruise priests were invited. As one of the few prospects who came to that meeting, I was appointed Chair of the Cruise Priest Committee, even though I had never served as a cruise priest.

As a parish priest, the maritime world was beneath my radar scope. I had had no exposure to the life of seafarers, and was fascinated by what I learned at that meeting. The Apostleship of the Sea has been serving the needs of the maritime world for over fifty years through its many Stella Maris Centers and port chaplaincies and at ecumenical seafarers centers. I enquired about the Twin Ports of Duluth and Superior and discovered that they had no priests serving there. Fr John Jamnicky, then National Director of AOS asked me if I was interested in serving there, but I told him that Grand Rapids is eighty miles from Duluth. He kept on my case, so I finally checked out the scene at Duluth and discovered that there was an ecumenical seafarers center there called the Twin Ports Seafarers Center, actually located in a former Catholic rectory. They were very anxious to find a Catholic priest to work with them. I went down to Duluth over several weeks and spent one or two days each week visiting “salties,” the ocean going foreign ships that come to the Twin Ports by way of the St. Lawrence Seaway. Finally I approached the Bishop of Duluth, Dennis Schnurr, and asked if he was interested in having me serve as port chaplain. He told me that he had been looking for a volunteer priest for some time, but had no funds available to pay expenses. After a moment’s reflection, I asked for permission to raise funds for my expenses by taking up collections from parishes and other organizations, and Bishop Schnurr agreed. So over these four and a half years I have been travelling throughout Minnesota speaking to parishes and the Catholic Daughters of the Americas, who have been supporting AOS for some time. I have been able to raise funds to cover my expenses and to make contributions to help cover the expenses of the Twin Ports Seafarers Center. I have no salary nor do I receive stipends.

As cruise priest and port chaplain, I have been able to take one or two cruises a year, and in the past four years have been to the Caribbean, Hawaii, Alaska. I took a cruise from San Diego to New York through the Panama Canal, another one around Cape Horn from Buenos Aires to Valparaiso Chile, and yet another from Barcelona, Spain to Puerto Rico. This past February I went from New Zealand to Australia, and from Japan to Korea, China, and Hong Kong. I visited the Seafarers Centers in Australia, Tokyo and Hong Kong. I made ship visits with Sister Minaki Iwaii, the Tokyo Port Chaplain and celebrated Easter Sunday Mass for a Filipino crew aboard ship with Sister Minaki. I stayed at the Seafarers Center in Hong Kong, which is run by the Anglican Church.

I then took a side trip to the Philippines. My work as a cruise priest and port chaplain has exposed me to the world of Filipino seafarers who make up over half of the seafarers of the world. I was anxious to find out why so many come from the Philippines. I was also interested in the Philippines because I was nine years old at the start of World War II and so I wanted to visit the sites of the many battles that took place there. The Bataan Death March, the fall of Corregidor, General Douglas MacArthur’s escape to Australia and his promise to return, the re-conquest of the Philippines and the savage battle for Manila are etched in my memory.

Sister Myrna Tordillo, our New National Director, is a Scalabrinian sister from the Philippines and she arranged for me to stay with the Scalabrinians in Manila. I was able to witness their great work there alongside Fr. Savino Bernardi, a Scalabrinian priest who runs the Manila Seafarers Center. The Scalabrinian Sisters work locally with some of the many women who are employed overseas as domestic workers and in the hospitality industries in Japan and the Persian Gulf areas. Fr. Savino edited Ahoy!, A Manual for Filipino Seafarers, a very useful book which gives a great deal of information on why so many Filipinos serve as seafarers. I had the opportunity to watch seafarers signing on at the many booths in a park in Intramuros, the walled city in Manila, as well as visit with wives of seafarers. Of course, I had to visit Corregidor, the island fortress at the entrance of Manila Bay. The gun emplacements and Malinta tunnel which was General MacArthur’s headquarters are still there, and now there are memorials to both the Americans, Filipinos, and Japanese who died there.

(Continued on Page 11)
From Manila I flew to Cebu City on the Island of Cebu south of Manila, and from there to Davao on the island of Mindanao where I stayed with Fr. Jack Walsh, the National Director Of AOS in the Philippines. While there I stayed overnight with a group of sisters who work with a French foundation that provides scholarships for students from poor families. I was most impressed with their work. On my return home I suggested to Sr. Myrna and Fr. Oubre that we consider making a presentation at the next national meeting of AOS on the work being done in the Philippines for seafarers and their families.

I must say that being retired is one of the best things that has happened to me in my life as a priest. It has given me the opportunity to experience new avenues of ministry, to see the world, and to go to very few meetings. I have never felt more like a priest.

Seafarers at job fair booths in Intramuros, Manila

Scalabrinians Sr. Noemi Digo, Fr. Savino Bernardi and Sr. Rochelle

Boxer Supports International Counter-Piracy Effort in Gulf of Aden Other Attacks Increase off Somali Coast

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Commander, Combined Maritime Forces Public Affairs

USS BOXER, At Sea – In a show of international sea power in the Gulf of Aden, seven nations representing three task forces coordinated efforts to pursue a skiff after the pirates on board opened fire on a German oiler, the Federal German Ship (FGS) Spessart, March 29.

At approximately 3 p.m. yesterday, FGS Spessart, reported that they were being attacked by pirates who may have mistaken the naval supply ship for a commercial merchant vessel. An embarked security team aboard the ship returned fire on the suspected pirates during the initial attack.

Subsequently, Spessart pursued the skiff while providing additional details of the attack to a variety of international naval vessels operating in the area. A number of naval ships and aircraft joined the pursuit, including: the Dutch frigate HNLMS Zeven Provincien, an SH-60B helicopter assigned to the Spanish warship SPS Victoria, a Spanish P-3 maritime patrol aircraft, two Marine Corps helicopters from the Combined Task Force (CTF) 151 flagship USS Boxer (LHD 4) and the European Union’s CTF 465 flagship, the Greek frigate Psara.

Supported by an AH-1 Cobra attack helicopter and a UH-1 Huey assigned to Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 163 (Reinforced), “Evil Eyes,” embarked aboard Boxer, the international naval forces contained the armed suspects until Psara arrived with a German boarding team.

Upon boarding the skiff, the team found seven suspected pirates and their weapons. The suspected pirates were disarmed and transferred to the German frigate Rheinland-Pfalz where they will remain until a final determination is made regarding potential prosecution.

While this event showcased the incredible international naval capabilities operating in the Gulf of Aden, it also highlighted the complexity of counter-piracy operations. The crew of Spessart and the embarked security team provided the critical first line of defense, utilizing defensive measures that are essential for all ships operating in the region. Moreover, nearly five hours transpired between the time Spessart’s armed security team thwarted the initial attack and when an armed boarding team was within range of the pirate skiff. In the interim, armed coalition aircraft kept the suspected pirates from getting away.

This incident in the Gulf of Aden happened at a time when other pirates have been operating well off the eastern Somali coast. The area off the coast of Somalia and Kenya when combined with the waters of the Gulf of Aden equals more than 1.1 million square miles, roughly four times the size of Texas or the size of the Mediterranean and Red Seas combined. In a region this large merchant mariners must often serve as the first line defenders against pirates, because naval forces will likely not be close enough to respond.
The program was started with a prayer by Wilson Andal, a 3rd year nautical student, followed by the singing of the Philippine National Anthem and the introduction of Sr. Myrna Tordillo as guest speaker. Information, experiences and stories in the context of AOS and seafarers brought by the words of Sr. Myrna gave a sense to future seafarers of the friendly welcome and assistance when in the future they will be seafarers on ships that will call on US ports and other parts of the world. Time was given for question and answer of which the students were very engaged in the conversations.

Truly indeed, the orientation and talk was of great relevance to soon to be seafarers to equip them on their future venture on the seas. And lastly, with God’s kindness, all of those who attended went home with awareness and great gratitude that even in the complex maritime industry, God’s hands reach out and guide those who work at and travel by sea.

By: Dione C. Ruozo Jr.
Third year student taking up BSMT

Alice Milloy Retires from the Corpus Christi International Seamen Center

By Father Eulalio Ponce Ibay, STD

The Corpus Christi (Alice Milloy) International Seamen Center celebrated the retirement of Mrs. Alice Milloy, on December 11, 2008. Alice has been the director of the Seaman Center since December 14, 1974 in conjunction with her involvement with the National Council of Catholic Women.

The Seamen Center was packed with family members, friends, staff and wellwishers, who had come to bid goodbye to wellloved Alice Milloy.

Sharon Emerson, President of the Board of Directors, said, “Alice is the most lovely person. Alice had a very unique style and approach to support the International seafarers as well as friends of the Center.”

Viola Kumaritakis, Administrative Assistant & Secretary of the Center, commented, “She loves people and she cares for the seafarers. I will miss her. We will all miss her.”

Alice worked hard for the Center in order that seafarers from around the world have a homelike, pleasant and welcoming place to go while their ships are docked. She stated, “We treat international seafarers as we would visitors in our own homes.”

Alice expressed her emotions by saying, “I’m touched by this celebration and I would like to thank everybody for making this day such a special occasion.” She thanked her children, grandchildren and friends of the Alice Milloy International Seamen Center for all their support.

(Rev. Ibay is the Port Chaplain, Corpus Christi, Texas)
IN MEMORY OF …

Fr. Mario Balbi, S.D.B. (1920-2009)

Fr. Mario Balbi, S.D.B., died on February 23, 2009, outside the Stella Maris Chapel at the Port of Newark, N.J. He was 88 years old. Even at age 88, he was offering his priestly ministry daily to the sailors and other personnel at the port.

Fr. Balbi had served as a port chaplain since 1991. He was largely responsible for getting the port’s new, permanent chapel built. It was dedicated in 2002 to Mary, Star of the Sea (Stella Maris). While the chapel was being built, he said of it, “For the Lord I want the best.”

Fr. James Heuser, S.D.B., the Salesian provincial superior, writes: “We have known Fr. Mario as a man who, even though elderly, briskly climbed the gangplanks of ships so that young sailors far from home would know God traveled with them, and that in His love they could always find safe haven. ‘Never have I found one ship that I have greeted and not found an open heart,’ Fr. Mario was once known to say. I suspect it was a response to the open heart the seamen found in him.”

Fr. Balbi was featured in a news story by Susan Vicarisi in The Catholic Advocate of the archdiocese of Newark on July 14, 2004. He is quoted there as being “committed to ‘caring for the bodies and souls of seafarers and their families,’ regardless of religious affiliation, many of whom commit to contracts which keep them at sea without family contact for more than nine months of the year.”

Fr. Balbi had belonged to the Salesian community at Our Lady of the Valley Church and the Don Bosco Residence in Orange, N.J., since 1999. From 1991 to 1999 he resided with the Salesians at St. Anthony Church in Elizabeth, N.J.

Fr. Balbi was born at Manaus, Brazil, on March 25, 1920. He entered the Salesian school there at age 12 and five years later started his year of novitiate in Pernambuco, Brazil. He made his first religious profession as a Salesian on January 28, 1938. In addition to his native Portuguese, he spoke Spanish, French, Italian, German, Latin, and English. He was ordained on December 8, 1947. He was temporarily in the United States in 1963-1966 and moved permanently in 1969. In 1981 he became a member of the New Rochelle Province of the Salesians. He taught Latin and French at Benedictine Military School in Savannah from 1969 to 1981 and was chaplain of the port of Savannah, Ga., from 1974 to 1990. He used his language skills very effectively to minister to sailors from all over the world.

Bishop J. Kevin Boland of Savannah, who is also the Bishop Promoter of the Apostleship of the Sea, praises Fr. Balbi’s work with seafaring men and women. He writes that Fr. Balbi “not only took care of their spiritual needs, but was greatly influential in making sure that these men had good social outlets in regard to sports and other activities during their short stays. He was well known at the International Seamen’s House and was instrumental in the annual Blessing of the Fleet on the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul. He developed a deep and loving commitment for the seafarers and the maritime community. Fr. Mario was small in stature but full of energy and enthusiasm in bringing the love of the Gospel to a people who by nature of their work were far from home and whose life on the ocean waves was demanding and lonesome. He was deeply missed when he left Savannah to take up a similar ministry in New Jersey.”

Fr. Balbi’s superior in Orange, Fr. Stephen Leake, S.D.B., writes of him, “He was a great inspiration of pastoral zeal and hard work.” He lived up to his own unofficial motto “Labor omnia vincit,” said Fr. Leake.

The funeral arrangements included Mass on February 26, 2009 at Stella Maris Chapel in Newark celebrated by Retired Archbishop Peter Gerety and Our Lady of the Valley Church, Orange with Fr. Heuser as celebrant. Fr. Mario was buried in the Salesian Cemetery in Goshen, N.Y. the following day.

+ Rev. Mr. Raymond Adolph Vrazel – 1928-2009

Deacon Vrazel was past director of the Catholic Maritime Club of Mobile, Inc. He was born on March 27, 1928 in Yoakam, TX and died on January 25, 2009 in Mobile, AL. He graduated from Kings Point Merchant Marine Academy in 1942 and served in WWII as First Lieutenant. He faithfully served the Church as a deacon in various capacities. He is survived by his wife Ida and eight remaining children and spouses, 23 grand children and 42 great grandchildren.

+ Prudencio Capeding

Mr. Capeding died on December 23, 2008 in Calbayog, Samar, Philippines. He is the father of Fr. Lito Capeding, AOS chaplain of Mobile, AL. The Mass of Christian burial was presided by Bishop Abarquez, with 23 priests and Fr. Lito concelebrating.

The Apostleship of the Sea extends heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and offers prayers for the eternal repose of the souls of the faithful departed.
By Martha Crawford
AOS San Diego, CA

Recently, on a scholarship from the Apostleship of the Sea, I was privileged to attend the Houston Chaplaincy Training program. About a year ago after Mass in my parish Fr. Jim Boyd, the Port Chaplain, spoke about ministry to seafarers and the shortage of volunteers. It was difficult, he said, to always keep the Center where they come to relax open if the minister on call was ship visiting or taking seafarers to various stores for shopping. As a lay woman I didn’t think that I was the volunteer he had in mind but after a second plea by Fr. Jim at a different church I decided to “see him after Mass.” Was this where Jesus was taking me not long after my prayer to “lead me into something” outside of my parish ministry?

For about a year I interacted with seafarers when they came to the center but still had little knowledge of their needs and the difficulties they often face in their jobs.

From the many speakers at the training program, who came from all over the country, as well as the chaplains at Houston, I learned, not only about the lives of seafarers on ships and their time in foreign ports, but also of the many Christian groups and agencies who minister to them all around the world. It is truly an ecumenical ministry.

In my class of 13 there were Protestants of Baptist, Methodist, Episcopal and Pentecostal denominations, an Eastern Rite Catholic, as well as Roman Catholics. It was an unforgettable faith building experience to work, study and socialize with people of different faiths engaged in a common goal.

I had expected to be the only woman in the class but there were two of us! Many women are involved in ministering to seafarers in all capacities. Mother Lacey, a Port Chaplain in Houston and one of our speakers, was with us much of the time providing emotional as well as practical support.

My life as a minister to seafarers is forever changed. I look forward to visiting ships, assisting at Mass or communion services whenever I can and of course, selling phone cards! Transporting seafarers to and from ships is now more important than ever because of recent TWIC limitations.

My humble gratitude to all of the Houston Port Chaplains who gave up their valuable ship visiting time to be with all of us. I know that I can speak for the whole class in saying that your kindness and hospitality are overwhelming. The food provided by various Church groups was outstanding and our accommodations were especially nice (some wanted to stay longer!). I stayed in the home of a gracious and lovely widow who raised nine children, now I am blessed with a new friend.

My prayer is that more people looking for ministry will learn of the seafarers who visit our ports each day. In asking where the Holy Spirit might lead me I never suspected that it would be to the Port of San Diego. Seafarers are people who are hungering not only for practical help while in port but for spiritual support as well. Our planet grows smaller each day, we are all “brothers and sisters in Christ.”
Panama and Norway ratify Maritime Labour Convention - Germanischer Lloyd Offers ILO Certification

Hamburg / Germany, 11 February 2009 - Panama as the fourth and Norway as the fifth flag state have now ratified the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC, 2006). The convention comes into force when both a minimum of 33 % of the world’s gross tonnage as well as 30 states have ratified MLC. Liberia, Marshall Islands and Bahamas had already ratified the convention. Together the five flags represent 43 % of the world’s shipping tonnage. The coming into force of the convention is expected for 2011.

By then some 50,000 ships must be certified and through that ensure their compliance with the international requirements for the working and living conditions of seafarers on board. The certification of the MLC, 2006 applies to all vessels of 500 GT or above in international voyages. Classification society Germanischer Lloyd offers a comprehensive MLC certification package to help shipowners prepare and achieve certification in time.

Adopted by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 2006, the Maritime Labour Convention, deals with the working and living environment of seafarers on seagoing ships. The new convention provides a comprehensive framework with mandatory requirements as well as voluntary guidelines. It covers inspection on issues such as age, qualification, hours of work and rest, the existence of seafarers’ employment agreements, evidence of payment of wages, manning levels and availability of accommodations and recreational facilities for seafarers, medical care as well as food and catering.

To help shipowners identify necessary improvements Germanischer Lloyd offers a self-assessment tool. In addition, with a gap analysis on board, GL can determine what needs to be improved before the ship fulfils the requirements of MLC, 2006. The GL Academy provides seminars and workshops on MLC, 2006. Certification is only possible once the convention is in force. To document compliance with the requirements well in advance, GL offers clarification of flag state requirements, review of the Declaration of Labour Compliance and initial inspections on board as well as the issuance of the MLC Statement of Compliance. GL will be prepared for a smooth transition from the MLC Statement of Compliance to the Flag State Certificate.

About the Maritime Labour Convention

The decision by the International Labour Organization (ILO) to move forward to create a major new Maritime Labour Convention was the result of a joint resolution in 2001 by the international seafarers’ and shipowners’ organizations, later supported by governments.

The implementation of global standards will reduce substandard shipping and help to abolish unacceptable working and living conditions seafarers are often exposed to. Additionally, it will support the establishment of a level playing field for all shipowners.

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From the darkness comes the light, from death springs new life; 
May your journey in faith, on paths trodden or unknown; 
Lead you to an encounter with the Lord. 
May the peace and joy of the Risen Lord be with you now and always. 
Happy Easter! From the Apostleship of the Sea in the USA