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Christmas at Sea

One of the dominant features of the land where Jesus lived and died was water. Water was essential for living but also for travel. No planes, trains, automobiles, buses – two choices: walk or travel by boat. The landscape featured the Sea of Galilee, the River Jordan, the Dead Sea and the vastness of the Western Mediterranean. The latter played a prominent part in the life of St. Paul.

Fast forward to the 21st Century. The shipping lanes of the vast oceans are what bind the human family together. It is estimated that 90% of what we eat, use, barter, or whatever clutters our lives in any which way, at one time or another traveled by sea. In the USA if one or more major ports were inoperable for a day or two it would have a negative effect throughout the land.

All of this is accomplished by men and women of every race, nationality and creed. We classify them as seafarers. Their efforts make the world go round. The vast majority of them will not be home for Christmas – with new technology perhaps they can Skype each other. A Skype is not a hug.

The Apostleship of the Sea (AOS) is a worldwide organization which is ever vigilant to the needs of the seafarers, and those who work the ports. They constantly advocate for proper working conditions and adequate compensation.

When you read this message offer a prayer to Our Lady, Star of the Sea (Stella Maris) for the welfare of seafarers and their families. If you live in an area where there is a port facility, volunteer a helping hand to those who may enjoy a couple of hours leave.



Bishop Kevin Boland (center) with two seafarers visiting Stella Maris Seafarers Center, Baltimore.

In conclusion, I quote St. Bernard. It is a reflection on Mary, "Star of the Sea."

Saint Bernard: ***"O you, who realize that in the rushing tide of this world you are bobbing about amid storms and tempests rather than walking on land, turn not your eyes away from the light of this star if you do not wish to be lost in the storm. If the winds of temptation blow up, if you are running over mountains of tribulations, look up to this Star, call on Mary. If you are being tossed about on the waves of pride, of ambition, of detraction, of envy, look up to this Star, call on Mary. If wrath of avarice or the snare of the flesh shall strike against the ship of the mind, look up to Mary. If, when overwhelmed by the immensity of your crimes, when ashamed by the ugliness of your conscience, when frightened by horror of the judgment, you begin to sink into the depths of sorrow, into the abyss of despair, think of Mary."***

To the Seafarers of the World:

We are deeply grateful for your dedicated service. The world family is the beneficiary of your unwavering and sacrificial service.

A Blessed Christmas to you and your families. May Mary, the Star of the Sea always be your guide and consolation. AMEN.

*Most Reverend J. Kevin Boland
Bishop Promoter – Apostleship of the Sea*



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AOS National Office web address has been changed. **If you have linked to us previously using the old www.aos-usa.org address, please remember to change your link to 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.

Contact Catholic Maritime News

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

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Apostleship of the Sea of the United States of America (AOSUSA) is a professional membership association of chaplains/associates, cruise ship priests, mariners, student mariners and affiliate members.

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From the National Director The Season of Giving

Each year around this time, maritime chaplains throughout the country are busy preparing Christmas shoeboxes that are shared with visiting seafarers who call in at local ports. For AOS teams, this tradition of gift giving involves partnering with local parishes, communities and volunteers. From donors who fill shoeboxes with items that include personal hygiene products as well as knitted scarves and caps and non-perishable food, etc., to volunteers who pick up donations and ship visitors who bring the gifts to seafarers, the Christmas Shoebox/Christmas at Sea gifts are very much appreciated by seafarers who are away from home this Christmas. For many of them, perhaps the only gift they will receive this Christmas is a filled shoebox plus the warm welcome and friendship of chaplains and their teams.



Scripture says that “*all good giving and every perfect gift*” comes from God. In the First Letter of Peter, the apostle reminded the early Christian communities with these words, “*As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God’s varied grace*” (1 Pt 4:10). Sharing our gifts of talent, time and treasure is Christian stewardship. The US Bishops Pastoral Letter on Stewardship directs our attention to it, “*As Christian stewards, we receive God’s gifts gratefully, cultivate them responsibly, share them lovingly in justice with others, and return them with increase to the Lord.*” The Christmas Shoebox/Christmas at Sea project is a concrete way of sharing the gifts we receive from the Lord.



Catholic Daughters of the Americas, Bay Area members preparing Christmas ditty bags for AOS Oakland

The season of giving began this year with the generosity of the maritime community in responding to relief efforts for victims of Typhon Haiyan which ravaged central Philippines on November 8 resulting in over 6,000 deaths and decimating homes and property. There is overwhelming global response to the cry for help.

Pope Francis, in his Sunday Angelus on November 10 prayed for the typhoon victims and asked Catholics to "send concrete help." The Holy Father's Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium* points out, "We incarnate the duty of hearing the cry of the poor when we are deeply moved by the suffering of others... whenever we have an opportunity to perform a work of mercy, we should rejoice, as if a fountain opened before so that the fire might be extinguished."

Concrete help came in many forms, below are samplings of the generous responses from local AOS chaplaincies here in the USA:

AOS Port of Stockton, CA

"Thanks to the Knights of Columbus who assisted Director Mike De Toro of AOS Stockton, CA. 90 boxes were packed and shipped to aid in the relief efforts in the Philippines... The value of the food and clothing items was approximately \$15,000. LBC (Luzon Brokerage Corporation) throughout the United States offered free shipping of relief items to the Philippines."



AOS Port of Newark, NJ

"Community groups throughout the country are scrambling to send relief both supplies and money to the Philippines devastated by typhoon Haiyan. Here, our own efforts are being spearheaded by Rev. Roy Regaspi. Working with him are Fr. John Corbett, Guy Catrillo, and Eileen Blades. The project that is underway is to send a 40 ft. container to the Philippines which will leave Port Newark in approximately two weeks and arrive in Manila on January 8th. John and Joseph Carroll have arranged for the container to be staged/loaded at Eastern Warehouse 266 Kellogg Street, Port Newark..."



AOS Port Isabel, TX

"Our parish will be participating the National Collection for the people of the Philippines. We have also included them in our petitions at Mass. I pray that the efforts of the world community will bring the much needed support and healing that the Philippine people are in need of. Sincerely, Fr. Pat Seitz"



AOS Port of Mobile, AL

Below is a portion of a communication that Fr. Lito Capeding, AOS Chaplain of Mobile sent to His Excellency, Archbishop Rodi of the Archdiocese of Mobile:

"Warmest greetings in the Lord! I am sending you the amount of monies which we collected (2nd collection=) from the Shrine of the Holy Cross and St. John's Mission Church in Bromely, Masses this weekend. Total: \$ 6,967.70

Indeed, I am truly grateful to you and overwhelmed by the generosity of our parishioners to the victims of super typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan) in the Philippines.

My heart bleeds specially, to the parishioners of St. Michael Parish, Basey, Samar, who lost 370 lives and 2000 people still unaccounted for to date. My first pastoral assignment was here in this parish and had fond memories serving in this historic and beautiful church of St. Michael...

I have talked to Bishop Isabelo Abarquez [Roman Catholic Bishop of Calbayog, Samar] and he was so glad and thankful to receive our kind donation.

I really appreciate your generosity and concern for our people back in the Philippines. Maraming Salamat po at Mabuhay kayo! God Bless you always. Sincerely, Rev. Lito J. Capeding."

Stella Maris in Baltimore

The Port of Baltimore was founded in 1706. Today it is one of America's largest and busiest ports and is still growing in tonnage and land mass. The Sparrows Point area (formerly a Bethlehem Steel Mill ship yard and ore terminal) is being promoted as a new large container terminal and possible cruise ship terminal. As the most inland of the east coast ports it is at the hub of several major interstate highways and is a hub for north, south and western railways. A large intermodal terminal is under construction providing double stacking container capability. Awaiting the opening of the new Panama Canal locks in 2015, Baltimore Port already has the nation's first "super max" cranes following major pier construction, channel widening and dredging operations.



Brother Jim Horan, S.J. was a devoted and tireless friend of the Seafarers until his death in 2008.

The Stella Maris International Seafarers Center is located ten minutes outside the gates of the two busiest terminals and several smaller ones, and fifteen minutes from the projected mega-container and ro-ro terminals at Sparrows Point. The Francis Scott Key Bridge, the Fort McHenry Tunnel and the Baltimore Harbor tunnel provide quick access to the terminals on the western side of the port, including the cruise ship terminal. Stella Maris is in a convenient shopping center and immediately across the street from St. Rita Church where our three vans are granted free parking. The Johns Hopkins Hospital, Bayview Campus is also ten minutes away.

At the start of AOS (2003) in Baltimore the Stella Maris Center followed the U.S.O. Club model with large rooms for table top games, used clothing, telephones and computers, a library, a large lounge, and even an exercise room. It became evident that we were providing services the seafarers did not use, need, nor have time for while ashore. In 2006 the Center relocated within the shopping center to a smaller, more functional and less expensive space. In 2010 the Center expanded by removing the walls of the adjacent small store to provide a Chapel, lounge, book, magazine and religious article displays, and a small used clothing and toiletries room. The Chapel is expandable. In 2011 an alcove at the rear of the two units was converted into a large four walled patio, "The Aft Deck", with a gazebo, a BBQ and table area. Wi-Fi is available in the Aft Deck and "the smoking lamp is lit" only there. Also in 2011 in front of the Center, a Merchant Marine Memorial Garden was created, with bronze plaque attached to a huge boulder. Wi-Fi and a bench make the small garden functional. The front window at the garden contains

in its twenty-four panes the word "WELCOME" in twenty-four languages and scripts. On the front wall of the center is a large red, white, and blue neon sign "Stella Maris Seafarer Center". A second neon sign in red, white and blue proclaims "The Archdiocese of Baltimore", the signs contain the logos of AOS and the Archdiocese. A second large from window provides space for maritime displays and displays for the liturgical year, and civic holidays.

Wi-Fi is available on all interior and exterior spaces. The table phones are wireless and portable inside and out. The bank of five computers has Skype, internet and access to a printer and fax machine. Small notebook computers are available for shipboard use, which also has a Mi-Fi unit. The three vans have GPS and the van drivers have cell phones so they can communicate with the Center to provide dispatch to ships who have requested transportation after the van is on the road.

Andy Middleton, the Director of Operations, coordinates **ship visiting**. He provides twenty-four hour telephone availability. Stella Maris offers seven days per week service. Andy trains, credentials, and schedules the ship visitors and visits ships himself. He travels around the state of Maryland (Archdioceses of Baltimore, Washington and Wilmington) promoting AOS. Andy will soon join Shawn Day as our second Lay Eucharistic Minister. Shawn Day, an automobile mechanic by trade, retired from the Navy, keeps our three vans on the road. He is also a weekend ship visitor. Andy's wife Amy, a retired police officer (Andy is a former police officer) until recently has been Administrative Director. Amy also started the statewide Christmas shoebox program. Amy is now pursuing a full time nursing career. AOS is most fortunate to now have as Administrative Assistant, Dot Acosta, recently retired from the fiscal department of the Archbishop's staff. Welcome aboard Dot.

Anne Kimble is Director of Seafarers Aid. Anne and her staff Paul Schwind and Keith Elliott organize and display donated clothing, toiletries, books and magazines, DVD's, CD's and religious articles in the center. They also prepare the "blue" and "white" bags for distribution by the ship visitors. Anne's team works in our second floor work/storage room and stuffs the "blue bags" with Catholic religious articles, prayer books, etc. and the "white bags" containing secular magazines and books. Recently the crew took on the extra



The AOS Baltimore Mission Statement is written as a word collage.



Smiling faces are an AOS Volunteers' reward.

task of packing and mailing our St. Elizabeth Seton Sculptures we commissioned from the Canadian sculptor Timothy P. Schmaltz.

At the heart and core are the ship visitors. (Over twenty, too many to name here). A contract with the Ignatian Lay Volunteer Program provides a two day per week ship visitor for one or two year terms. The dedication of these volunteers is amazing! Everything we do supports them. They are the "one on one" welcome to the Port of Baltimore. The creative suggestions they share with Andy and myself, and the entries they write in the ships visitors log keep us growing in service to seafarers. Visits to the chapel by them before and after ship visiting make us aware of what AOS is about.

Our Power Point presentation, website, 8 panel brochure and twenty-six point maritime ministry fact sheet all help us to educate the community about the plight of merchant seafarers. A key tool is our monthly newsletter (over 250 recipients) to our Mother Seton



Sr. Myrna Tordillo, Andy Middleton, Cardinal Veglio, Amy Middleton, and Msgr. John Fitzgerald and a participant in the Paul VI Auditorium during the 2012 AOS World Congress in Vatican City. (Walking by is Bishop Kevin Boland, the National Bishop Promoter.)

Prayer partners and financial supporters. There is an annual "Pastor's Advent Appeal", an annual bull & oyster roast, three Orioles club seat raffles, and opportunities to memorialize items in the Stella Maris Center on our Memorial Plaques are our main source of funding. The Archbishop's Annual Appeal covers large part of our expenses. The Maryland Knights of Columbus Councils are a major support as well. The State deputy has appointed a Knights of Columbus liaison to AOS, Mr. Innocent D'Almeida, who greatly enhances Knights of Columbus involvement in, and support for, AOS. Almost all of the Ship Agents make donations for ship visits, except for the largest ship line serving the port!

We are working in the Archdiocese for an annual observance of "Maritime Sunday". The *Port of Baltimore Magazine*, the *Baltimore Sunpapers*, and the *Catholic Review* have all kindly published articles on AOS. There have also been TV and radio interviews to help educate the public.



Bishop Kevin Boland and Msgr. John Fitzgerald at the Merchant Marine Memorial Garden, located outside of Stella Maris International Seafarers Center (May 2012).

AOS Baltimore maintains daily communications with "The Flying Angel" team at the Baltimore International Seafarer Center. The Reverend Mary Davisson, an Episcopal Priest, the Director at B.I.S.C. presents a united front of cooperation in ship visiting and in joint efforts to provide routine and emergency care and to address advocacy issues benefiting seafarers.

A Christmas Greeting

On November 12, 2013 I was appointed by the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People to AOS Regional Coordinator of North America and the Caribbean. I am humbled by this call to serve and hope to serve our region well during the next five years. Six out of nine of the recently appointed Regional Coordinators are newly appointed so our first meeting, that will take place in Rome on January 19-24, will be an important occasion to get to know each other, to understand our role and responsibilities and how to cooperate with the Bishop Promoters and the National Directors of our regions. We will also focus on how AOS globally can collaborate more effectively for the benefit of seafarers and better communicate the work that chaplains and volunteers worldwide are doing to the Church and the maritime sector.

I will be communicating with you again in the near future as I begin to understand my role and the balance I will need in doing it well while maintaining my family and port ministry. May Our Lady Star of the Sea, mother of our Lord and Savior, be with all of us during this beautiful Christmas Season.

Karen Parsons, OFS; Port Chaplain, Galveston TX; Regional Coordinator, North America and Caribbean



Karen (left, front row) with M/V Nord London crew.



Building Relationships with Others: The Importance of Reconciliation and Healing

By John W. Crossin, OSFS



I want to begin by thanking all who invited me to share a few words with you today—General Secretary Jason Zuidema of NAMMA, Fr. Ron Perkins and Lesley Warrick of Seafarer's House, Sr. Myrna Tordillo of the Cultural Diversity Office of the Catholic Bishop's Conference, and all those who make this meeting and this ministry possible.

When I was growing up in a religiously mixed neighborhood in Philadelphia, Catholics and Protestants never visited one another's churches. We might play sports together every day in the neighborhood after school but Catholics and Protestants were both told to stay out of one another's churches. Because of the ecumenical movement which began in 1910 with the International Missionary Conference in Edinburgh, Scotland and the Second Vatican Council 1962-65, this situation has radically changed. The Decree on Ecumenism of the Council marks the official Catholic entry into the search for Christian Unity.

A most common question we get is: Why be ecumenical at all? (1) Jesus prayed for unity at the Last Supper; (2) Church teaching; (3) to enhance the spreading of the Gospel—the purpose of the 1910 Conference; (4) to serve those in need more effectively at food pantries and the like; and (5) to be a voice for those who have no one to speak for them—those whom Pope Francis constantly refers to, people out on the margins of society whom no one cares about.

Cardinal Walter Kasper puts it particularly well when discussing the Our Father, the Lord's Prayer: "In the first series of petitions, our hearts and minds turn toward God Our Father, for his own sake: 'hallowed be *thy* name... *thy* kingdom... *thy* will...' Through these petitions, the Lord immerses us in the mystery of God's loving plan for the salvation of humanity. By contrast, division among Christians does not hallow the name of God, it does not hasten the coming of God's kingdom, nor does it fulfill his will."¹

Since the Second Vatican Council, we have changed our attitude toward one another:

- a. We build relationships with one another. We walk together and make a commitment to one another.
- b. We search for the truth together. We have a collaborative attitude.
- c. We are seeking to come deeper into relationship with Christ and thus closer to one another.
- d. We presume the best of one another—building relationships of trust. We call each other if a problem seems to be emerging rather than relying on second-hand reports.
- e. We compare bests not best to worst.
- f. We start our dialogue with easier questions and work toward the harder ones.
- g. We are honest, in a gentle way, about our disagreements with one another. Lasting agreements will be built on the honest acknowledgements of convergences and divergences. A 'my values and your values approach' is not helpful.
- h. We are seeking to build peace not division.

We build relationships with one another. These conversations—often referred to more formally as dialogues—usually occur in four interrelated arenas. Often we begin by sharing our experiences, for example our work

with and for the seafarers and its benefits; a second arena would be sharing on work together such as common projects and works of charity; a third area would be a sharing on theological topics of mutual interest. Here we would attain to some mutual sharing with each other. Finally, we might have a spiritual sharing on our life's journey and how God has spoken to us and led us.²

- a. These arenas tend to overlap—but there is an increasing depth in beneficial relationships.
- b. Some of our colleagues in ministry are not ready for such relationships and we must respect their decisions but keep the door open for a future conversation.

A common perception is that dialogue partners compromise their faith. The opposite is true. Dialogue forces us to go deeper in our faith. Our friends from other Christian traditions ask us questions. To answer them we have to review our understanding of our Catholicism/Protestantism and often to deepen it. Retired Bishop Ted Schneider of the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America once remarked to me that when he began to enter into dialogue with Catholics and others, he had to go back and look at the meaning and deeper meaning of the abbreviations and common phrases he and his colleagues tossed around all the time but didn't think too much about. We may have to move beyond clichés to deeper understanding so that we can explain our belief to others.

The common root of our relationship with one another is prayer. We need to pray privately and together. We pray for and with one another. We need to pray for one another as we minister together just as all of you need to pray daily for the seafarers and their concerns.

In our prayer we ask for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We ask the Spirit for the right words to say in sometimes difficult situations. We ask that the Spirit guide our ministry. We pray daily for wise judgment in our ministry. Sometimes we have to honestly admit when we have been unwise. We engage the process of the Discernment of the Spirit in important matters so that we might be doing God's will and not just our own.

The results of discernment can be surprising. Two years ago I thought I might be heading into some form of parish ministry. I would not be talking to you today except for a surprising recommendation which eventually led to my accepting the position of executive director of the *Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs* at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

I have already referred in your program to the importance of listening to building relationships with others. I thought that I might spend some time now talking about the important topic of reconciliation and healing in ourselves, in our pastoral relationships and in our ecumenical dialogues.

Reconciliation and Healing is a persistent theme in the Gospels, Luke's Gospel in particular:

- a. Jesus forgives even his executioners—"Father forgive them for they know not what they do" [Lk 23:34A]
- b. Luke 23 matches Luke's version of the Lord's Prayer [11:4]
- c. And parallels Stephens; "Lord do not hold this sin against them" in Acts 7:60
- d. It is a constant theme in Jesus ministry

² This paragraph is based on the document *Dialogue and Proclamation* from the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue which appeared in 1991 and is readily available on the Vatican website. I think the same applies to ecumenical dialogue.

¹ *A Handbook of Spiritual Ecumenism* (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2007): 43-44.

Our preaching of repentance for the Forgiveness of sins is rooted here—in Jesus ministry:

- a. Salvation is **not** in other important but secondary things: (a) In political liberation (b) or accumulating power (c) or in material goods—and the income to buy them (d) or in popularity.
- b. But salvation is in the forgiveness of sins. We have been forgiven.

We are grateful for this forgiveness—the virtue we need is gratitude:

- a. What blocks this? We don't think we need to be forgiven!
 - (1) Pride—who are you to forgive me?
 - (2) Denial—we should not underestimate its power.
 - (3) Blind Spots—that a friend can gently point out to us.
- b. We need forgiveness and healing in an ongoing way. We should thank God every day for this great grace—and continue to ask for healing. We all have hurts that need to be healed and scars from the past that hurt once in a while. Such is the human condition.

Having accepted our need for forgiveness, we are called to forgive others in imitation of Jesus on the Cross—we need to do this personally:

- a. Our blockage to doing so can be highly emotional—we have been hurt.
- b. Jesus forgave even enemies and forgave them on the cross—the standard is high.
- c. One of the hardest parts of our faith is forgiveness.
- d. Even when we know the truth of things forgiveness can be hard
- e. Forgiveness is a process and it can be hard work.
- f. Yet we have hope—no matter how bad the past healing and forgiveness is possible. Jesus' love on the cross can heal the deepest fissures between us as individuals and among us as groups.

The call here is to a deeper spiritual maturity:

- a. We need humility and modesty—to see ourselves clearly—with gifts given by God, but also with the need for forgiveness and healing.
- b. We need to go deeper—we work through the difficulty rather than ignoring it.
- c. Sometimes on our spiritual journey our prayer is flat, we are bored, we are experiencing dryness in prayer, or we are on a plateau.
- d. A wise spiritual friend will point out that in this pattern there often is a resistance to going deeper—we are hanging on to something we should let go of—perhaps a resentment or a past hurt—we should forgive more so that we can be more faithful to the guidance of the Spirit.
- e. We are often being called to embrace something new—a new attitude, a new relationship, a new ministry. It's surprising how we/I can resist doing God's will! Rather than discerning God's will and going deeper.
- f. We can go deeper in our own spiritual life but we also can help others to go deeper in theirs.
- g. We can be agents of God's healing—by offering a kind word or good advice, by sharing an important biblical passage on healing. Or, I am being quite Catholic here, by sharing the Sacrament of Reconciliation, as Pope Francis recently did at World Youth Day in Rio. I have experienced the Sacrament as powerful—from both sides, both as minister and as recipient.³

³ See Kasper, pp. 64-65.

Healing and Reconciliation is not just between God and us or in our relationships with others.

This reconciliation is also between communities:

- a. To forgive we need to acknowledge, not deny, the truth of the past and the present—what really happened—in the Balkans and elsewhere, [Ambassador Robert Hennemeyer's recounts a story of his work in the Balkans seeking to end conflict. In bringing leaders together and asking them to tell the stories of their communities. All told stories of being victims. One told stories of being perpetrators.⁴]
- b. The problem is that some communities [e.g. in the Balkans] have created and continue to create mytho-history. This is a history written from a particular point of view. Such histories can nourish ongoing animosities even over centuries.

Blessed Pope John Paul II changed our relationships to others by acknowledging the past. For example in his visit to Greece, he immediately apologized for past wrongs committed by Catholics against Greek Orthodox Christians. This opened the way to a good visit and more importantly to a deeper relationship between the churches:

- a. By acknowledging past wrongs done, either personally or communally, we can be freed up to move into a new future. This is what John Paul II freed us to do.
- b. Catholic and Lutherans are now primed to move forward in our relationships with the Mennonites having acknowledged the persecution we subjected them to in the 16th Century. We have engaged in moving liturgies of reconciliation.
- c. Might I dare say, in some of the history texts on all sides written from the Reformation to the rise of the ecumenical movement were not as accurate as they might have been? Sometimes we gain our identity more by knowing who we are against rather than what we are for.
- d. In our renewed friendship, we have the courage to seek the truth of the past. Mistakes were made.
- e. In *From Conflict to Communion: Lutheran-Catholic Common Commemoration of the Reformation in 2017*, the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity (sponsored by the Lutheran World Federation and the Pontifical Council of Promoting Christian Unity) offers in Chapter III, "A Historical Sketch of the Lutheran Reformation and the Catholic Response" a succinct and up-to-date view of the Reformation based on the most recent scholarship. Such clear work frees us to move forward.

Monsignor John Radano put it well when he said: "The challenge now is to appreciate and receive what has been achieved and to allow our churches and communities to be shaped by what has been achieved."⁵

- a. He also notes that a healing of bitter memories may be necessary for us to receive the gifts the other communities are offering us. I think that this can—as with individuals—be a difficult and an ongoing process.
- b. Much work is being done today on processes of reconciliation and peace building. As we have seen, this involves:
 - A search for the truth of the past—moving beyond histories written from a single point of view
 - An acknowledgement of past wrongs—and an abandonment of the contention that "we were always right"
 - A search for mutual forgiveness
 - A resolve to move into the future
- c. Pope John Paul II's apologies opened the door to reconciliation but of course he went much further. A complementary aspect of his ministry was the recognition of Orthodox and Protestant Saints.⁶ Today we also have the many Christian martyrs of various traditions in varied parts of the globe. One study said there are over 100,000 of these each year. These men and women can provide positive direction for our common future.

⁴ See William Bole, Drew Christiansen, SJ and Robert T. Hennemeyer, *Forgiveness in International Politics: An Alternative Road to Peace* (Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops 2004).

⁵ "The Future of Our Journey: Issues Facing Ecumenism," *Ecumenical Trends* 37/5 (May 2008): 71.

⁶ See *Ut Unum Sint*, #84-85

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Serving the Other Typhoon Victims: Filipino Crew Members on Ships

Priests join other ministers to serve mariners who are anguished for loved ones

By Jim Davis - Florida Catholic correspondent (Reprinted with permission from Florida Catholic/Archdiocese of Miami)

FORT LAUDERDALE | Several decks below the pools, restaurants, shops and luxury cabins of one of the largest-ever cruise ships, crew members prayed for victims of Typhoon Haiyan — those who survived, those who died — in the Philippines, half a world away.

"When disaster occurs, God does not forget his children," Father Peter Lin told 17 Filipinos and others at a Mass on the Oasis of the Seas. "God embraces his children and walks with his children through all their pain and all their suffering."



JIM DAVIS | FC Crew members of the Cruise Ship Oasis of the Seas, Filipinos and others, attend a Mass for their storm-struck homeland.

The shipboard Mass was one of six sponsored last week by Seafarers' House, a multifaith ministry to mariners at the busy Port Everglades. Besides Father Lin, representing the Archdiocese of Miami, the ministers included six clergy of various groups, including two other Roman Catholic priests. They also led four Masses and other prayer services at Casa Del Marino, the ministry's community center at the port, serving a total of 331 Filipinos.

They gave away 113 phone cards and 115 packets of info, which included prayer cards and lists of international organizations keeping track of the recovery effort in the Philippines. And they offered counseling for shipworkers who were anguished over the storm.

"People are focused on the devastation on the ground," noted Lesley Warrick, executive director of Seafarers' House. "It's easy to overlook these people who are bereaved on ships."

The Mass at the Oasis, held as the 220,000-ton vessel was docked, drew both men and women to the crew's lounge: some in the epauleted white shirts of officers, some in the blue or gray coveralls of other workers.

All sat or stood solemnly for the Mass, speaking not a word, their attention fully on the prayers and on Father Lin's homily. During a prayer, some knelt on the carpeted floor, a few wiping away tears.

"When I heard about it, I was happy," Carlos Lawsin, from the hard-hit Leyte Island, said of the Mass. "Somebody was caring for us."

Father Lin launched his homily on a surprisingly angry note. He denounced those who criticized God, or even denied God's existence,

because of the typhoon. He spoke even more sharply against people who say it was a divine punishment against the Filipino people.

"The very idea that God is visiting his wrath upon those poor people is one of the most sinful ideas ever to be verbalized," he said.

Instead, he said, God was showing love for the Philippines in several forms: in people's prayers and donations, in rescue teams and hospital ships, in the many volunteers from churches, hospitals, and fire and police departments.

Father Lin said that God understands human feelings through the life of Jesus. "God knows the sufferings and pains we have in life. God knows and understands, because God has experienced it personally."

The intercessory prayer, too, touched on the storm, invoking divine aid for Filipinos who have lost homes and livelihoods, and for those stricken by sickness. The worshipers also prayed that the deceased would "be at peace in the kingdom of heaven," and that the bereaved "be consoled by their treasured memories."

Providing music was the Rev. Steven Wright, a Baptist minister. He played a six-string acoustic guitar, leading simple choruses like "Be Glorified" and "I See the Lord."

"You are unique people," Wright said in wrapping up. "You are God's children, and we love you very much."

The Mass seemed to help Jay LaCandazo, a technical storekeeper, who said he "came to give thanks that my family is safe." However, he had heard that his house, which sat on the coast of Leyte Island, was destroyed.

His friend Carlos Lawsin said he had just heard — after several tension-filled days — that most of his family was safe. His family farm, however, was ruined: His chickens were dead and his mango and coconut trees were down, although his cattle survived. And he hadn't yet heard about his parents.

"I'm praying that they're safe," Lawsin said.

Even a few non-Filipinos attended the Mass. Anthony Fernandez, an air-conditioning technician, is from Goa, India, but he came to pray for the Philippines after seeing CNN reports.

He said he especially liked Wright's choice of songs, like "Open Our Eyes, Lord." "I came to tears," Fernandez said. "It touched me."



JIM DAVIS | FC Fr. Peter Lin distributes the Eucharist during a Mass for Filipino crew members on the cruise ship Oasis of the Seas.

Father Lin said he didn't mind the small number who attended the Mass. *"It wasn't so many people, but they were very dedicated. When crews are on a ship for months at a time, there's no chance for Mass. This will give them some spiritual energy."*

Wright agreed. *"It's a refuge, spiritual and emotional, to come to a service. Many of the mariners don't get to mix with other believers. This gives them fellowship and a common bond."*

Worrying about the Philippines can take an especially heavy toll on those who work on cruise ships, said Father Ron Perkins, chaplain at Seafarers' House.

"They have to be positive and upbeat and smiling and welcoming to passengers, 24/7," said Perkins, a priest in the Orthodox Catholic Church. *"While they're doing that, they're worrying about their loved ones, not knowing if they're alive or dead or injured or have food or water or a roof over their heads."*

However, Royal Caribbean, the cruise line to which the Oasis belongs, has been proffering its own help to the Filipino crew members aboard its six cruise ships. Human resources manager Margaret Aitchison said each ship has taken up collections for the Filipinos for food, clothing and repairing homes. The cruise line has also given them calling cards at a reduced rate of 10 cents a minute, plus unlimited texting.

Besides Father Lin and Wright, the Seafarers' House team includes Filipino priest Father Jesus "Jets" Medina of Archbishop Coleman F. Carroll High School, plus retired priest Father John McLaughlin and Episcopal Deacon Hal Hurley. And Perkins could call on Muslim, Jewish and Buddhist volunteers if he needed.

"We're unlike the typical faith-based organization; we're multifaith," Perkins said. *"You don't have to check your religious ID at the door."*

Besides the spiritual services, Casa Del Marino provided mariners with couches, books, magazines, a TV, a small grocery store and online computers. Seafarers' House can even drive them there, via its vans that shuttle people around Port Everglades. The free service carries about 75,000 passengers around the sprawling port every year, Perkins said.



JIM DAVIS | FC Fr. Peter Lin celebrates Mass for Filipino crew members of the cruise ship Oasis of the Sea.



JIM DAVIS | FC The priests who took part in the Mass for Filipino crew members of the Oasis of the Seas pose for a picture in front of the Seafarers' House. From left: Father Jesus "Jets" Medina, Father John McLaughlin and Father Peter Lin.

Apostleship of the Sea: Catholic Ministry to Seafarers

The Archdiocese of Miami has assigned two priests and several deacons to its Apostleship of the Sea, ministering mainly to those who work at sea.

- Stella Maris Seamen's Center, under the direction of Father Roberto Cid, is located at 1172 Florida Way, Port of Miami. It is open Monday-Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Mass is celebrated Saturday and Sunday at 12:30 p.m. and a Holy Hour is observed Thursdays at 12:30 p.m. The phone number is 786-970-0416.
- Father Peter Lin is the Catholic chaplain at the multi-faith Seafarers' House, located at 1850 Eller Drive, #500, Fort Lauderdale. Mass is celebrated Saturday and Sunday at 11 a.m., except for the first Sunday of the month. The phone number is 954-734-1580.

Building Relationships with Others: The Importance of Reconciliation and Healing

Continued from page 7.

The healing/reconciling of the past will enable us to preach the gospel more effectively. Healing is not just for us but for mission. In preaching the message of Christ, those of us with an academic orientation tend to think that clear logical explanations will convince people. Wonderful individuals, such as Cardinal Avery Dulles, have come to faith primarily by deep study. For most, however, conversion to Christ comes first from the heart.

St. Francis de Sales (1567-1622) reminds us that a spoonful of honey is more attractive than a barrel of vinegar. The goodness and beauty of Christian living—seen in the love of Christians for others, in our case for seafarers—is compelling. Good example, hospitality, and walking with others moves hearts. For most people an affective conversion to Christ leads to a thirst for knowledge. Now we are at the core of your ministry.

As grateful recipients of divine healing ourselves, we are inviting people to join with us in a community—one that is universal in scope yet particular in manifestation in the port. Sharing and showing our faith involves conversation with others—and especially listening. The Spirit is at work in the other as well as in us. We have something to give and something to learn—from the seafarers and from our colleagues in ministry.

Thus we need even more to call on that divine grace—the work of the Holy Spirit—which opens our hearts to others and enables us to be forgiving of all.⁷ When only 2 or 3 of us gather together to serve in Christ's name great things can happen.

Thank you.

Rev. Dr. John Crossin, OSFS, Ph.D. is Executive Director of the Secretariat of Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. The above text is Rev. Crossin's keynote address at the North American Maritime Ministry Association (NAMMA) Annual Conference on August 6, 2013 in Fort Lauderdale, FL

⁷ See <http://www.usccb.org/about/ecumenical-and-interreligious-affairs/videos.cfm>.

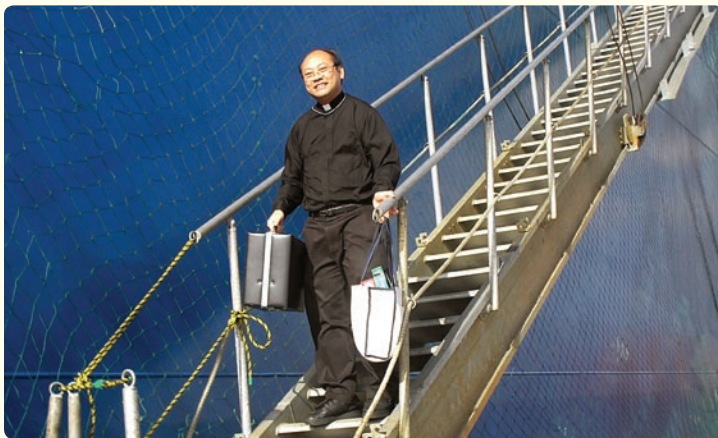
A Reflection on the Spiritual Aspect of Port Ministry

By Fr. Joseph Duong Phan, Chaplain, Apostleship of the Sea, Diocese of Oakland, CA

The ministry to seafarers has nourished my spiritual life.

Someone said that the Apostleship of the Sea is the invisible ministry to invisible people. Indeed, every time I give a talk about port ministry at a parish, I ask parishioners if they know the Apostleship of the Sea. Most often, only a few people would raise their hands. Interestingly, people know about AOS through other sources or by meeting a priest on board a cruise ship, not through the communication network in the diocese.

I have the privilege to serve as a chaplain for the last 8 years at the ports in the Diocese of Oakland, California. The Apostleship of the Sea ministry has really enriched me spiritually when I provide pastoral care to the community of international seafarers.



Fr. Joseph Duong Phan, AOS chaplain, Diocese of Oakland, maneuvering the steps after ship visiting and celebrating Mass.

First, I have golden opportunities to lead seafarers to God or at least to remind them about God. There are seafarers of diverse religious background on board container ships. However, majority of them are Catholic, thanks to the presence of Filipino seafarers. My visit is not only to say hello to the crew or find out their problems on board or share meals with them, but the center of my visit is to celebrate the Eucharist with Catholics and with anyone who wants to participate. The Eucharist is the center of Catholic life and worship and it's what Catholic seafarers miss most when they are away from their parish communities. In my experience, it always moves me when the Eucharist is celebrated with seafarers in their working clothes, during their short break time, and with their burning hearts. The Eucharistic celebration is simple but prayerful and profound. It is a good opportunity for seafarers to connect to their families through formal prayers. Many Catholic seafarers often say to me, "Father, thank you for the Mass. It makes my day."

Yes, the Eucharist does not only make seafarers' day, but it really makes my day as well. At the celebration, I have the privilege to repeat Jesus' words, "this is my body, take it and eat of it; this is the chalice of my blood, take it and drink from it." The words remind me that it is not only Jesus who shares his life to me to eat and drink. It is me now who shares my life to my parishioners, the seafarers who are the most forgotten people in the world. This [Eucharist] always gives me the energy to serve after Mass. I do not hesitate to say yes to any request



Fr. Joseph Duong Phan (5th from left) with crew of Cherokee Bridge.

from the seafarers after celebrating the Eucharist, whether to drive them to our center or to any store in the area. In helping seafarers, I live the Eucharist I just celebrated. It is sheer joy to serve knowing that I am doing so with Jesus who just shared his life to me. Clearly, hospitality and charity flow from the celebration of the Eucharist. It is also beneficial for volunteers to be nourished by the Eucharist in order to have the energy to serve. It is noteworthy that our International Maritime Center here in Oakland has a small chapel with the tabernacle at the center of the building. This reminds us that the Eucharist must always be at the center of our service.

Secondly, I can see God in all things I encounter during my day at the ports. Seeing ships come and go remind me of the changing world. Seeing the busy movement of trucks, cranes, cargos and containers in the port, I see the blood life of the US economy. There is nothing stable except God's steadfast love. But the world is connected. We are not isolated islands, we belong to the human family and the ships connect us. We all are children of one loving God.

I thank God for the opportunity to live in this country where I have the basic things I need. Also, I thought that not many people are able to see the wonders of nature from their work places. I am the lucky one. Walking from one ship to another is like a trip to see the beauty of nature. The sky, the sunset, the majestic San Francisco Bay, the enveloping fog in the early morning, the sound of the waves, the vastness of the ocean, the squeaking seagulls and wild life reveal to me the Creator. How can I not see God in all these things?

When I go aboard ship, I encounter God in all unexpected situations. Every ship seems like a different world and every day on board is different from the other one. I have learned not to expect anything when I go ship visiting. It could be a pleasant visit or not. The crew may or may not have time for me. When I expect a good turnout for the Mass because of a good number of Catholics onboard, I get very few Mass attendees. When I do not expect any, it is a miracle-I get a big crowd. God has his own way of guiding me in this ministry. He always provides. God reveals his presence to me in all of these situations.

In short, the port ministry is still very much invisible to society and the churches even though many chaplains and volunteers from different faith traditions are dedicating their lives to serve the most forgotten people of the sea. For us who have the privilege to serve in this ministry, it is a blessing because we can live the Eucharist we celebrate and love God through seafarers we serve and all the things at the ports.

Flag of Convenience

By Deacon Michael Riggio

Most of us involved on the waterfront notice the various flags flying on the vessels calling in our ports. We also notice the name of the country painted on the stern and sometimes wonder about life in these countries. Why are the flag of the ship and the country name painted on the hull important to chaplains and ship visitors? Isn't it our mission to visit any vessel and meet the crew regardless of where the ship is from? The answer to this last question is, "Yes, of course." However, understanding the significance of the ship's "registry," i.e., its flag, is a very important step toward understanding the conditions of a mariner's life on the vessel. I have been asked to write specifically about the issue known as "flag of convenience," (or the shorthand expression "FOC") and why understanding this issue might help us in our ministry.

Before looking in detail at flags of convenience, let's first examine the more basic concept of a ship's flag (also called a civil ensign). Ship registration is the process by which a ship is documented, that is, given the nationality of the documented country. The registration country has control over the ship and is called the "Flag State." This control includes, for example, authority to inspect the ship and its crew and equipment. A ship can only sail under the flag of one country at a time. Registration is quite important since it determines which country's laws govern the operation and internal affairs of the vessel and the crew arrangements. This is important for crews because the flag state has full responsibility for inspecting and certifying living and working conditions on its ships. In fact, Article 94 of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) requires the flag state to exercise control in administrative, technical and social matters on ships flying its flag.

Since 1921 it has been recognized that all states, including land-locked countries, have the right to be flag states. Each country sets the conditions for registering ships under its flag, and different countries have quite different requirements. At one time, it was usual for ships to be registered in the country where their owners lived – and some countries still require this. However, in the past 100 years, some countries have made it relatively easy and inexpensive for foreign owners to register ships under their flags.

This brings us to the term "flag of convenience." That term describes the business practice of registering a ship in a sovereign state different from that of the ship's owners, and flying that state's flag on the ship. This practice mostly originated in the United States. In the early 1900's, the U.S. passed new laws to protect U.S. merchant sailors. These laws made it more expensive to operate a U.S. flagged ship than to operate a similar ship flagged in a country without such protections. By moving their ships to the Panamanian flag in those times, U.S. owners could reduce costs. By the end of the 20th Century, a large percentage of the world merchant fleet was sailing under flags of convenience – and it still is today. In the present-day system, ships are registered under flags of convenience for many reasons: to reduce operating costs, for tax savings, to avoid the regulations of the owner's country or to protect and hide the owners' identities.

Flag-of-convenience registries are often criticized by international shipping organizations, importantly the International Transportation Workers' Federation (the ITF) with whom most of us have contacts in our daily ministry. Many flag states have been found to have substandard regulations. Flags of convenience allow ship owners to be legally anonymous, which makes them difficult to prosecute in civil and criminal actions. Some ships with flags of convenience have been found engaging in crimes, or have substandard working conditions. Some negatively impact the environment through improper fishing. Many countries are targeting these FOC states' vessels for special enforcement when such vessels call at their ports. There are those who actually call for an end to the flags of convenience system. In a recent article, a journalism professor

in New York stated, "The years of ship owners doing what they want must end. Large numbers of lives are at stake." (Counterpunch. *Flags of Convenience*, January 18, 2012). In summary, the argument against FOC is that it allows ship owners to avoid the laws of the nation from which they actually operate and take advantage of weak safety, labor and environmental standards in the flag state, and the flag state's lack of enforcement of the laws and poor inspection ability.

At the same time, there are those who actively support the practice of FOC, arguing the economic and regulatory advantages for the owners. These folks also talk about the increased freedom in choosing employees from an international labor pool. Some people will go so far as to avoid the term FOC itself, preferring to use the expression "open registry," a technical maritime term referring to states' registries that do not limit registration to vessels with *bona fide* connections to the flag issuer.

Another important concept for crews is that of the "port state." The port state is the country (state) where a vessel is calling or visiting at a particular time. A port state in maritime law may exercise jurisdiction over any ship within its territorial waters. However, there is a well-recognized practice that a port state does not interfere in the internal administration of foreign flagged vessels. The long recognized practice is that, unless a significant port state interest is involved (such as the prevention of crime, serious safety issues, or pollution) the port state does not intervene. When the port state's significant interests are involved, however, the port state will apply its own laws regardless of the ship's flag when the ship is in its waters. For instance, a vessel involved in an oil spill in U.S. waters will have port state intervention. Another example is the international law known as the Maritime Labour Convention or the MLC 2006 (effective August 2013 in most countries but as late as February 2014 in France and August 2014 in the UK). The MLC 2006 specifies certain minimum standards for crew health, living and safety standards of merchant ships, regardless of their location. Under the MLC 2006, port states can inspect ships registered in other countries, even if the flag state has not ratified the MLC 2006. The port state may actually detain a vessel if it does not meet the standards of MLC 2006. Note: the U.S. has **not** adopted the MLC 2006, while 50 countries have ratified it as of August 2013. Those 50 countries represent 75% of the world's shipping. Even though the Convention was not ratified in our country, in February 2013 the US Coast Guard published a notice regarding voluntary compliance with MLC 2006 for US flagged vessels. (It's beyond the space allowed in this publication to address why our country has not ratified MLC 2006.) For crews, this means that when their ship is in a US port, they have some protection under US laws regardless of where the ship may be flagged.

No matter whether one sees a flag of convenience as an obstacle to a safe environment for seafarers, or as the reality of modern business in the maritime world, we ship visitors and chaplains should be aware of the arguments on both sides. We can complete our mission of assistance to seafarers best when we understand the rules and customs affecting our ports regardless of the flag flying on the ship and the country's name painted on the stern.

As a parting word, in my opinion the best and most important thing we can do for all seafarers and people on the waterfront is to pray for them. Until next time, may the Lord provide smooth seas and following winds.



Deacon Michael Riggio is Stella Maris Center Director in Seattle. He is a retired Navy officer having been a fighter pilot, attorney, and military judge in the US Navy. As a civilian attorney he has handled maritime and admiralty cases. To contact him by email: office@catholicseafarercenter.org

Maritime Industry - Challenges for Seafarers and Employers

By Joe Cox, President and CEO, Chamber of Shipping of America



In the past, which is just over the horizon astern for some of us, commercial ships transited the oceans and the ports of call were numerous and in some countries there were multiple ports of call. Loading and discharging of cargo ships took days and even tankers enjoyed a period in port when watches could be broken and the lucky seafarers with time off could spend the time in personal pursuits. Seafarers could homestead ships, i.e. they could work on a ship and be assured of meeting that same ship when returning from time off. The challenges in being a seafarer were more associated with the time away from home and the lack of communications with family than with anything to do with the profession of seafaring. The phrase "Time is Money" applied although the pace of seafaring life allowed breathing room for both the seafarer and his/her employer. Times have indeed changed and seafarers and their employers are challenged.

In today's maritime world, seafarers sign-on a ship and rarely expect to be assigned to the ship again... there are the lucky minority who can homestead! The ships venture to various ports of call, however, the time in port is very limited. In addition, the port itself may not be as downtown-centric as ports of the past. There were ports where the ship docked within walking distance of the center of activity. In many places today, the "port" has the same name although the distance from the center has magnified to the extent that the center is virtually unattainable for the short time the ship is in port. On most ships, the time in port dictates the crew does not break sea watches. Additionally, the seafarer may or may not be able to go ashore. In previous days, the seafarer was listed on a crew manifest and that was sufficient to allow shore leave. Today, most must have visas to enjoy a few hours of concrete, macadam, dirt or any surface under foot other than the steel deck of their home away from home. The siren call of being in foreign ports is very much muted from its previous clear call to adventure!



While seafarers may enjoy better communications with family due to improvements in communications, the time and distance formula still applies. A phone call is a luxury enjoyed today by some seafarers that seafarers in previous years could only have dreamed. However, the

written words of a letter received by a seafarer in olden days and the hanging up of a phone today have a common theme – the sender is not close by and the touch of a spouse or excited child exists in the imagination of the seafarer whether he/she be of older or newer vintage.

The expectations of society have intruded on the life of the seafarer and his/her employer. Treaties and their attendant adoption by nations in their national laws and regulations address the areas of safety, environmental protection and training. The safety regulations are a robust collection of requirements that cover the design of ships and machinery, equipment on board, and operational protocols. All safety is under the umbrella of the safety management code requiring seafarers and their employers to specify exactly what the responsibilities are and who will engage in ensuring compliance with all requirements. Environmental protection has expanded to include virtually all discharges from ships. Equipment to contain and control discharges must be in good operating order and monitoring and recordkeeping on the equipment has to be readily proven. The seafarers must have training and re-training in some cases on myriad responsibilities of their jobs.

Any maritime incident today carries with it the specter of an investigation by authorities. There are many rules and regulations today, many emanating from the desire of authorities to ensure environmental protection. Seafarers and their employers spend a large amount of time ensuring not only that safety and environmental protection requirements are met but also with keeping accurate records that they have indeed been met. Many a seafarer and his/her employer have learned that errors in record keeping result in a doubling of effort to prove compliance.

So with all the challenges facing seafarers and employers, why continue? The answer is older than recorded history. Seafaring is a profession and those engaged do it well and without external acclaim. Any acclaim comes from within each seafarer. Each has a role and responsibility and an individual seafarer is relied upon by his/her shipmates to perform in a professional manner. When the last line is let go and the sea buoy is astern, the ship is underway towards the next port. The engines are tuned and running, the course is set and the steward aspects of the ship are well in hand. Mankind's largest moveable structure is no longer attached to shore. While the ship is designed to carry cargo, it is also designed to engage that ever-changing creation, the oceans. Seafarers and employers know the challenges they must meet to ensure the continuance of their single voyage. The completion of the many professional responsibilities supporting that voyage and the many replicated around the globe on a daily basis attest to the professionalism of the many that make the industry run. Pay and sometimes acclaim by the employer are important to seafarers although the satisfaction of doing a job well is maybe the most intense feeling experienced by the seafarer.

An Unforgettable Ship Visit

By Fr. Peter Lin, AOS Chaplain, Port Everglades, FL

"There was a Buddhist Monk living at a Temple of Northern China. He had two young student monks, Chen and Li, who were studying Buddhism. Not only did he teach them how to study the Buddhist knowledge, but he also taught them about virtues. The Old Monk had been suffering a leg disease and he felt pain when it was cloudy and raining. Thus he used to ask the two student monks to massage his legs. Student Chen was in charge of the left leg and Li, the right leg.

While the two students were doing massage for their teacher, the Old Monk talk with them about how to be a good monk. When Chen came, the Old Monk would say, "You are doing the massage so hard, it feels very painful. Why not learn something from you brother Li, he does so well." Every time Chen heard that the old Monk praised his brother Li, he was unhappy and was so jealous of Li. However, when Li came on duty, the old Monk would say to him, "You should learn from your brother Chen, he does the massage so well and makes me so comfortable. You are massaging so soft that I feel nothing improved." When Li heard that the old Monk praised his brother Chen, he was also unhappy and jealous.

One day, there was a wedding in a village, student monk Chen was invited to preside the ceremony. After Chen left for the wedding, the younger monk Li broke the left leg of his teacher with a hammer. The left leg was supposed to be in the care of his brother Chen. When Chen came back to the temple, he was furious and he cut down the right leg of his teacher with a sharp knife, since the right leg was in the care of his brother Li.

The old Monk was deeply sad because his young students misunderstood his teaching. His purpose was to encourage them to learn from each other about their advantages rather than disadvantages. Instead, they did the opposite. Both young monks made very stupid things they would regret all their lives.

The story is something linked with the gospel today, as Jesus said: "do you think that I have come to establish peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division." (LK 12:51). We may also misunderstand what Jesus



Right: Fr. Peter Lin with crew on a ship docked at Port Everglades, FL

is telling us. In fact, Jesus, no doubt, has come to bring peace, not hate, but we should always understand and interpret Him correctly and properly. Do not be like those two young monks, who did stupid things because they misunderstood the message and teaching of the Old Monk."

Above was the homily I gave at Mass on my first ship visit on August 18th at the Port of Everglades. When I learned that I was invited by the crew from the Philippines to celebrate Mass, I was so glad and looked forward to meeting all of them. The Mass started at 4 pm that day and lasted around one hour. Eighteen (18) crew of the ship attended Mass and everyone received Holy Communion with joyful hearts. I enjoyed very much providing service to the crew members who are at sea most of the year.

I am very grateful to Most Rev. Thomas Wenski, bishop of the Archdiocese of Miami. He gave me an opportunity to be a chaplain in Port of Everglades. Having been here for three months, I have really enjoyed working with the sailors. Since I came here, I have scheduled Catholic Mass for the sailors at 11 am every Saturday and Sunday (except on first Sunday when I celebrate Mass in Chinese at St Thomas University, 11 am). There are always sailors who come to attend Mass and some of them would go to confession first. It seems that they love chatting with me about their spiritual life, family, faith, and work. I hope in the future I can serve more and more sailors from all over the world, whether they are Filipino, Indian, Chinese, or European, they are all children of God, brothers and sisters of mine.

SAVE THE DATE

Houston Maritime Ministry Training Program, "Houston School"

February 9-21, 2014 • Contact: Rev. David Wells, coordinator, email: wells6652@msn.com

AOSUSA Annual Conference

April 29-May 2, 2014, Corpus Christi, TX • Contact: Doreen Badeaux, email: aosusa@sbcglobal.net

Maritime Day Mass, 12:10 pm, Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, DC

In observance of National Day of Prayer and Remembrance for mariners and people of the sea

Contact: Margaret Marzec, email: mmarzec@usccb.org

NAMMA Annual Conference

August 5-8, 2014, Corpus Christi, TX • Contact: Dr. Jason Zudeima, email: jason.zuideima@namma.org

World Maritime Day Observance 2014

September 25, 2014 • Theme: "IMO Conventions: Effective Implementation"

The Situation Onboard MV Caravos Glory

By Fr. Lito Capeding, Port Chaplain, Apostleship of the Sea, Archdiocese of Mobile, AL

Barely two weeks since typhoon Haiyan unleashed its devastating power over the Philippine Islands of Samar and Leyte, our group did our usual ship visiting around the port of Mobile on November 24. I celebrated Mass in honor of the feast of Christ the King aboard MV Caravos Glory with



Fr. Lito Capeding giving communion to crew of MV Caravos Glory

23 all Filipino crew. It was so solemn and meaningful since on that Mass we offered our intentions for the victims of the typhoon who perished during that horrible tragedy. More so, it came to my knowledge that some crew members have families in the Philippines who were directly impacted by the typhoon.

As we shared the meager meal prepared onboard, another big blow for the crew came to my attention. Eight crew members finished their contract on November 8 while they were still in Spain but they were not allowed to sign off, instead they were allegedly severed from work as the ship was in route to Mobile. I was told the only wire message the 8 crew got from the ship owner (IASON Hellenic Shipping) was, "we have not scheduled any crew changes in Mobile due to sudden change of load port. Crew changes will be effected in the next port, Panama Canal." These crew members were all anxious to go home, worried of the plight of their families. Another issue which the crew intimated to me was their deplorable working condition. The exhaust from the ship's incinerator allegedly went to the vents directly into their cabins and because of that a seafarer was rushed to a local hospital in Mobile due to carbon monoxide suffocation. To me the incident was clearly a violation of the provisions of MLC 2006.

We left the ship that day with a heavy heart. Feeling compassion and empathy for the crew, I reported the incident to the Harbor Master, who in turn reported the situation to the Coast Guard. I believe a prompt investigation was conducted by the appropriate authorities. The following day on November 25th, MV Caravos Glory left for Panama Canal amidst the anxieties of the crew.

However, a question lingers in my mind... when will ship owners become sensitive to the plight of seafarers whose fundamental rights are violated in the name of profit and greed?

May Christ the King, ruler of the universe reign in our hearts! This was my prayer for that day!



Fr. Lito Capeding and volunteer Perry Tan (with guitar) with crew of MV Caravos Glory after Mass.

Pope Francis' Message for World Day of Migrants 2014

"Migrants and Refugees: Towards a Better World"

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Our societies are experiencing, in an unprecedented way, processes of mutual interdependence and interaction on the global level. While not lacking problematic or negative elements, these processes are aimed at improving the living conditions



of the human family, not only economically, but politically and culturally as well. Each individual is a part of humanity and, with the entire family of peoples, shares the hope of a better future. This consideration inspired the theme I have chosen for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees this year: Migrants and Refugees: Towards a Better World.

In our changing world, the growing phenomenon of human mobility emerges, to use the words of Pope Benedict XVI, as a "sign of the times" (cf. Message for the 2006 World Day of Migrants and Refugees). While it is true that migrations often reveal failures and shortcomings on the part of States and the international community, they also point to the aspiration of humanity to enjoy a unity marked by respect for differences, by attitudes of acceptance and hospitality which enable an equitable sharing of the world's goods, and by the protection and the advancement of the dignity and centrality of each human being.

From the Christian standpoint, the reality of migration, like other human realities, points to the tension between the beauty of creation, marked by Grace and the Redemption, and the mystery of sin. Solidarity, acceptance, and signs of fraternity and understanding exist side by side with rejection, discrimination, trafficking and exploitation, suffering and death. Particularly disturbing are those situations where migration is not only involuntary, but actually set in motion by various forms of human trafficking and enslavement. Nowadays, "slave labour" is common coin! Yet despite the problems, risks and difficulties to be faced, great numbers of migrants and refugees continue to be inspired by confidence and hope; in their hearts they long for a better future, not only for themselves but for their families and those closest to them.

What is involved in the creation of "a better world"? The expression does not allude naively to abstract notions or unattainable ideals; rather, it aims at an authentic and integral development, at efforts to provide dignified living conditions for everyone, at finding just responses to the needs of individuals and families, and at ensuring that God's

gift of creation is respected, safeguarded and cultivated. The Venerable Paul VI described the aspirations of people today in this way: *"to secure a sure food supply, cures for diseases and steady employment... to exercise greater personal responsibility; to do more, to learn more, and have more, in order to be more"* (Populorum Progressio, 6).

Our hearts do desire something "more". Beyond greater knowledge or possessions, they want to "be" more. Development cannot be reduced to economic growth alone, often attained without a thought for the poor and the vulnerable. A better world will come about only if attention is first paid to individuals; if human promotion is integral, taking account of every dimension of the person, including the spiritual; if no one is neglected, including the poor, the sick, prisoners, the needy and the stranger (cf. Mt 25:31-46); if we can prove capable of leaving behind a throwaway culture and embracing one of encounter and acceptance.

Migrants and refugees are not pawns on the chessboard of humanity. They are children, women and men who leave or who are forced to leave their homes for various reasons, who share a legitimate desire for knowing and having, but above all for being more. The sheer number of people migrating from one continent to another, or shifting places within their own countries and geographical areas, is striking. Contemporary movements of migration represent the largest movement of individuals, if not of peoples, in history. As the Church accompanies migrants and refugees on their journey, she seeks to understand the causes of migration, but she also works to overcome its negative effects, and to maximize its positive influence on the communities of origin, transit and destination.

While encouraging the development of a better world, we cannot remain silent about the scandal of poverty in its various forms. Violence, exploitation, discrimination, marginalization, restrictive approaches to fundamental freedoms, whether of individuals or of groups: these are some of the chief elements of poverty which need to be overcome. Often these are precisely the elements which mark migratory movements, thus linking migration to poverty. Fleeing from situations of extreme poverty or persecution in the hope of a better future, or simply to save their own lives, millions of persons choose to migrate. Despite their hopes and expectations, they often encounter mistrust, rejection and exclusion, to say nothing of tragedies and disasters which offend their human dignity.

The reality of migration, given its new dimensions in our age of globalization, needs to be approached and managed in a new, equitable and effective manner; more than anything, this calls for international cooperation and a spirit of profound solidarity and compassion. Cooperation at different levels is critical, including the broad adoption of policies and rules aimed at protecting and promoting the human person. Pope Benedict XVI sketched the parameters of such policies, stating that they *"should set out from close collaboration between the migrants' countries of origin and their countries of destination; they should be accompanied by adequate international norms able to coordinate different legislative systems with a view to safeguarding the needs and rights of individual migrants and their families, and at the same time, those of the host countries"* (Caritas in Veritate, 62). Working together for a better world requires that countries help one another, in a spirit of willingness and trust, without raising insurmountable barriers. A good synergy can be a source of encouragement to government leaders as they confront socioeconomic imbalances and an unregulated globalization, which are among some of the causes of migration movements in which individuals are more victims than protagonists. 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.

It must also be emphasized that such cooperation begins with the efforts of each country to create better economic and social conditions at home, so that

emigration will not be the only option left for those who seek peace, justice, security and full respect of their human dignity. The creation of opportunities for employment in the local economies will also avoid the separation of families and ensure that individuals and groups enjoy conditions of stability and serenity. Finally, in considering the situation of migrants and refugees, I would point to yet another element in building a better world, namely, the elimination of prejudices and presuppositions in the approach to migration. Not infrequently, the arrival of migrants, displaced persons, asylum-seekers and refugees gives rise to suspicion and hostility. There is a fear that society will become less secure, that identity and culture will be lost, that competition for jobs will become stiffer and even that criminal activity will increase. The communications media have a role of great responsibility in this regard: it is up to them, in fact, to break down stereotypes and to offer correct information in reporting the errors of a few as well as the honesty, rectitude and goodness of the majority. A change of attitude towards migrants and refugees is needed on the part of everyone, moving away from attitudes of defensiveness and fear, indifference and marginalization – all typical of a throwaway culture – towards attitudes based on a culture of encounter, the only culture capable of building a better, more just and fraternal world. The communications media are themselves called to embrace this "conversion of attitudes" and to promote this change in the way migrants and refugees are treated.

I think of how even the Holy Family of Nazareth experienced initial rejection: Mary "gave birth to her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn" (Lk 2:7).

Jesus, Mary and Joseph knew what it meant to leave their own country and become migrants: threatened by Herod's lust for power, they were forced to take flight and seek refuge in Egypt (cf. Mt 2:13-14). But the maternal heart of Mary and the compassionate heart of Joseph, the Protector of the Holy Family, never doubted that God would always be with them. Through their intercession, may that same firm certainty dwell in the heart of every migrant and refugee.

The Church, responding to Christ's command to "go and make disciples of all nations", is called to be the People of God

which embraces all peoples and brings to them the proclamation of the Gospel, for the face of each person bears the mark of the face of Christ! Here we find the deepest foundation of the dignity of the human person, which must always be respected and safeguarded. It is less the criteria of efficiency, productivity, social class, or ethnic or religious belonging which ground that personal dignity, so much as the fact of being created in God's own image and likeness (cf. Gen 1:26-27) and, even more so, being children of God. Every human being is a child of God! He or she bears the image of Christ! We ourselves need to see, and then to enable others to see, that migrants and refugees do not only represent a problem to be solved, but are brothers and sisters to be welcomed, respected and loved. They are an occasion that Providence gives us to help build a more just society, a more perfect democracy, a more united country, a more fraternal world and a more open and evangelical Christian community. Migration can offer possibilities for a new evangelization, open vistas for the growth of a new humanity foreshadowed in the paschal mystery: a humanity for which every foreign country is a homeland and every homeland is a foreign country.

Dear migrants and refugees! Never lose the hope that you too are facing a more secure future, that on your journey you will encounter an outstretched hand, and that you can experience fraternal solidarity and the warmth of friendship! To all of you, and to those who have devoted their lives and their efforts to helping you, I give the assurance of my prayers and I cordially impart my Apostolic Blessing.

From the Vatican, 5 August 2013

FRANCIS



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Calla Jane Slivinski, daughter of Lt. & Mrs. Luke Slivinski USCG, was baptized in Coast Guard tradition on May 5, 2013 in the bell of the CGC Oak, docked at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, North Charleston, SC, by Rev. Fr. Robert F. Higgins, AOS Chaplain, Diocese of Charleston.