

Alongside

The magazine for AoS Supporters
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Cup of Tea?



Where does yours come from?

See our 'Focus On' article on page 3

Apostleship of the Sea

By Martin Foley AoS National Director



Welcome to the first edition of *Alongside* since my appointment as National Director of the Apostleship of the Sea. It is an enormous privilege to serve the seafaring community through my role as National Director. Thank you for helping to make our vital work possible. I hope to get an opportunity to thank as many of you as possible as I travel the country in the coming months visiting parishes to promote our vital work with seafarers.

As you will read elsewhere in this magazine, unlike my illustrious predecessors, Commodore Chris York and Captain Paul Quinn, I do not have a maritime background. In fact, having been born and brought up in Birmingham I have lived about as far away from the sea as it is possible to get! At least Birmingham does have the distinct advantage of being equi-distant from most UK ports so I can't be accused of being partial to one particular port over and above the others!

In my short time with AoS I have already visited many ports and ships. I have been enormously impressed by the selfless dedication and commitment of our chaplains and volunteers. When they embark on a ship they don't quite know what to expect. Thanks to your ongoing generosity they are equipped to respond to what they find – the seafarer requiring help with communication home to his family, the crew that haven't been paid, or the crew left in a deeply traumatised and distressed state following the on-board suicide of one of their colleagues. No wonder we are held in such high esteem by the global seafaring community. They know that AoS can be relied upon to offer help in a timely, effective and compassionate manner regardless of faith, race, ethnicity or gender.

Please continue to remember seafarers and the work of AoS in your prayers. The Masses, rosaries and devotions offered for seafarers are a source of tremendous consolation for them. Also, please continue to generously support the work of AoS during these difficult and turbulent economic times. AoS does not receive any statutory funding so we are serious when we say that without the ongoing support of the Catholic community our transformative work with seafarers would not be possible. Mother Angelica, the indomitable founder of the EWTN Catholic satellite television network, used to urge her supporters to remember to send a cheque to EWTN when they were paying their gas, electricity and other household bills. I urge you to do likewise. If you do, we can assure you of the prayers and gratitude of the global seafaring community.

Our Lady, Star of the Sea.
Pray for us.



Goods Import

How long does it take you to make a cup of tea? About 9 seconds?

Have you ever thought about where your tea has come from and how it reached you?



95% of the weight of British goods and trade are carried by sea making merchant shipping vital to the British economy. Every day seafarers work to bring us our everyday items such as tea, coffee, bananas.

According to the Chamber of Shipping, the British maritime sector has an annual turnover of £37 billion, more than the British agriculture and aerospace industries combined. Britain has

the largest maritime sector in Europe, directly employing 250,000 people with as many jobs again relying indirectly on shipping.

Figures from the Department for Trade show that some 150,000 merchant ships visit British ports every year bringing us 354 million tonnes of goods and commodities. As the British Chamber of Shipping website claims:

“Without shipping, the import/export of affordable food and goods would not be possible - half the world would starve and the other half would freeze!”

Seafarers are a hidden workforce. They work to bring us the everyday items we often take for granted. Apostleship of the Sea is a frontline service for the welfare of seafarers.

For your teabag to have reached you for your ‘9 second’ daily cup, it takes a seafarer...

- 9 months at sea
- 9 months away from home
- 9 months with little / no contact with loved ones
- 9 months of harsh conditions

Help us to continue to support fair transport and seafarers’ rights.



AoS Additions

AoS has a New National Director

We are delighted to announce the appointment of Martin Foley as our new National Director.

Martin joined us from the charity LIFE where he was Chief Executive since 2005 and started with us on 1st June 2010.

Following his education at Bishop Walsh RC School, Martin went on to read law at Manchester University, returning there after some years to complete an MA in Health Care, Ethics and Law. He practiced as a solicitor before joining the Houses of Parliament as Clerk to the All-Party Parliamentary Pro-Life Group and Personal Assistant to Lord Alton.

Martin is a Member of the Bishops' Conference Bioethics Committee for England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales and is also a Member of the Ethics Advisory Committee for Banner Ethical Investment Company. Martin is married to Anna-Marie, who is herself a GP, and together they have four children. We wish Martin well in his new post.



A New Chaplain for Plymouth & Teignmouth



My name is Ann Donnelly I have been a Lay Chaplain for Apostleship of the Sea for almost a year. I work part-time and cover the Ports of Plymouth and Teignmouth. Prior to my appointment I had been a ship visitor to the Port of Teignmouth for 6 years. I am married with 5 grown up children and one granddaughter. I have a nursing background and also work as a Clinical Educator at the Universities of Plymouth and Exeter teaching undergraduate medical students. Although my university role is interesting, nothing compares with the work involved with AoS. It

is a privilege to meet with seafarers of all nationalities and offer them practical, emotional and spiritual support when they need it.

A New Chaplain for Fawley & Southampton



Hello, I'm Roger Stone and I'm the Port Chaplain for Sussex & Hampshire based in Southampton. I started at the beginning of June and am thrilled to be able to work alongside a team of volunteers to serve seafarers from all over the world who come into the ports along the south coast of England. Before I came to Southampton I was the Parish Deacon of Billingshurst with Pulborough in West Sussex where I served for nearly four years. The parish didn't have a resident priest and I was privileged to serve the two churches in the parish family.

When I saw the advertisement for Port Chaplain a few months ago I was attracted but didn't know why. I know now. The last seven weeks have been amazing. I've met seafarers from countries I couldn't have put on a map previously and have already been able to help a few who are in serious difficulties. I never imagined that the ministry could be as rewarding as it has proved so far and I am so grateful for the opportunity to serve in this unique ministry. I'm hoping to increase and diversify the number of volunteers along the south coast so if you're reading this and are wondering whether to become more involved, please do contact me and let's see what we can do together.

A New Chaplain for Milford Haven & Pembroke Dock



I am Rev. Fr. Jaime A. Bautista of the Archdiocese of Manila but currently working in the Diocese of Menevia as Parish Priest of St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Milford Haven, Pembrokeshire. I was ordained on the 17th of June in 1995. I feel privileged to have been asked by the Most Reverend Matthew Burns, Bishop of Menevia, to become part of the Apostleship of the Sea.

I have always supported AoS even back in Manila. On February 3rd 2010, I went to Portbury Dock Bristol to observe how a day in the life and work of a port chaplain goes. In the course of that day, I immediately saw how helpful the work and presence of a port chaplain can be in the lives of seafarers. I believe that my being a "people-oriented-kind" of a person will be a good contribution to AoS. I believe that my being a Filipino will surely be a great plus in ministering to seafarers, particularly because a good majority of seafarers coming to port in Great Britain are Filipinos also. Furthermore, I am a person who is curious about and respectful of the different cultures of the world.

AoS Fundraising News

The Great Big Small Charity Car Draw

It's back and it's better than ever! In 2009, hundreds of charities across the UK including Apostleship of the Sea raised money through the FSI Car Draw. It was such a success that it is back to 2010 – with the winner receiving a brand new MINI First and every ticket buyer helping out their own nominated small charity. We have once again registered as a charity with the FSI and are hoping that you will help us by buying lots of tickets. You never know, this year it might be one of our supporters who wins the prize.



The Car Draw is open now and runs until the 6th of September with the winner drawn at the FSI Forum on the 14th of October. So you have plenty of time to get your tickets.

If you would like to support us and buy a ticket for a chance to win this fantastic prize then go to www.thefsi.org/fsi/charityprofile/apostleship-of-the-sea to visit the AoS page on the Charity Car Draw Website. You can also find out more about the car draw here www.smallcharitycardraw.co.uk

Fisherman's Fair

Every year in Jersey there is a Fishermans Fair as part of the Jersey Fish Festival which celebrates the hard work of the local fishermen and is a celebration of the Jersey sea fishing industry. All proceeds of the festival are donated to local maritime charities and AoS Jersey are always present.



Once again this year the Jersey team ran an AoS related stall designed to raise awareness for the work of AoS. They also managed to raise £80 in donations from handing out bottles of water to visitors.

Sea - Wheeling Challenge

60 Towns ... 60 Days ... One Aim!

Sea-Wheeling is a bike ride consisting of 60 towns in 60 days with one aim - to raise funds for AoS.

Riders will join and leave the ride as they wish, or indeed cycle the whole way, each raising sponsorship for their individual efforts. Local TV, press and radio will follow this adventure and at ports where AoS has a presence, there will be an opportunity for riders to meet visiting seafarers.

The idea for this event came from former AoS Trustee David Savage, who a while ago completed a sponsored bike ride. On the 15th November 2008, David rode from Liverpool to Hull, non-stop, on an immense charity bike ride to raise funds for AoS. He rode 215.9 kilometres in a total time of 9 hours and 42 minutes. He reported his average speed was 22.26 kph but that at one point he even got up to 69.88 kph, but that was down a hill!



This challenge only spiked his enthusiasm more and Sea Wheeling was conceived. David himself will be completing this entire new challenge and cycling 60 towns in 60 days. He invites supporters to pick up the route where they can and join him in this incredible challenge!

The first leg of this journey will commence on 3rd September 2010. David will be riding through 12 towns in 12 days from Hull to Weymouth, covering a distance of 596 miles! You can see his route on the map on the page opposite.

[David and AoS are asking for your help!](#)

Could you cycle a leg of the journey and get sponsorship to help seafarers? If you don't think you could cycle would you help David and the other riders by sponsoring them? How about promoting the event in your local area?

If you would like to join or sponsor David and the other riders on this immense challenge then you can visit the JustGiving page at www.justgiving.com/seawheeling to donate online. Or contact Annie at head office on 020 7012 8609 or email annie@apostleshipofthesea.org.uk





Walking on Water



Picture courtesy of the Jersey Evening Post

AoS in Jersey have once again performed a miracle...they ‘walked on water’ to raise funds for Aos. Organised by Terry Brown, a volunteer ship visitor in Jersey, the event saw walkers from all over including the head of the Catholic Church in Jersey, Monsignor Nicholas France, walking the equivalent distance to France along the St Catherines Breakwater. The walkers raised a massive £2500 for their efforts.

Terry and his team were also joined by chaplain Anne McLaren from the Hull ports to represent the mainland. This event was a great success last year, but even more money was raised this year and more walkers took part. Terry and his team are hoping it will now become a well known annual event in the area. Well done walkers!



The Suffolk Saunter



The Orwell Walk has become an annual fundraising event in Ipswich, where people of all ages, shapes and sizes can take part and do a sponsored walk for a charity of their choice. This year our chaplain for Felixstowe, Sr Marian Davey, took part in the walk - or as she called it ‘the Suffolk Saunter’ to raise funds for Aos. Many of the local parishioners and some Aos volunteers offered their support by way of encouragement and sponsorship

which amounted to just over £500.

As it was Marion’s first time she decided to bite off a ‘small chunk’ and just walk the short route option of 11 miles. However, after she joked:

“Needless to say, by the time I finished the walk, my feet felt as if they had completed a circuit of 111 miles! However, it was well worth the effort and I am very grateful for all the support and enthusiasm which I received from friends and Aos supporters.”

2010 Sea Sunday Appeal News

We would like to thank you all for your support of our Sea Sunday Appeal, this year held on Sunday 11th July

As some of you may know, especially those of you who are parish contacts, each year we produce resource material aimed at parish priests to support them and the local churches in celebrating Sea Sunday and the work of seafarers. We encourage priests to use Sea Sunday as the theme for Mass on that day, and to take up a second collection which is our main source of funding each year, enabling us to continue in our support of seafarers.

We understand that there are many collections taken up each week at Mass, and so we are very grateful when parishes find it in their hearts and minds to support AoS and seafarers and take up our collection. This year so far we have almost hit our fundraising target and the donations are still being delivered. So do please continue to think of us at this important time of year.



This year the Catholic Herald made it possible to promote Sea Sunday on the front cover of their paper. Our aim was to raise awareness of the date of the appeal and recruit new supporters. We are very pleased with its success. We have gained quite a few new supporters. We have also received generous donations from new and established donors, and we would like to say a big thank you for responding so positively with your comments and gifts.

A little note about Parish Contacts!

Very often it is parishes with parish contacts that really take on the idea of Sea Sunday and this is why

we are always on the look out for new parish contacts. If you would like to be a parish contact for your church please let us know and we can discuss this in more detail with you, and get you started. If you are interested in becoming a parish contact, please contact Salvina our Parish Co-Ordinator on 020 7012 8602 or email salvina@apostleshipofthesea.org.uk

Sea Sunday 2010: A Message from the Pontifical Council



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

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) has declared 2010 the “YEAR OF THE SEAFARER”. We pay tribute to the 1.5 million seafarers for their unique contribution to society at large. While sailing across the seas of the world many Seafarers find themselves in difficult situations created by nature, but often also by people. We need to increase awareness about these matters.

Seafarers are usually defined as “invisible people”, passing quickly through the ports. The annual celebration of Sea Sunday invites all Christian communities to see and recognise them as “real people” who, with their hard work and sacrifices, make our lives more comfortable.

Seafarers labour differently compared to those who work on land. We do not see them going to work every day. Their contract requires from them to leave wife, children, family and friends for a long period of time. They sail from port to port often in isolated places with little time to go ashore before they sail out again. The perimeter of the vessel is the limit of their world, the confined space of the cabin is their ‘home’. They share their work with people of different nationalities and religions, often using a “Babel of languages” to communicate. For seafarers, loneliness is a constant companion. Injustices are frequent. Moreover in these times of economic crises crews are easily abandoned in foreign ports. “Pirate” attacks are becoming more rampant. When an accident occurs criminalisation and detention are sometimes the price they pay on behalf of the vessel owner or the charterer.

Technological progress has made many changes in the maritime world improving safety and reliability of the vessels. Turn-around time in ports is too fast and brief. However,

what continues unchanged and provided by AoS is that which relates to human needs of seafarers and fishers. These needs are simple: a warm welcome in a foreign country, a vehicle to transport them to the city, a telephone or a computer to connect with their family and loved ones, a priest to celebrate Holy Mass (if they are Catholic) or bless them, a friend to listen to their stories and problems, a volunteer or a pastoral agent to visit them in hospital or in prison.



The Apostleship of the Sea was founded by a small group of committed lay people in Glasgow 90 years ago on the 4th October 1920, to provide spiritual and material assistance to “neglected” Catholic seafarers and to provide for their needs.



Since then it has grown beyond all expectation: 67 countries, 167 ports and more than 400 Stella Maris Centres or outreach stations. Looking back at its humble beginning we can see the providential hand of God in the way in which the AoS has spread throughout the world. Providing pastoral care, especially through ship visiting for seafarers and fishers, remains our main concern as it was at the origin of this Apostolate. Therefore, we would like to encourage everyone to continue to support this “work” hoping that the local Churches will be more and more involved in this pastoral care.

The Apostleship of the Sea, with its network of “Stella Maris” Centres around the world, is always available to respond to the seafarers’ requests, welcoming them to ‘a home away from home’ and making their life a little easier.

The chaplains and volunteers in many ports of the world are visiting hundreds of vessels, welcoming thousands of seafarers of all religions and nationalities offering clothing, telephone cards, money and providing ‘a safe and secure port’ in times of crisis; last but not least, helping to maintain in their lives the openness towards transcendental values.

On the international and national level the Apostleship of the Sea also does advocacy work to promote seafarers’ rights and provide justice for seafarers.

In remembering its 90th FOUNDATION ANNIVERSARY and celebrating the Year of the Seafarer, we would like to make an appeal to speed up the ratification of the 2006 Maritime Labour Convention, a fundamental instrument to improve the working and living conditions of seafarers.



Finally, everyone on this occasion is invited to pause for a moment and pray for them and their families. We recommend to Mary, Star of the Sea, the chaplains and volunteers who every day generously walk along piers, climb gang-ways and show love and concern for “those who for various reasons live and work in the maritime world” (Motu Proprio Stella Maris, Introduction).

+ ***Antonio Maria VegliÒ***
President

+ ***Archbishop Agostino Marchetto***
Secretary



AoS News



Dover & The Medway

Daniel Mulcahy, chaplain to the ports of Dover and the Medway, was invited to speak about the work of the AoS at the Dover Sea Sunday annual Ecumenical Service held at their local RNIL Lifeboat Station.

Daniel spoke of a recent incident he was involved in, in which Zhang Bin, a 33 year old Chinese seafarer, fell and fractured his jaw on a ship in the English Channel on route to La Harve. He was airlifted off along with the bosun who acted as his interpreter. He

underwent surgery at Canterbury hospital during which three metal plates were fitted to his jaw. He was put on a liquid diet as his jaw had been wired up. After his discharge Zhang Bin stayed with Daniel for nearly a week where he was cared for practically and spiritually. The next week, accompanied by a Doctor, he was flown back to Shanghai.

By coincidence, two of the RNIL crew on the life boat that had attended the incident on the 6th were present at the service. They were pleased to hear the outcome of the incident and the fact that the seafarer had survived! He was in a critical state when they had last seen him. A collection for Sea Sunday was then taken up and £92 was raised!



Picture of the Season

This picture was sent to us by Jaqui Kilkerr, volunteer ship visitor in Aberdeen. We love the look on this sea-gulls face.

Do you want your picture to be the next 'Picture of the Season'? If so send us your images, anything goes so long as it's linked to AoS in some way. I am afraid we can only accept digital files (*for quality of print*), so if you have any photos you would like to submit, please email them to marina@apostleshipofthesea.org.uk



Here at AoS we use the term ‘seafarer’ a lot!

But do you now exactly who that means? It’s not just those working on large cargo ships and bulk carriers. Seafarers are all those who live and work at sea, including fishermen and workers on cruise ships and boats.

AoS cares for all seafarers as the two examples below show:

Fishermen Need our Support and Attention



It’s not just seafarers on large cargo ships that we support. As part of our original mandate AoS also supports all migrant workers and this includes fishermen. Often fishermen are not just local to their area; some come from many miles away from different countries to work to make a living. AoS treats these fishermen the same way we do all seafarers and we provide for their pastoral and practical needs. In Macduff, Tina Harris, a

volunteer ship visitor, has been regularly visiting a crew of Filipino Fishermen at the quayside. The fishermen live on their fishing vessels during their six month contracts and hence greatly welcome visits from AoS. They also are unable to regularly and easily contact family and loved ones and so require the help of AoS, just as much as any large ship’s crew.



Cruise Ship Crews Can’t be Forgotten

Deacon Brian Kilkerrr is a regular visitor to the crews on luxury cruise ships that often dock at Invergordon. Recently the AIDAaura cruise liner pulled into port and Deacon Brian arranged for Mass to be celebrated on board for the crew.



He was joined by Fr Anil Gonsalves, himself from India. Fr Gonsalves readily identified with the crew ‘working a long way from home’ and he welcomed the experience of meeting and talking with the crew. The crew were grateful of the chance to practise their faith. Jacqui Kilkerrr, Brian’s wife, and herself a volunteer ship visitor, joined them on board to distribute small faith items. For those on long term contracts it is a great source of strength for them.

2010 The Year of the Seafarer

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) has declared 2010 as the Year of the Seafarer. This was decided during IMO's 102nd session held in London from 29th June to 3rd July.

The idea of this year long celebration is to raise awareness, acknowledge the contribution that seafarers make to global society and to recognise the risks and hardships they endure to bring us the items we often take for granted.

Watch our New Advert

CST Advertising, a large London based advertising agency, have recently completed a short TV advert for AoS.

This advert was created free of charge for AoS and it's aim is to raise awareness of who we are, our cause and to drive people on to our website to learn more about us. The advert comes in two versions, one with a voice over by Sir Robin Knox as a show of his appreciation for the work we do here at AoS. Our advert can now be viewed via the home page of our website at www.apostleshiofthsea.org.uk so please go and have a look.



It's almost Christmas!

Hasn't the time flown! Once again Yule Tide is almost upon us and with it the usual whirlwind of social occasions and celebrations. To help you remember your friends and relations we have once again produced our own range of bespoke Christmas cards and a Calendar for 2011. We have increased the range of cards this year to four different designs, so you can ensure you send the right card to the right person. Our calendar is once again filled with beautiful imagery to see you through the year, and is also ideal as a gift. You will have seen the Christmas leaflet which came in with this copy of Alongside, so please do look at our range for this year and we hope you will place an order with us. As always all profits go towards our work with seafarers.



Ampleforth Students visit Teesport & Hull Ports

A group of Year 12 students (17yr olds) from Ampleforth College recently visited Teesport and Hull ports as guests of Apostleship of the Sea. This was part of a planned day by the College which saw eight different groups of up to 15 students visiting various locations and organisations around the diocese, under the general title of “Here I am among you as one who serves”.

The Teesport group was welcomed to the Seafarers’ Centre by AoS port chaplain Tony McAvoy who gave an overview of the facilities that the Centre has to offer, the types of ships arriving in Teesport and the many seafarers of different nationalities who pass through the port each year.

This was followed by a visit to the deep water berth at Redcar Ore Terminal where a Polish crewed ship was being loaded with coke for export. A visit to Tees dock itself followed when the students had the opportunity to get their bearings and to see up and down the river Tees, and to get a real impression of the scale of operations.

Finally, the group went aboard one of the roll on, roll off freight ferries which visits Tees dock each day. Here they met and conversed with Filipino crew members and the Dutch officers and spent time on the bridge chatting with, and having their questions answered, by Capt Eliander.

In Hull the group was welcomed by Ann MacLaren AoS port chaplain.

They were given a presentation at Hull Seafarers’ Centre about the work of Apostleship of the Sea, a tour of the centre and a visit to the ABP Dock office to view the Vessel Tracker Service.

They then had a tour of the docks and after lunch three of Hull’s volunteer ship visitors came into the centre to explain why they volunteered and were able to answer questions put to them by the students.

Hopefully the students had an enjoyable and informative day and gained an insight into the ministry of the Apostleship of the Sea.



Lasting Friendships

by Tony McAvoy, port chaplain to Teesport



Tony McAvoy, with Leeno to his left and other crewmembers on board the Metsaborg 2010

In the course of a day's Ship Visiting, AoS Chaplains and Ship Visitors naturally meet and spend time with a number of seafarers, often on a 'one to one basis'. Some visits will be short, others longer, but during the time available, it is likely that a bond may be established, however temporary this may turn out to be. In many cases after one visit the ship will leave and the parties may never meet again.

With ships that arrive in port on a regular basis, perhaps passenger or freight ferries, tankers or container ships, the Chaplains and Ship Visitors have the opportunity to really get to know individual seafarers and build lasting friendships through the pastoral and practical care they provide for them.

Ultimately though, the seafarers complete their contract and return home, and it is entirely possible that they will then join another ship at the commencement of the next contract, so will not be seen again.

Such was the case with Leeno; he was the Filipino Bosun on the roll on, roll off freight ferry 'Norsky' and he completed perhaps three separate nine month contracts on board, sailing between Teesport and Zeebrugge. During this time he became friendly with me, and relied upon my regular visits. I would bring news, provide transport, and do whatever I could to improve Leeno's quality of life and that of the other crew members. This was all back at the start of the new Millennium, and, as usual, Leeno eventually went home, subsequently to join another ship which sailed on a different schedule in different waters.

A few weeks ago, I received a call from the Bosun of the MV Metsaborg, a general cargo ship newly arrived in Teesport. Much to my delight the Bosun was Leeno and later that day, after a gap of nine years, I was able to meet him on board, to reminisce about earlier times, and to once again provide pastoral care for him and his current fellow crew members while the ship was in port.

It was incredible, even after a gap of so many years, once we began talking, we were able to recollect all sorts of things about each others families and the hopes and aspirations which we held at the time. The reunion was a wonderful experience, and one which I will never forget. It really meant a lot to me that Leeno remembered the support he had been given by AoS during the time he was a regular visitor to Teesport."

Tim's Tale ...

...A Visit to Sheerness Docks

My name is Timothy Dalgado. I am currently undertaking work experience at the Head Office of the Apostleship of the Sea. During my Work Experience, I was allowed to go along with Salvina Bartholomeusz, AoS Parish Coordinator, to visit Deacon Daniel Mulcahy at the port of Sheerness. During my time at AoS, I had heard a lot about the Seafarer centres and what they did, but I had not witnessed the atmosphere of it first hand.



On Wednesday, 14th July 2010, Salvina and I departed from St. Andrews parish in Thornton Heath and drove down to Sheerness Docks to visit the centre as well as to see what the docks were like. It took us around an hour and a half and we arrived at the centre at around 10.00am to be greeted by Daniel, a full-time AoS Chaplain. There are



13 AoS Chaplains in total, which are comprised of Priests, Deacons, a Nun and Lay men and women. In total, there are 57 ports that these Chaplains look after. Deacon Daniel was very friendly and invited us in to have a look around the centre. Inside the centre were many different things. This included phones and phone cards provided by AoS for the seafarers to phone their families and friends, and also international clocks, so that they could see the different times around the world. It also comprised of coffee machines, religious items such as rosaries and prayer cards, games such as billiards and clothes such as mittens, hats and T-shirts that were donated and knitted by volunteers around Great Britain. The centre seemed very basic, but included all of the things that a seafarer would appreciate after being at sea for several months.

Daniel then took us on a tour of the Sheerness Docks as well as various other Docks such as the Isle of Sheppey that he was in charge of as AoS Chaplain. The Docks seemed very busy and Daniel, Salvina and I saw several different types of cargo such as timber and gravel that were brought onto the Docks by cranes and even new Porsches that Daniel told us were driven onto the Docks into large Car Parks. It was interesting to see how the Docks operated and how everything was stored in warehouses, ready to be sent to Tesco's, car retailers and other various shops. While driving around the Docks, we saw boxes of bananas being lifted from the ships onto the Docks. Forklifts then carried these boxes into the warehouses where they were stored.

While travelling around Sheerness, Daniel gave us a brief history of the Docks. At one of the places we visited Daniel told us about explosives which were located at the bottom of the Sea by several markers that floated upon the top of the Sea. These were remainders of explosives from the Second World War. He told us that the Council had a choice whether to do something about it or not and that they decided to leave them there hoping that over several years the explosives would gradually deteriorate.



Daniel then took Salvina and I to the Lighthouse Café, a local Café in Sheerness and treated us to lunch, after which we set off back to the Seafarers Centre to say our farewells. After we departed home, Salvina told me that she received a phone call from Daniel telling her that just after we left, a ship came in with Spanish Seafarers who were jubilant as a result of Spain's World Cup Finals win over Holland.

Overall, it was a great experience to be able to go and visit the Sheerness Docks and the Seafarers Centre. I had a wonderful time there and I would love to go back there again and possibly be able to go aboard the ships to meet the seafarers and see how they live.

Resolve to Get Involved

Volunteers are invaluable to Apostleship of the Sea. Without them we simply could not sustain our vital work with seafarers. Apostleship of the Sea offers a wide range of volunteer work.



Ship visiting: Volunteer ship visitors go onboard vessels to visit seafarers, approaching them as friends, listening to their concerns and where possible offering practical help.

Driving: Volunteer drivers take seafarers from their ships to seafarers' centres, the local shops and, on some occasions, a local church or hospital.

Fundraising: Volunteers help us by holding fundraising events in their local community.

Parish contacts: We ask parish contacts to be our presence in their local parish and community. They help to fundraise, organise events, help with Sea Sunday in their parish and much more.

Office volunteers: At Head Office we need help with various administrative duties.

If you are interested in volunteering for us please do not hesitate to contact us at the national office on info@apostleshipofthesea.org.uk or call 020 7058 88285

Winner - Caption Competition



Former Shipping Minister, Jim Fitzpatrick, on a ship visit with Fr Colum Kelly AoS chaplain to Immingham.

Congratulations to Mr Bernard Evans from Swansea. His entry was chosen by Captain Paul Quinn as the winner in our recent competition. He won a £10 M&S voucher kindly supplied by Captain Quinn.

His caption:

“If you wanted more sugar you should have said before we got all the way up here!”

Here are a few more of our favourite entries:



“Jim, I know you are not happy about the mug, but I’ve had to drink mine out of my helmet.” – Highly Commended
Gerard Moan – Paignton, Torbay



“In my Ministry we believe in the natural look. At least mine won’t blow away” – Highly Commended
Mrs A. Coelho – Bognor Regis, W.Sussex



“That was our last tea bag, I had water myself.”
Cath Morris – Bridgnorth, Shropshire



“If you put this helmet on, we’ll look more alike” said Fr. Colum
Bernard Dobson – Leeds



“Jim, so much for being second only to Gypsy Rose Lee in your ability to read a tea cup. With the crew all on shore leave and the ship now drifting in the mid-channel, I so think you could have given us some warning!”
Jeremy Harnock – Bingley, W.Yorkshire



“Its really quite simple, Mr Fitzpatrick. To some God gave hair, and to others, brains.”
Graham Drake – Castleford, W.Yorks