

# Apostleship of the Sea of the United States of America (AOS-USA)

*Seafarer Morale and Welfare*

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*October 16, 2019*

# Introduction

## Who is AOS-USA?

- Apostleship of the Sea is the Catholic Ministry to seafarers, fishers, port workers, and all People of the Sea world-wide.
- AOS-USA is a unique professional Membership association comprised of AOS Port Chaplains, Cruise Ship Priests, Catholic Mariners, and all others who are dedicated to the well being of mariners. It calls each person to provide for the welfare needs of mariners from his/her own unique vantage point.

# What does AOS-USA do?

- Advocate for Seafarers on issues concerning their well being, safety, and spirituality
- Train and educate our members to improve their interaction with mariners and how to address seafarer welfare issues
- Encourage our members to actively promote their faith and make themselves more sensitive to seafarer and shipmate morale

# Welfare and Morale

- This presentation focuses on Foreign Mariners
- Repetitive issues on slides
- Many Port Welfare groups see no need to service their national seafarers
- M.L.C. and seafarer Welfare
- Fewer volunteers
- Crew morale dependent on ship and company culture

# Port Welfare groups

- NAMMA, ICMA, AOS, Seaman's Church
- Multi-faith Seamen's centers
  - More ports consolidating facilities
- Foreign seafarer focus
  - Attitude in many US ports US mariners don't need a ship visit
- Port location accessible to seafarers
  - Port Welfare groups looked at as taxis

# Observed Seafarer Issues

- Fatigue
- Long work tours
- Lack of Social Interaction onboard
- Restricted shore liberty
- Operational pressures
- Loneliness and depression
- Increased suicide rate among mariners of all nations

# Other observations

- Friction between cultures and shipmates onboard, bullying
  - Engine versus Deck
- Off duty Crew invisible in Port
- Crew only seek transportation ashore
- Many US flag ships turn us away at gangway citing operational needs and not on approved visitor list

# Port Welfare challenges

- Are Port ministries just free taxi services?
- Are Seamen's centers worth the expense?
- Is shipboard social interaction a thing of the past?
- Has internet access and social media worsened loneliness and depression onboard?
- We must become a ministry of listening versus preaching



# Seafarer Welfare Resources

- International and National hotlines
- Union and company HR resources
- Shipmates
- Port ministries / Seamen's centers

# AOS-USA



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