



APOSTLESHIP OF THE SEA

Mariners' Club
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Stella Maris

November 21, 2017

Appeal Letter for Funds in support of the Apostleship of the Sea (AOS) Seafarers' and St. Peter's Community Centre

Introduction

The Constitution of the Apostleship of the Sea (A.O.S.) states: "The object is to promote the spiritual, moral and physical well-being of seafarers and their families worldwide and that in pursuance of this object it will use any means consistent with Christian principles and the received practice of the Church."

A quote from our past Chaplain- "*Because of the mainly practical nature of our work, the A.O.S has been perceived by many people mainly within the industry, to be a seafarers' welfare organization. In the face of this, we have been at pains to declare that we are a missionary society of the Catholic church and that our work is a response to a gospel imperative.*"

He goes on to say, "*The society has adopted its ministry to changed circumstances, acknowledging the fact that there is no part of the church which has greater ecumenical involvement and experience, that is deeply involved in dialogue with people of other faiths every day; and that through almost every member of staff it is daily involved in issues of social justice*"

Background

Within the over 40 years recent-history of the Apostleship Of the Sea, since the momentous decision of the Anglican and Roman Catholic Bishops to "join the two societies" in 1969, the AOS Centre has been working in close collaboration with the Missions to Seamen existing as a haven for the continuing work that aims to provide invaluable services supporting the physical, social and spiritual needs of the seafarers as well as the community around and even beyond Hong Kong.

From its current location within the Mariners' Club Building in Tsim Sha Tsui and with the blessed support from the Missions to Seamen under the leadership of Senior Chaplain Rev. Stephen Miller, the AOS inspired by Fr. Valan and assisted by the Apostleship Of the Sea Council, working as the Joint-centre is now home to the work and services of various maritime community groups including the German and Danish Seamen's Missions all of whom have occasion to celebrate in God's name in the St. Peter's Church, within the Mariners Club, T.S.T. Hong Kong.

The St. Peter's Church was founded originally to support the spiritual well-being of the seafarers that come to Hong Kong. Through the years, with the active leadership of all past and current Chaplains, the community has grown and expanded not only in its membership but also in terms of the services, sponsorships and support that it is able to extend within and even outside of Hong Kong.

"Be to me a rock of refuge to which I may continually come." – Psalm 71:3

Today, the beneficiaries of the services, sponsorships, charities and other support are not only the seafarers. These extend to their families in and outside of Hong Kong, members of relevant maritime organizations, local residents within the area and other foreign workers.

The AOS centre has long been hosting the works of the AOS and the St Peter's Church under the leadership of its Chaplain extends beyond the basic religious and spiritual services to many various community and social activities such as:

- Apostolic work for seafarers, regular visits to ships both at the anchorages and those berthed at the various marine terminals in Hong Kong
- Apostolic work for seafarers such as visits to hospitals, prisons, when seamen are involved
- Apostolic work for parishioners and other residents focused on the mission to continuously grow the AOS and St Peter's Church community
- Weekday, Sundays and Special days liturgical services
- Baptisms, Weddings and Funeral services
- Fund raising and charitable works supporting various projects and charities through donations (i.e. Mariner's Club, AOS Int'l Rome, AOS regional conferences, Caritas, natural disasters, medical and other special needs of the seafarers, aid to refugees)
- Fellowship activities from various groups
- Social activities that foster the community spirit

Through all these, undoubtedly, the AOS centre with the St Peter's Church has been known to be more than just as a place or a structure in the Tsim Sha Tsui area. This haven is recognized and considered by many as an active part of forming and growing a community not only from within but also as an active contributor to the care and welfare of those around it.

With the growing support and dedication of the people within the community, The St Peter's Church collections from various contributions continuously increased year-on-year from about HK\$ 250,000 in 2008 to something close to HK\$ 400,000 this year. It is through these that the church is able to continue its works and in reaching out to as many that are in need.

Early in 2017, the plan to close the current Mariners' Building to pave the way for the construction and development of a new, modern high-rise building was announced. The project is planned to commence in February 2018 and the completion is estimated after 4 to 5 years.

The project for the new, bigger and modern building is one that many look forward to with much enthusiasm. For one, the plan also guarantees a place for the AOS centre and likewise the St Peter's Church upon completion.

However, the question many have is what will become of the community during the 4-5 years?

Our goal

Finding an "interim home" for the AOS centre and St Peter's Church community and its works as it steps out of the current location in the coming months, probably as soon as December 2017, as indicated by the recent information received via the general committee of the Mariners' Club.

This will be for a period of 4 to 5 years until the new building is completed for it to move in.

Purpose

- Provide a seamless transition between the current and future "home/location" of the AOS centre
 - Continue the apostleship and mission in sustaining and growing the members and the community in numbers as well as in their spiritual and social well-being through the St Peter's Church
 - Support uninterruptedly the work of the community and parishioners that are all dedicated to raise funds, support various charities, projects and needs of seafarers. families, and the rest of those in need
 - A haven for the continuing activities of all the current groups supported by the AOS
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Action Plan: Finding the "interim home"

Under the leadership of The St Peter's Church Chaplain, Father Valan and Capt. Joseph Fonseka, a search was launched that led us to the proposed location for the "interim home" for the AOS Centre

and St Peter’s Church: **ADDRESS: 3rd Floor, Chi Wo Commercial Building, No. 20 Saigon Street, Kowloon**

Supporting the preparation and the monthly operating costs for the 4-5 years period will be funded by The St Peter’s church through its regular collections and fundraising activities. As with the past years, we count on the grace of God and the benevolence of the community to provide for the modest needs to maintain the operations of the church and the AOS centre.

Budget

- **One-time cost** for the modest renovation is estimated between **HK\$ 600K to HK\$700K**
- Continuing day-today expenses that will support the full operation of the AOS centre and the St Peter’s Church is projected in terms of estimated operating expenses under a planned budget

Estimated Operating Expense (HK\$)	Monthly	Full-year
Rental fee	63,000	756,000
Other fees (Bdlg. Mgt fee, Gov’t rate)	9,000 +	108,000 +
Admin/Staff (salary, allowances, etc.)	10,000 +	120,000 +
Utilities (Electricity, water, telecom, etc.)	15,000	180,000
Logistics (supplies, transportation, etc)	6,000 +	72,000 +
Fund (charities & donations, funerals, educational, travel, food etc.)	9,000 +	108,000 +
TOTAL	112,000 +++	1,344,000 +++

Therefore, we appeal to everyone to come to our help. We need committed sponsors who could pledge donations towards this plan for five years. Any committed amount great or small is welcome.

Thank you and May God bless you abundantly for your generosity.

Yours sincerely,

Captain Joseph Fonseka

Chairman of the Apostleship of the Sea, Hong Kong Council.

Father Valan Arasu Arockiaswamy SVD

Chaplain of the Apostleship of the Sea.

Methods of donation: Donations can be made on a regular monthly, yearly or a one go basis.

1. Crossed check payable to: "Apostleship of the Sea"
2. Direct deposit into: "Apostleship of the Sea" account:
Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (Asia) Limited,
Account No. 705 010 000589
3. Cash: Enclose cash in a sealed envelope with indicated amount on it.
Hand envelope directly to Fr. Valan
4. Tax deductible receipt will be issued for donation of HK\$ 100 or above upon request.
5. For enquiries, please contact Fr. Valan: 9774 1279 / ava1810@yahoo.com

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3 November 2017

Rev. Valan Arasu Arockiaswamy, SVD
Port Chaplain
Marina's Club
11 Middle Road
Tsim Sha Tsui
Kowloon

Dear Fr. Valan,

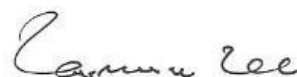
**Re: Fund-raising Plan for renting an "Interim Home" for
Apostleship of the Sea (AOS) Centre and St. Peter's Church**

I refer to your letter of 30 October 2017 regarding the above-captioned matter.

The above-captioned matter was brought up at the last meeting of Bishop Michael Yeung with the Board of Diocesan Consultors. On the understanding that the carrying out of the fund-raising plan is really necessary to sustain the services of the AOS Centre and St. Peter's Church in the coming 4 – 5 years before the completion of the new, upgraded building replacing the current Mariner's Building, I am pleased to inform you that approval is hereby granted for the proposed plan.

With prayerful best wishes,

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Rev. Lawrence Lee
Chancellor

cc: Bishop Michael Yeung
Rev. Benedict Lam, VG