



HLI MISSION REPORT

Pro-Life Missionaries to the World®

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By Mario Rojas

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Dear HLI friends and supporters,

This month, HLI Coordinator for Latin America, Mario Rojas, reports from Central and South America. First, Mario reports from Uruguay, which, although still protected by pro-life laws, has a fertility rate of a dismal 1.89 children per family. Next, Mario reports from Mexico, where, three years after the legalization of abortion in Mexico City, HLI sent in its missionaries to bolster up pro-life leaders and seminarians.

MISSIONARY TRIP TO URUGUAY—Reported by Mario Rojas, November 4-10, 2010

The Oriental Republic of Uruguay is located in the southeastern part of South America. Its current population is 3,510,386 (as estimated in July 2010). The capital is Montevideo, which is a cosmopolitan city where at least 50% of the country's population makes their living.

According to a 2010 estimate, Uruguay's population is getting older as



compared to other countries in South America. Currently about 22% of the population is below 14 years of age; 64% of the population is between 15 and 64 years; and 14% are 65 years old and over.

According to demographic experts, a fertility rate of 2.11 children per family is required to maintain a language, tradition, culture, etc. over time. Unfortunately, **Uruguay has a fertility rate of about 1.89 children per family**; and if those figures do not change, Uruguay runs the risk of becoming an older society with fewer people contributing to the economic development of the country.

URUGUAY'S SECULARISM

With its strict separation of Church and State, Uruguay has experienced a strong movement towards secularism since the beginning of the 20th century. Today, very few young people practice any form of religion at all, despite it being a predominantly Catholic society. According to a 2006 census, the following are the percentage breakdowns of the different religions:

- Roman Catholic 47.1%
- Non-Catholic Christians 11.1%
- Nondenominational 23.2%
- Jewish 0.3%
- Atheist or agnostic 17.2%
- Other 1.1%



Secularism is so strong in Uruguay that very few people speak about God or the devil in public events, or they just do not think they are important issues.

THE PRO-LIFE WISDOM *of* FR. PAUL MARX THE APOSTLE OF LIFE



Fr. Paul Marx

The knowledge that abortion is available contributes to irresponsible sexual behavior, which in turn contributes to more unwanted pregnancies to be erased by abortion. Sexual irresponsibility and abortion thus sustain each other in an ever-widening spiral as both become ever more socially and morally acceptable under the educative influence of a permissive law.

— *The Death Peddlers*, pages 177-178.

GOVERNMENT POLICIES AGAINST LIFE AND FAMILY VALUES

The current government is part of a Broad Front coalition that came to power for the first time during the 2004 presidential elections and won a second mandate in 2009. At the head of this coalition is a former leftist guerrilla, Jose Mujica, who took up office on March 1, 2010 after having won a run-off election against the conservative former president, Luis Lacalle, with about 53% of the vote. Mr Mujica was a co-founder of the left-wing Tupamaros urban guerrilla movement during the 1960s and was imprisoned during the 1973-1985 military dictatorship.

The Broad Front Coalition has been pushing to approve policies and laws that go against life and family values. Among their advances are the following:

APPROVAL OF GAY CIVIL UNIONS - NOV 2007

Uruguay's Congress approved a bill in November 2007 that allowed civil unions for both gay and unmarried straight couples. It is the first country in Roman Catholic-dominated Latin America to approve such a measure nationwide. But gay "marriage" remains illegal in Uruguay.

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH LAW – DECEMBER 2008

Uruguay's President, Tabare Vazquez, signed a law on December 1, 2008, guaranteeing the full exercise of sexual and reproductive rights for the entire population; and for that purpose, the State will promote national policies of sexual and reproductive health, develop new programs, and organize services to implement them according to the specified principles and norms (Law No. 18426).

APPROVAL OF ADOPTION BY SAME-SEX COUPLES – SEPTEMBER 2009

In September 2009, same-sex couples in Uruguay were allowed to adopt children following the approval of a controversial bill by the country's senate. With this move, Uruguay became the first Latin American country to allow gay couples to adopt.

A near future threat is the possibility of legalized abortion. The forces in the Uruguayan Legislative Assembly in favor of and against abortion are even at the present time, but there is a lot of pressure by international organizations to advance the legalization of abortion as a human right.

OBJECTIVES OF THE MISSION TRIP

Taking into account the many challenges to the Culture of Life in Uruguay, HLI determined to make a missionary trip there in order to speak to as many key players of society as possible about life and family issues and the threats of the culture of death. This mission trip was made possible largely due to the cooperation of Asociacion Esperanza Uruguay, the local affiliate of HLI in that country, and Fr. Manuel Perez, Vicar of the Family Pastoral of the Archdiocese of Montevideo. The missionaries sent there were Fr. Juan Carlos Chavez, Director of the Latin American Network of Priests and Seminarians for Life (REDESSVIDA) and myself, Mario Rojas, HLI Latin American Coordinator.

As a result, lectures were given at several universities, seminaries, schools, convents, and at the Uruguayan Legislative Assembly. There were also several radio and newspaper interviews given in which we discussed the threats of population control and how to promote the Gospel of Life.

LECTURES TO CONTEMPLATIVE NUNS

It is well known that Uruguay is experiencing a shortage of vocations for priests and nuns, and the impact seems very similar to what the European society is experiencing at the present time. Basically, people are getting married at an older age because of economic or other reasons, and as a result, fewer children are being born into families.

We made a special effort on this mission trip to visit as many convents of contemplative nuns as possible in order to seek special prayers for the triumph of the Culture of Life over the culture of death. We visited five convents and spoke to 62 nuns. In our visits, **we asked the nuns to commit to pray the Pro-life prayer of Pope John Paul II for the next 5 years.** After one of the lectures at a Convent of Visitation in Progreso, Uruguay, one contemplative nun had this to say:

“We are really concerned about the reality that we are

Pro-life Prayer of Pope John Paul II

O Mary, we entrust to you the cause of life. Look down upon the vast numbers of babies not allowed to be born.

Grant all who believe in your Son to proclaim the Gospel of Life.

Obtain for them the grace to accept the Gospel as a gift ever new, to bear witness to it resolutely, to the praise and glory of God, the Creator and Lover of Life. Amen.

living, and after hearing about the current threats of the culture of death, we are committed to praying against the powers of evil.”

LECTURE AT THE FACULTY OF THEOLOGY

We gave one of the most important lectures in Uruguay at the Faculty of Theology to **42 seminarians from three different seminaries and eight priests**. A key aspect of the lecture was to expose the process of what is promoted as “safe sex”; namely, that “safe sex” means using contraception to avoid pregnancy, and since its reliability is not 100%, unwanted pregnancies occur, some of which lead to abortion and post abortion syndrome.

LECTURE AT FAMILY PASTORAL

Another challenge was a lecture we presented on the culture of death and population control to 30 leaders of the Family Pastoral of the Archdiocese of Montevideo, Uruguay. After the lecture, many leaders showed their concern at the acceptance of contraception by so many Catholics in Uruguay. This is an area that the Catholic Church needs to work harder on in Uruguay.

LECTURES TO YOUTH GROUPS AT SCHOOLS AND PARISHES

At the request of Asociacion Esperanza Uruguay, several lectures were offered to youth groups on the Christian view of sexuality and the importance of chastity and abstinence as part of an integral love. In general, the subject matter was well received, especially when data was used to clarify issues. After the lecture, many pro-life leaders, educators and youth were interviewed. Maria Jose del Campo, a Pro-life leader of Asociacion Esperanza Uruguay had the following to say:

“The lectures presented by Fr. Juan Carlos Chavez and Mario Rojas of Human Life International were excellent. They spoke to many groups in parishes, schools, and universities about life and family issues that are not often mentioned in our country. The information provided was very valuable; it will help us reach more people in the near future.... We are very thankful for their efforts and for adapting themselves to the requirements of the local environment...”

CONCLUSION

The visit to Uruguay was a great challenge because the population in general is more concerned about economic problems and tends to consider life and family issues as less important. Under this scenario, raising the importance of life and family issues was not an easy task. But it was made possible thanks to the cooperation of small pro-life groups, led by the Asociacion Esperanza Uruguay and the Family Pastoral of the Archdiocese of Montevideo.



Mario Rojas (far right) and Fr. Juan Carlos Chavez with the nuns of the Convent of Visitation.



Lecture at the Faculty of Theology (above) and the Family Pastoral (below) in Uruguay.



And, of course, none of these efforts would have been possible without the gracious donations from our benefactors. Let us help Uruguay promote the Gospel of Life. You can make it possible!

MISSIONARY TRIP TO MEXICO—Reported by Mario Rojas, October 2010

Catholicism is still the main religion in the Republic of Mexico (76.5%, according to the 2000 census), but secularism is very strong, especially in key areas like Mexico City. Remnants of the 1920s persecution of the Church (when even the public celebration of the Mass was banned) are still visible in cities like Morelia, in the state of Michoacan, where many churches, seminaries and schools that were taken over by the State at that time are still kept as museums. **In the ranks of government, the Mexico City Legislature at the head of the Revolutionary Democratic Party (PRD) has been very proactive in favor of ultra-feminist policies since coming to power in 2007.**

ANTI-LIFE AND ANTI-FAMILY POLICIES

On March 16, 2007 a law was passed authorizing the first civil partnerships among same-sex couples, which gave gay “couples” the same inheritance rights as heterosexuals. And on August 16, 2010 the Mexican Supreme Court decided to allow adoptions by same-sex couples.¹

On April 24, 2007 the newly elected Mexico City Legislature, led by the majority Revolutionary Democratic Party (PRD), presented and approved the legalization of abortion up to 12 weeks of pregnancy. However, to make it less dramatic, the law did not call it “abortion.” **Instead, it called it “Legal Interruption of Pregnancy”** (or, “Interrupcion Legal del Embarazo” in Spanish). To make matters more confusing, the Legislative Assembly *did* use the term abortion when referring to the 13th week of pregnancy, at which time the action is to be punishable by law.



1. The law applied only in Mexico City, but other states must respect adoptions by homosexual couples made in the capital.

IRA Charitable Distribution Extended for 2011

If you're over 70½ and have an IRA, you are required by law to take a minimum disbursement.

You can do this by making an IRA Charitable Distribution to Human Life International.

IRA distributions to HLI will be excluded from federal taxable income.

For information on how to make the transfer, contact Bill Williams at 540-622-5285 or at wwilliams@hli.org

Since the legalization of abortion in Mexico City, pro-abortion NGOs (non-government agencies) have enjoyed the full support of the authorities of Mexico City Government in the promotion of Sexual and Reproductive Health Services. These NGOs include: Catholics for Free Choice, International Planned Parenthood Federation, the Mexico City office of Marie Stopes, Ipas, and many more. As a result, at the present time the city offers legal abortion in 14 so-called “health centers,” and so far **over 45,000 abortions have been performed and over 20 maternal deaths have been recorded from legal abortion.**

PRO-LIFE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

In response to Mexico City’s decision to permit legal abortion to any woman in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy, and despite the fact that abortion was already illegal everywhere but Mexico City, 17 states have passed constitutional amendments declaring that life begins at conception.

HLI MISSION TRIP

It was exactly three years after abortion was legalized in Mexico City that I visited the country, along with Fr. Juan Carlos Chavez, HLI’s Director of the Latin American Network of Priests and Seminarians for Life (REDESSVIDA). Our trip was coordinated with the help of Comite Provida, HLI’s local affiliate in Mexico.

The main objective of our visit to Mexico was to visit key Catholic seminaries and speak to seminarians and priests about the Gospel of Life as part of a Pastoral service within a parish (and better yet within a diocese) and to encourage them to be part of the Network to spread the Gospel of Life among priests and seminarians. At every seminary we visited, we discussed the culture of death at length, and we especially treated the question of how “safe sex” leads to the wide use of contraception, which leads to unwanted pregnancy and abortion.

LECTURES IN MEXICO CITY AND GUADALAJARA

With the blessing of Cardinal Norberto Rivera Carrera, Primate of Mexico and Archbishop of Mexico City, and Cardinal Juan Sandoval Iñiguez, Archbishop of Guadalajara, we made visits to and lectures at the Diocesan seminaries of Tlalnepantla, Conciliar and Guadalajara. We also spoke at La Joya Seminary of the Legionnaires of Christ, where **we presented to 607 seminarians, 18 priests, 2 lay teachers and one bishop** the question of how to help women experiencing unwanted pregnancies, and also those who are suffering with post-abortion syndrome, as part of a Pastoral for Life at a parish or diocese level. The message was well received and resulted in the majority of seminarians registering to be part of the Network.

VISIT AND LECTURE TO CONTEMPLATIVE NUNS IN MEXICO CITY

As members of the REDESSVIDA project, we strongly believe in the power of prayer for the triumph of the Gospel of Life.

Therefore, we could not pass up the opportunity to visit an order of contemplative nuns as part of our mission trip. There, we explained to the nuns how the culture of death is already influencing our daily lives, and we encouraged them to pray for all involved in this fight for life!



From left to right: Assistant Dean of the Seminary, Victoria Saracho of Comite Provida, Fr. Juan Carlos Chavez, Fr. Jose Antonio Orozco, Dean of the Seminary and Mario Rojas of HLI.

LECTURES AT THE ARCHDIOCESE OF MORELIA IN THE STATE OF MICHOACAN

In the state of Michoacan, as in other regions of Mexico, there is a feeling of despair because of the presence of so-called drug cartels that are spreading violence and murder. Under these conditions, it is ever more urgent to preach the Gospel of Life .

With the blessing of Monsignor Alberto Suarez Inda, Archbishop of Morelia, several lectures were given to Morelia Diocesan Seminary, Missionaries Servers of the Word Seminary, leaders of the Family Pastoral of the Archdiocese of Morelia, medical doctors, nurses and nurse students of a Catholic Hospital, pro-life leaders and prep schools. In this effort we reached: 160 seminarians, 10 nuns, 5 priests, 50 leaders of the Family Pastoral, 30 pro-life leaders, 20 medical doctors, 70 students of a nurse school and 210 preparatory school students.

The results were quite amazing, and can perhaps be summed up by the testimony of Fr. Benjamin Osornio Morales, the Coordinator of the Family Pastoral of the Archdiocese of Morelia, who after a lecture to his groups had the following comments:

“I feel very motivated with this lecture, ... I truly believe that I have been evangelized, as it contributed to open my eyes and heart to face this fight in favor of the culture of life that every human being should be part of, and especially those of us Catholics. Thank you so much for your presence among us. ... May God continue to bless this work so that you continue to promote the Gospel of Life”

DEVOTION TO OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

During the visit to Mexico one thing was very common among Mexicans: the strong devotion that they have for our Blessed Mother, Our Lady of Guadalupe. Every Sunday from sunset to sundown there are pilgrimages to the Sanctuary in Mexico City led by delegations of people that travel from different parts of the country, and they all converge at the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Guadalupe, where Mass services are held every hour, all day long.

On Sunday, October 24 (Day of Missions), Fr. Juan Carlos Chavez, Director of REDESSVIDA was hoping to participate in the celebration of Mass at the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City, and when he asked about the possibility of participating in the Mass services, he was granted the privilege of being the main celebrant. It was a day that Fr. Juan Carlos will never forget, because **he was able to celebrate Mass for at least 10,000 persons and his homily included a strong call for the right to life from the moment of conception to natural death.**

CONCLUSION

The visit to Mexico was gratifying because the lectures helped create more awareness about the right to life from the moment of conception to natural death and the willingness to establish strategies and alliances among



Above and below: Lecture at Seminary Misioneros Servidores de la Palabra en Morelia.

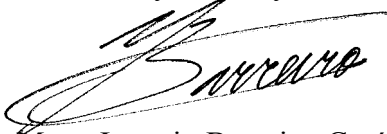


Catholic groups, the Church hierarchy, and other pro-lifers in this great nation of Mexico. One clear result is the commitment to organize a first pro-life event in Mexico for priests and seminarians sometime in September of 2011.

None of these efforts would have been possible without the gracious donations from our benefactors. Mexico is a key country for the abortion industry right now, and every effort must be pursued to stop its advances; otherwise, the rest of Latin America will become an easier target.

Dear friends, with the culture of death's strength growing and being supported by governments that once support the Church, HLI's mission is ever more critical to assist pro-lifers in these areas, who defend the defenseless and courageously proclaim the Gospel of Life! Please send your gift this month, and know that your greatly appreciated contribution is what keeps our missionaries on the front lines of this battle.

God bless you always!



Msgr. Ignacio Barreiro-Carámbula
Interim President

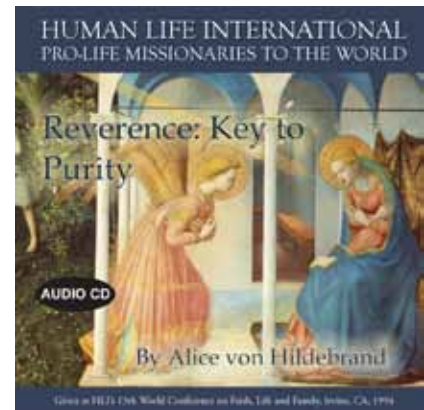
P.S.—This month, to thank you for your contribution of \$49 or more, I'd like to send you an audio CD of a talk by Alice von Hildebrand called, **“Reverence: Key to Purity.”**

Dr. Alice von Hildebrand presents this talk on the connection between reverence and purity. Why is it that society judges a woman much more harshly for sexual sins than a man? **Because it is within a woman that God chose to create new life.** The creation of life is a mystery that needs to be veiled with reverence and respect.

Those who are reverent and respectful toward their bodies and those of others, with God's grace, will maintain their purity. Many in society treat people like animals and detach the “marital act” from the reverence it deserves. They accept it and promote it in the wrong context and thus betray its sacredness.

With the help of this talk, **help spread the truth and reclaim the marital act for what it really is: a sacred union between a married man and woman for the co-creation with God of a new life made in His image and likeness.**

Please send HLI your gift of \$49 or more this month, and let me send this talk to you today!



“Reverence: Key to Purity” is our gift to you this month in appreciation for your financial support of \$49 or more!