



# Mission Report

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- \* **Culture of Death Affecting Vocations in Lesotho**
- \* **Help HLI Save Lives with Your IRA Distribution**
- \* **“Stop Abortion” Initiative Likely to Pass in Poland**

*Left: HLI's Dr. Ligaya Acosta, speaking in Poland, where HLI has fought for years against the Culture of Death, and now the fruits of that fight are beginning to show.*

Dear Pro-Life Friend in Christ,

In this issue of *Mission Report*, Emil Hagamu reports from Lesotho, Africa, where he was able to proclaim the message of life to 1,769 students in seven high schools. Lesotho is affected by the Culture of Death in many ways, one of which is a lack of vocations. With fewer vocations and smaller families comes a large elderly demographic with no one to take care of them. The attitude of the schools in life issues is critical as Lesotho's population declines.

Also in this issue, we present a way for retirees to reduce taxable income and benefit HLI at the same time. Thanks to a legislation passed by Congress, you can make a gift to HLI directly from your IRA. See the article on page six to find out why this kind of the donation might be right for you.

Our final report is good news from Poland, where the citizens' initiative "Stop Abortion" has just passed its first stage of parliament. The initiative was passed by a "conscience vote," where all members of parliament are allowed to vote their consciences instead of voting based on party. It is encouraging to know that Poland has such a pro-life parliament. In spite of George Soros spending millions of dollars to influence the public mind, there are less than 1,000 abortions committed in Poland each year. It may take time, but "Stop Abortion" is expected to ultimately pass.

My dear friends, our efforts in standing for Life and Family would not be possible without your dedicated support. On behalf of the HLI family, I thank you and wish you every blessing of Almighty God.

Yours in Christ and in Our Lady,

Fr. Shenan J. Boquet  
President, Human Life International



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President

## MISSIONARY TRIP TO LESOTHO

*By Emil Hagamu, Regional Director of Anglophone Africa, September 2016*

Lesotho is a romantic and aesthetically pleasing country, and my mission trip there was equally pleasurable. Accompanied by Sr. Celestina Tiheli of the Holy Cross Congregation, who is HLI's contact person in that country, I was able to tour nearly half of the country. **In the course of one week I visited three dioceses, met three bishops, talked to 1,769 school students in seven high schools, and made one radio interview.** I also visited St. Augustine Major Seminary in Roma for a talk with the pro-life club chaplain, Fr. Maricki. Fortunately, as has been the case everywhere I visit, students and teachers showed a great interest in the pro-life message and promised to organize their own pro-life clubs. This tour was made possible by a pick-up car that I was given by Bishop John Tihomola of Mochale's Hoek diocese. I must confess my driving ability has never been tested more than during this time in the mountainous country of Lesotho. There were points in my trip when the roads were so steep that a small driving mistake could cause a catastrophic accident. I thank God for allowing me to drive safely to spread His Praise and Glory.

## CHRISTIANITY AND RELIGIOUS LIFE

Lesotho is said to be a Christian country because over 65% of its population claims to be Christian or Catholic. The country has one metropolitan see: the Archdiocese of Maseru, formed by dioceses of Maseru, formed by dioceses Leribe, Qacha's Neck, Mochale's Hoek, and Maseru. The Basotho people live simple lives in remote villages separated by mountains and hills. Vocations to the priesthood and religious life are declining drastically. While touring the convent of the Holy Cross Sisters, I noticed that most of the nuns were over 50 years old. The Mother Superior told me that most girls leave the convent just



Emil Hagamu, HLI Regional Director of Anglophone Africa, addressing students at Christ the King High School on pro-life issues during recent visit to Lesotho.

a few years after joining because they find religious life boring. In my conversation with the Superior General, I told her that the Culture of Death, which is predominant in Lesotho, is the major cause of decline in vocations. This Culture of Death is perpetuated by the contraceptive mentality and the abortion culture. **The choice for smaller families, which the people of Basotho have copied from their giant neighbor South Africa, is becoming disastrous to priestly and religious life.**



### **THE SCHOOLS' PRO-LIFE PROGRAM**

I was impressed by the hospitality of the principals of the schools we visited. Although it was time for examinations, the teachers at each school gave us a warm welcome and at least two hours to share the pro-life message with the students. I spoke to 250 students at St. Thomas High School, 110 at Maentle High School, 204 at Holy Cross High School, 460 and Masembana High School, 165 at Hemittage High School, and 450 at Christ the King Girls' High School. With the help of a Power Point Presentation, Sr. Celestina and I demonstrated the sanctity of every unborn human life by displaying fetal development models. The "Window to the Womb" video was particularly effective, as **students were able to see how a baby grows, moves around in the womb, squints, laughs, cries, breathes, shows facial expressions, and hears her mother's voice.** Sr. Celestina and I also gave talks on the evil that abortion does to the mother, to the child, and to the abortionist. I told them there is no empirical or moral justification for abortion and highlighted how contraceptive use leads to psychological, moral, social, and spiritual disaster. Lesotho is a dying nation. The population has experienced a decline from 2.2 million 15 years ago to just 1.8 million currently. Why? Because families in Lesotho have embraced whole-scale use of contraception and are greatly engaged

in abortion practices which, according to Most Rev. Gerald Tlali Lerotholi, Archbishop of Maseru, are advertised in local and foreign newspapers as being "painless, cheap, simple and rewarding."

### **THE GIFT OF THE ELDERLY**

I was blessed to also visit the elderly nuns at Holy Cross Sisters Convent in Maseru's Hoek and the religious brothers and priests at Mazinod Center in Maseru. In spite of old age, their faces were shining and their mouths were full of laughter. They were very grateful to see me because, they said, they were not used to people visiting them. I was very happy to see them too, especially Fr. Lawrence Tanki Motsi, former HLI Director in Lesotho, who has become incapacitated due to a brain tumor. He seems to have partially lost memory, but he was happy to receive my handshake and words of encouragement. The elderly



**Emil Hagamu visiting the elderly of Holy Cross Sisters at the Convent in Lesotho.**

are also directly affected by the Culture of Death. As vocations decline, the number of elderly increase and the number of those attending them decrease.

In the eyes of these elderly and sick, I saw the merciful God, the giver of life. I was drawn to reflect on my own future old age, and reminded of those in my own family. My father stayed with me until his death in 2005. My mother is currently living under the good care of my brothers in my home village, Ng'ombo. I am going to see her soon on my next vacation. Her happiness will remind me of the happiness I saw in the eyes of the elderly nuns and priests in Lesotho. There is no better way to celebrate the eldest generation than by embracing the gift of life that they embraced and sharing the gift of love we have received from them. They are a treasure of love and life to all of us.

### **BISHOP OF QACHAS'NECK**

Rt. Rev. Joseph Sephamola, formerly Provincial of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, is now the ordinary of Qachas' Neck Diocese, which is disadvantageously situated on the mountainous western part of Lesotho. The diocese has only 13 parishes, which are far apart and are separated from one another by mountains. The bishop told me the area is totally neglected by the government and therefore is still very poor. The area is thinly populated and most people live along river banks and on road sides. Bishop Joseph is very humble, but extremely pro-life. I was acquainted with him at Mazinod Center, where he used to stay when he was Provincial. So it was by God's providence that I met him now as a bishop. He was extraordinarily hospitable, sharing meals with me at the bishop's house. He is a thoughtful person and likes to learn from everyone he encounters. If HLI is to have a reliable ally in Lesotho, he is the one who can be trusted to promote our cause in his diocese. He believes that the youth are the appropriate people to be imparted with the pro-life message so that they can be effective ambassadors at their places of work and in the community they find themselves upon completion of school.

### **ARCHBISHOP GERALD TLALI LEROTHOLI**

On Saturday, September 24, I had the privilege to meet the Archbishop of Maseru, Gerald Tlali Lerotholi, at his



Above: Bishop John Tlhomola of Mochale's Hoek, offering Mass for the cause of life in Lesotho.

Below: Archbishop Gerald Tlali Lerotholi of Maseru and Emil Hagamu.



residence. You may recall that in 2011 HLI awarded him the Cardinal von Galen Award. I asked the Archbishop about the achievements of the pro-life movement in Lesotho. This is what he said:

“Although abortion is illegal in Lesotho, the Penal Code allows abortion for mother’s life and when the pregnancy is a result of sexual defilement. However, abortion practices are common among many women. Some seek abortion services in South Africa, while others use local abortionists. Due to the Catholic Church’s support of our campaigns against the legalization of abortion in 2012, abortion advertisements have dropped greatly. Although Basotho culture is largely pro-life and considers abortion an abomination, Lesotho’s geographical location is greatly influenced by mighty South Africa, where abortion was made legal in 1996, when parliamentarians overwhelmingly voted in favor of abortion on demand.”

Speaking of the future of the pro-life movement in the country, the Archbishop hopes it will grow under the current coordination of Sr. Celestina Tiheli. She has already secured the support of her congregation, although her major challenge is lack of financial support. The culture war against Christianity and the people of Lesotho is being fought through language. The Archbishop cited the example of “*reproductive engineering,*” “*peace education,*” “*gender,*” and “*sexual orientation.*” The Archbishop appeared agitated to learn that Lesotho’s delegate to the recently concluded United Nations Assembly accepted the LGBT resolution, claiming that he did so on behalf of the people of Lesotho. He lamented that the United Nations population control resolutions should be binding to all member countries.



Sr. Celestina Tiheli, HLI Director of Lesotho, with students from St. Thomas High School.

## IRA Charitable Gift

### Make a gift to HLI and reduce your taxable income!

**C**ongress passed the legislation, and the president signed into law, making permanent the Qualified Distribution from IRA accounts. Why not take advantage of the Federal tax law and make gifts from your retirement plan's assets to help HLI spread the Gospel of Life around the world!

Individuals 70 ½ or older, who must take a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD), can transfer up to \$100,000 per year from a traditional IRA or Roth IRA to HLI. Under this law those assets are excluded from income provided the distribution is made directly to HLI.

#### IS A CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTION FROM AN IRA RIGHT FOR YOU?

Donating IRA assets can be a financially rewarding strategy for both you and HLI. As always, it is advisable to contact your personal tax advisor or financial representative before making a decision that alters your tax situation. Here are some scenarios that may make sense for you.

- Generally, in order to claim a charitable deduction, you must itemize your tax return. For retirees who no longer pay mortgage interest, the deductions may be too small to itemize. The provision offers the tax benefits of a charitable contribution without your having to itemize your deductions.
- Charitable deductions can be limited by your income. By directing all, or a portion, of your IRA distribution to HLI you can avoid this restriction.
- If reporting additional income on your form 1040 increases your Medicare Part B premiums or negatively affects the taxability of your Social Security benefits, then making a charitable contribution from your IRA may be appropriate.
- Some states do not allow residents to deduct a charitable contribution. Making a donation directly from an IRA may provide a way to effectively claim a state tax deduction. Consult your tax advisor for state-specific guidance.

#### HOW DO YOU GET STARTED?

Easy! Contact your financial advisor, or IRA administrator, and request a distribution to be sent directly to Human Life International.

#### WHY MAKE A GIFT TO HLI FROM YOUR IRA?

At 70 ½, you must begin receiving the Required Minimum Distributions from your IRA regardless of whether you actually need the income. Contributing your distribution to HLI can cover or count toward your Required Minimum Distribution and help HLI to Give Glory to God and Defend Life & Family Around the World. If you have any questions, please contact HLI at 540-635-7884, ext. 225.



# A Huge Victory for Life in Poland!

The voice of the Polish people has been heard. The “Stop Abortion” citizens’ initiative, which had received 450,000 signatures from Polish Citizens, has cleared its first hurdle in the parliamentary process by a very wide margin.

The “Stop Abortion” proposal was one of three citizens initiatives—proposals that receive over 100,000 signatures—considered by the Polish Parliament. Also considered were the “Deputies bill in defense of life and the health of unborn children conceived *in vitro*” to regulate the *in vitro* fertilization industry; and the “Save Women” initiative, which would have liberalized Poland’s very restrictive abortion laws.

Members of Parliament voted 267 – 154 to send the “Stop Abortion” proposal to commissions, which means that it will be debated for an indefinite period, before a final bill is written and put to a parliamentary vote. The proposal was passed by such a



wide margin that it is very likely that a pro-life law will ultimately be passed.

The opposing “Save Women” citizens’ initiative received 215,000 signatures, but was voted down by a vote of 230-173. Central to the proposal was the liberalization of abortion laws for health of the mother and fetal deformity up to 24 weeks.

Importantly, this was a “conscience vote”—so there was no party pressure, and members of parliament were allowed to vote their conscience. This is believed to more accurately reflect the will of parliament and those they represent.

In 1993, Poland became the only developed nation to go from completely unrestricted legal abortion to having very strong abortion restrictions in place. It is estimated that fewer

than 1,000 abortions are committed annually in Poland. Pro-life doctors in Poland are quick to point out that even with its restrictions on abortion, Poland has among the lowest maternal mortality rates in the world.

“We are very pleased to see such a strong vote for life, especially since members know they will be facing economic threats from the European Union,” said Ewa Kowalewska, director of HLI Poland. “With this vote you see the heart of the Polish people, since MPs were allowed to vote their conscience.”

She continued:

*The battle now becomes one of helping the Polish people understand the attacks that are about to come from the EU and from left wing media and NGOs funded by George Soros. It is widely known that Mr. Soros has poured millions into saving the left wing Polish newspaper from bankruptcy, and that he funds the radical opposition to pro-life bills. Sadly, they have been successful with their propaganda campaigns, especially among young people.*



Members of Parliament voted 267 – 154 to send the “Stop Abortion” proposal to commissions.

*Poland has excellent maternal health care; our maternal mortality statistics are among the lowest in the world even though we have—indeed, because we have—strong restrictions on abortion, so the pro-abortion effort's branding as 'Save Women' is extremely dishonest.*

*Ours is a very pro-life society that wants to protect women's health even as we eliminate exceptions on abortion that are used to deceive people. This is why the other side focuses on eugenics, or demanding unlimited abortion because of the tiny number of children born with serious disabilities. But killing a child does not cure him and does not prevent disease. We reject eugenics and want to work with all people of good will to continue to improve all health care options for women and mothers.*

*There is a great irony that critics of the pro-life initiative say that the very popular effort, which obviously passed with a very wide margin in the democratic process and gained a huge number of signatures—is 'anti-democratic.' These radical groups are funded by billionaires from outside our nation, they lost a democratic vote, and they are saying that this is a 'failure of democracy.' This is quite obviously absurd, and for the unelected European Union powers to start repeating this absurd claim is insulting not only to the Polish people, but to all thinking people who value democracy.*

## **DONATE \$53 OR MORE TO HLI THIS MONTH AND GET OUR LATEST PRO-LIFE RESOURCE!**

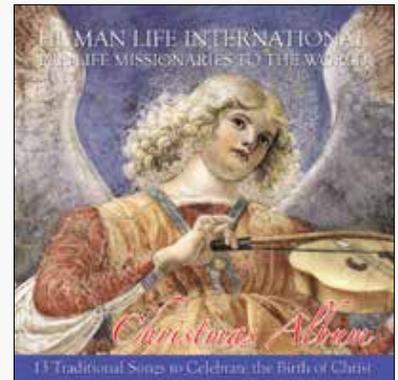
This month I'd like to send you a wonderful audio CD of Christmas music that features musicians from our Front Royal area. It is called **CHRISTMAS ALBUM**, and I'd like to send it to you today *in gratitude for your gift to HLI of \$53 or more!*

Included on this Christmas album are 13 traditional songs to celebrate the birth of Christ. Selections include:

- ✓ O Sanctissima
- ✓ Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming
- ✓ God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen
- ✓ What Child is This
- ✓ Here We Come a Caroling
- ✓ Silent Night
- ✓ O Come, O Come, Emanuel
- ✓ O Magnum Mysterium
- ✓ O Little Town of Bethlehem
- ✓ Puer Natus Est
- ✓ We Three Kings of Orient Are
- ✓ Wexford Carol
- ✓ Auld Lang Syne

This Christmas album includes a wide variety of styles and performers.

*Please send your gift of \$53 or more to HLI, and we'll rush out this beautiful CD to you in time for Christmas!*



**HLI's Christmas Album is our gift to you this month in appreciation for your financial support of \$53 or more!**