



Mission Report

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Above: HLI Regional Director of Anglophone Africa, Emil Hagamu, during an HLI training on Life and Family in Rwanda.

- * HLI completes 21st mission trip to the Philippines
- * In Rwanda, HLI missionaries declare abortion the “new genocide”
- * HLI Uganda launches pro-life caucus in nation’s parliament
- * This Month’s Gift to Donors: 50th anniversary edition of *Humanae Vitae*

Dear Pro-Life Friend in Christ,

Many of you are familiar with the moniker of our founder, Fr. Paul Marx, “Apostle for Life.” In traveling the world to promote Life, Faith and Family, he set a standard which Human Life International still follows today.

This month, we tell you of Rwanda. Many of you will recall the 1994 genocide that killed at least half a million, mainly Tutsi tribe members. All human life is precious; and though Rwanda states on paper that abortion is illegal, it is permitted across a wide spectrum of alleged medical necessity, and 60,000 are performed yearly. In eight years’ time, that’s almost half a million children wiped off the face of the earth...yet these little ones are unacknowledged. HLI Regional Director for Anglophone Africa, Emil Hagamu, has been busy educating Rwandans in the Culture of Life, and building contacts to extend our pro-life networks.

But there’s always much more to be done. We’re spreading the word of the landmark Encyclical *Humanae Vitae* of Pope Paul VI, published July 25th, half a century ago. When it was promulgated, many were surprised, expecting “change.” Our soon-to-be-Saint Pope Paul VI upheld Church teaching and its continuity, and his prescient words still resound globally today. Please visit our special website section at hli.org for more information. Meanwhile, our calendar will keep you informed of up-coming activities. Please pray for their success. Together, we are saving lives and families. Thank You!

Yours in Christ and Our Lady,

Fr. Shenan J. Boquet
President, Human Life International



Fr. Shenan J. Boquet
President



MISSION TRIP TO THE PHILIPPINES

By Dr. Brian Clowes, HLI Director of Education and Research, May 2018

HLI Welcomed by Large, Faith-Driven Philippines

HLI President Father Shenan J. Boquet and I began our mission trip to the Philippines on the morning of May 8th and arrived some 23 hours later in Manila, in the late evening. We were welcomed by HLI's Regional Director for Asia and Oceania, Dr. Ligaya Acosta and her husband, Sandy. After grabbing a quick dinner, we traveled to our hotel. There was little time for rest since our intense work schedule began promptly the next morning.

St. Clare is the patroness of the airwaves, and we trust she was with us spreading the Culture of Life, along with former journalist St. Maximilian Kolbe! We drove to Radio Veritas in Quezon City to tape some segments for the *Digma ng Buhay* [Battles for Life] radio program, followed by an hour-long live program. Our host was Mr. Ansel Beluso, a great supporter and host for Catholic radio for more than 25 years. His fervor for Faith and Life shone clearly on his face and in his enthusiasm. Those like him, effectively propagating and amplifying HLI's message, are absolutely essential to the success of our missions.

From Manila to Cebu

The next morning, we were up at 4:30am to catch a flight to Cebu City, where we were welcomed by Dr. Rene Bullecer, HIL's Country



Director for the Philippines. There was no rest for the weary. Our first order of business was to meet with a columnist for *The Philippine Star*, Mr. Bobbit Avila, to participate in a television show entitled "Straight from the Sky." Mr. Avila's pro-life columns in *The Star* have reached millions, and only



At the annual Marian convention at the Theotokos Shrine near Cebu City, Father Boquet explains a point about the dignity of the human person using some audience members as "chess pieces." Six hundred people attended the all-day seminar.

God knows how many lives and souls he has saved. ***HLI missionaries in the field have found that if the media holds strong on the dignity of human life, the death peddlers have little chance of infusing poison into the souls and minds of a nation.*** This essentially caused the recent moral collapse of Ireland, the only nation ever to vote for abortion. Years of constant anti-life propaganda by the virulently pro-abortion and anti-Catholic media, along with the shutting out of opposing voices, made the legalization of abortion nearly a foregone conclusion. In the Philippines, this has not happened, and so we urged the people in the studios and in the audiences to stand firm for Faith and Life regardless of attacks they receive.

After the interview we traveled to our hotel where Dr. Bullecer organized a pro-life training conference for local and regional leaders. There were over 200 participants, comprised of both lay and religious.

The following day, Father Boquet, Dr. Acosta, Dr. Bullecer and I had spent most of the day speaking at the Annual Marian Convention at the Theotokos Shrine, near Cebu City. We addressed the dignity of humanity and the nature of the human person, current anti-life threats to the Philippines, how to respond to these threats and strengthen Faith and Family as a group, and what to do as individuals. The 600 or so people watched Father Boquet explain fundamental concepts of family and the human person as he “borrowed” some of the audience members, and like chess pieces, moved them around to illustrate his points. This effectively helped overcome the language barrier for those who did not speak English well.

Few things have made me gasp in my lifetime, but one of them was my first glimpse of the Simala Marian Shrine, run by Marian Monks of the Eucharistic Adoration. This amazing shrine was our second stop of the day. Picture an alabaster city, rising out of the jungle, with statues of the Virgin Mary everywhere. The road leading to the shrine was long, narrow and winding, and I was amazed by a tiny pickup truck carrying 26 people on a pilgrimage there. (I counted them as they piled out of the truck.) Despite the difficult road, five million visited the shrine last year, and the number is rapidly rising. Most amazing of all, there was nothing there but jungle twenty years ago. This shows the impact of tremendous faith and the will of the Filipino people more than anything else I have seen.

Sunday, Father Boquet presided over one of the thirteen Masses at the Cebu Metropolitan Cathedral, packed to capacity! And there are ten Masses every weekday! Since it was Mother’s Day, Father Boquet called all of the mothers forward to be blessed, and hundreds of women gathered around to be sprinkled with holy water. We all left quickly after the Mass to meet Dr. Rene Bullecer’s 93-year-old mother for lunch; if we had stayed any longer, Father Boquet would still have been talking to the moms!

On to Tacloban...

Monday the 14th was mostly a day of rest due to the local elections in the Philippines, so we flew to Tacloban, where the intensity of the work ramped up considerably

August 2018 Events

Please pray for HLI’s Mission work in August:

- Emil Hagamu, HLI’s Anglophone Africa Regional Director, will be in Zimbabwe Aug. 18-30th.
- HLI President Fr. Shenan J. Boquet has an article appearing in this month’s Legatus magazine.
- Fr. Boquet, Dr. Brian Clowes and Dr. Ligaya Acosta will be in Mongolia August 15-26th.
- Raymond de Souza, HLI Delegate for International Missions, travels in late July/early August to Peru.

Watch for details of these events to be reported in future issues of HLI's Mission Report.

the following day, Father Davy Erby Lajara, who brought Dr. Ligaya over from the “dark side” of her work with the Philippines Department of Health years ago and assisted her greatly in her transformation into a champion for Life, met us at the airport along with about twenty other active pro-lifers from Tacloban. They escorted us to the VIP area, where we visited for a while before going to our hotel. This hotel was so new that construction was still ongoing, part of the essential rebuilding of the entire city after typhoon Haiyan flattened it five years ago.

More than thirty thousand people in Tacloban died during the disaster, which flooded most of the city under forty feet of water. Father Erby’s parish alone lost five thousand people. The scale of this catastrophe is simply unimaginable. Memorials dot the city where hundreds of people were buried in mass graves because they could not be identified.

To help prevent the utter devastation wrought by Haiyan from occurring again, the government of the Philippines is embarking upon a billion-dollar project to construct a seawall in the bay. This is a big component of President Duterte’s drive to “Build, build, build!” and we saw evidence of this policy everywhere. The Philippines is booming in construction. Everywhere you look, spindly cranes tower over new skyscrapers and enormous malls, especially in the larger cities like Manila and Cebu. But much of the construction is new high-rise apartment buildings which house hundreds of tiny units, where it is difficult to find room to have any

children at all. In fact, we found that many of these complexes turn people away if they have more than two children. *Given these pressures, the total Filipino fertility rate has dropped from 7.5 children per woman in 1950 to only 2.5 now, a decrease of two-thirds.*

HLI Speaks on Life Before Hundreds in Astrodome

From Tuesday to Thursday, we spoke at the three-day, Inter-Diocesan Pro-Life Training Conference at the Tacloban Astrodome with hundreds of priests, nuns, seminarians, lay leaders, youth and members of religious organizations. Each day began with Mass celebrated by a different bishop, showing their support for the pro-life/pro-family mission. I could not help but think that, if all of the bishops of the world were so strong in their support, the world would be a much better place, especially for women and the unborn. At the end of each day, we relaxed for a while on the outside deck of the Astrodome, where we could enjoy a bit of breeze in the oppressively hot and humid weather.

Friday, we rose early again to fly back to Manila to complete our mission, which began with a presentation by Father Boquet to nearly 300 members of Catholics for Family and Life (CFL) at San Nicolas Tolentino Church. Father spoke on “The Demands of Living the Gospel of Life.”

The next event began early Saturday morning with the Couples for Christ—Foundation for Family and Life (CFC-FFL) Youth Congress in the Cuneta Astrodome, filled with some 4,000 people. Father Boquet spoke on clergy and consecrated persons, and CFC-FFL’s Servant General, Mr. Frank Padilla, addressed his organization’s role in the fight for Faith, Life and Family. HLI has been cooperating in presenting to CFC-FFL’s tens of



Father Boquet blesses the hundreds of mothers in the congregation before the end of the Mass.

thousands of worldwide members an intensive three-day “Pro-Life Missionary Training Program.” It grounds participants in the fundamentals of the human person and his dignity, and also in specific topics, from population control to the gender agenda, and the practical skills required to do “the most important work on earth,” as Pope St. John Paul II has called it.

On Sunday morning Father Boquet celebrated Holy Mass for young adults, singles and professionals of the CFC-FFL community and presented a one-day conference on the “The Gift of Vocation and Chasity.”

The final event preceding our 9,000 mile journey home was a dinner, at the beautiful Barbara Restaurant in historic Intramuros, the foundation of the great city of Manila in the 16th Century. As Father Boquet, Dr. Ligaya and I discussed our future plans with Mr. Frank, Maribel Descallar and other CFC-FFL leaders, we enjoyed traditional Filipino dancing, including the tinikling, involving heavy bamboo poles clashing around the feet of the dancers.

Between us, Father Boquet and I have visited the Philippines 21 times, showing how important the nation is to the eternal battle between the Culture of Life and the Culture of Death. With the moral collapse of Ireland, the Philippines is even more critically important to the world than it ever was. We are already planning to return in March 2019 and, God willing, will be back many more times to help these beautiful people turn away from the tide of evil.

THE LAUNCH OF THE UGANDA PARLIAMENTARY PRO-LIFE CAUCUS

By Fr. Jonathan Opio, Executive Director, HLI Uganda



Fr. Jonathan Opio

With great fanfare on May 24th, 2018, HLI Uganda launched the pro-life parliamentary caucus at the Parliament of Uganda. The Rt. Hon. Rebecca Alitwala Kadaga, Uganda’s Speaker of Parliament, officially launched the caucus, and I thanked all parliamentary members for attending. Praising their courage in advancing the Parliamentary Pro-life Caucus, I urged them to continue promoting Life. I explained to the audience the pro-life issues currently affecting the country and the attempts at advancing a Culture of Death. I particularly

emphasized the government’s guidelines for alleged post-abortion care; these are in essence providing contraception and abortion from as early as age 10. These dangerous guidelines sexualize children. In this line of thought, I highlighted the attempts to introduce Comprehensive Sexuality Education in schools. There are problems with both the Ministry of Education’s “Guidelines for Sexuality Education,” and the East African Sexuality and Reproductive Health Rights Bill. We at HLI will continue to hold the line for Life, Faith and Family. Please pray for Uganda.

RWANDA MISSION REPORT

By Emil Hagamu, HLI Regional Director, Anglophone Africa

Believe it or not, with population growth in a tailspin in much of the world, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) still recently marked International Population Day. In its statement, the UNFPA stated as usual that “high” population threatens economic gains. The present fertility rate in Rwanda is only 2.9%, less than 3 children per couple. How is that “high?”

Rwanda is regarded by many as one of the countries in Africa that has made rapid gains in economic development, thanks to the commercialization of RwandAir making Kigali, its capital city, a transit hub. But this has come with a price. The government has seriously adopted a population control agenda through contraception, abortion and sterilization. A 3-child policy



The following is an excerpt from Fr. Shenan J. Boquet's weekly column, *Spirit and Life* on *Humanae Vitae* and soon-to-be Saint Pope Paul VI's vision for respectful relationships:

"...There are two striking elements about Pope Paul VI's vision of married love. The first is that it is a vision of love that demands continual effort and sacrifice. It is not enough for a couple simply to feel 'in love'; to attain this depth of love, both spouses must work hard for it. And, secondly, it is a love that presumes *equality* between the spouses, an equality that is fostered by the spirit of sacrifice mentioned above. Rather than adversaries in the 'battle of the sexes,' husband and wife are *friends*, each seeking in their own way to give to the other, for the other's own sake."

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has been put in place. Reducing the number of people for economic gains has been hailed by many as a hallmark of progress. The result of this policy is that the rate of population growth has dropped from 7.96% in 1999 to 2.40% in 2017. The government of Rwanda has fallen victim to Western population control propaganda. Jean Claude Ngendandumwe of USAID: "The rate at which the population is growing is one of the major threats to economic and national development." Yet a report he co-wrote also stated that Rwanda in 2013 "experienced tremendous economic growth" (*CSO Sustainability Index for Sub-Saharan Africa*, USAID). Unemployment this year was only 2.5%, and the GDP was \$22.8 billion dollars. Roughly two thirds of the country live above the poverty rate.

Abortion Still Exists, Though Highly Dangerous

We are told by the Guttmacher Institute that an estimated 60,000 induced abortions were performed in 2009, extrapolated at an annual rate of 25 abortions per 1,000 women aged 15–44. As usual, through manipulation of language, proponents of abortion push

for its legalization. Even more frightening: over half the abortions are performed by untrained individuals and at high risk to the woman. "***An estimated 34% of abortions are provided by traditional healers and 17% are induced by the women themselves.***" Only 19% are done by physicians, with others insufficiently trained taking up the remainder (nurses or medical assistants at 16% and trained midwives at 14%). Many procedures do not take place in health facilities and result in complications.

Currently, although the constitution states that abortion is illegal, in actuality the Penal Code provides and allows a wide range of exceptions where abortion is permitted, provided the procedure is carried out by a medical practitioner. The Penal Code has literally legalized abortion-on-demand and, to say the least, a silent genocide is taking place in Rwanda. ***Unlike the 1994 genocide, this one is directed towards the unborn through contraception, abortifacients, chemical and surgical abortion and sterilization.***

HLI's May Mission Reveals a Church Affected by Anti-Life Propaganda

The three-day training that I conducted was for people drawn mostly from Diocesan Family Commissions, and their experiences opened my eyes to the true realities of the aggressive anti-natalist policies in Rwanda. I realized during my presentations that the Catholic Church has not been spared from this anti-life propaganda aggression. When presenting a talk on the beginning of human life, ***some trainees of the Church confessed they were hearing for the first time that God and a husband and wife are involved in creating a new human being.*** They had not understood we are co-creators with God in the transmission of new human life.

I gave six presentations discussing the educational basics of human life, fetal development and threats to Life, Marriage and Family. My presentations on building a Culture of Life were accompanied by two videos: "Fetal Development" and "The Hard Truth." I also used the Holy Bible, papal encyclicals and the Catechism of the Catholic Church as a basis.

A serious argument erupted during a talk on discordant couples (where one partner has HIV) and condom use. Most were of the opinion that condom use is okay



Emil Hagamu, HLI Regional Director for Anglophone Africa, with Fr. Prudence Rudasingua, Fr. Longin Nduwayezu, and HLI trainees at Cyangugu Pastoral Center after celebrating Holy Mass.

for discordant couples, despite a failure rate and health information that shows that condoms do not always protect from the HIV virus. They did not want to understand the theological concept of “sacrificial love.” To them, it was impossible to abstain while in marriage because of natural sexual inclination.

I tried unsuccessfully to explain HLI President Fr. Shenan J. Boquet’s argument given to medical students in Zimbabwe: that no husband can love his wife so much that he would wish to harm her and vice-versa. I also alluded to the scientific approach to explain how some condoms may be faulty during production and how some may be damaged during transportation; how others can be weakened by weather and environment; how they can be damaged during opening and usage and that some do break, tear, or slip during the sexual encounter. Others may be past

their “use” date at the time of use, and oil-based condoms may be damaged by oil. I used the moral principle of “self-defense” as explained by Dr. Brian Clowes, author of HLI’s excellent resource, *The Pro-Life Pastoral Handbook*. He writes that the non-infected spouse has a right to defend himself/herself from the infected partner by abstaining from marital intimacy. I explained to them Church teachings from *Humanae Vitae*, wherein every conjugal act must be open to the transmission of life. The condom frustrates the procreative function by being a barrier in the marital embrace. Their obstinacy to accept objective truth is a signal of the weakness of Pastors in preaching the Gospel of Life. Attendees said they do not hear teachings on the evils of contraception and abortion. Neither do they hear any talk on homosexuality and same sex “marriages.”

HLI is Critically Needed to Help the Rwandan Catholic Church

HLI’s presence in Rwanda has been blessed by the Catholic Bishops Conference. The Bishop Chairman in charge of the Family Commission gave his full consent and blessing to the training. The Diocesan Pastoral Director, Fr. Ignace Kabera graced the opening with Holy Mass, in which he encouraged participants to listen attentively so they can be messengers of the Culture of Life in their respective dioceses. The closing session was presided over by Fr. Prudence Rudasingua, Vicar General for Cyangugu Diocese. In his homily he expressed enormous gratitude for HLI’s efforts, training and the financial support that enabled our successful training. Father then challenged participants to understand modern threats to Life, Marriage and Family, and challenged them to confront the Culture of Death

in their respective dioceses. He was aghast at how Ireland’s people — including women! — changed their pro-life constitution to allow abortion.

The participants appreciated the training and expressed a wish to start their own pro-life movement to confront the Culture of Death in their dioceses. The proposed name of the movement is “Family Life Apostolate Rwanda.” After consulting with their Bishops, and upon their approval, they will officially launch the movement. Bishop Celestin Hakizimana, whom I had met earlier during my talk to medical personnel, prayed that one day HLI would host a training session in his diocese. He is currently Apostolic Administrator to the Diocese of Cyangugu.

Despite the grisly reality I explained in my opening paragraphs, there is still hope in Rwanda. Rwandan people still love Life and Family. Respect and worship for the sacred still predominates. Despite a drop in church attendance, I witnessed at Mass at Cyangugu Cathedral where the majority of the people are still deeply religious. As a side note, our HLI training was blessed to have the presence of 4 children as pro-life attendees! They were noisy at times during the presentations, but that was the joy of having children amid the group. As the Psalmist exclaims, children are a blessing to a family. The future of the pro-life movement and the Rwandan nation lies in its children.

One trainee, Claude Munkakusi, had the best words in conclusion: “During the first pro-life training in Rwanda, which took place in Cyangugu Diocese from May 27-30, 2018, I was given an occasion to share with participants my own pro-life initiatives, especially the Spiritual Adoption Prayer. My new prayer is that this first pro-life training in Rwanda may bear fruit and help lay people spread the Gospel of Life.”

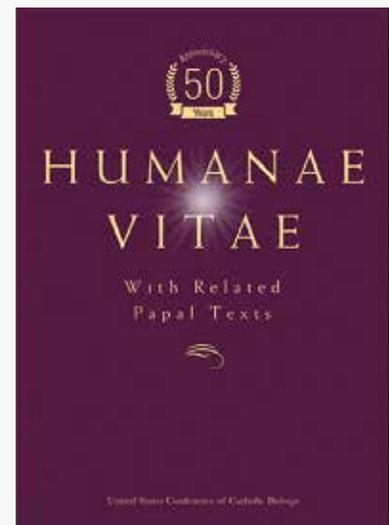
DONATE \$53 OR MORE TO HLI THIS MONTH AND GET OUR LATEST PRO-LIFE RESOURCE!

This month, when you donate \$53 or more to support HLI’s life-saving mission, you’ll receive the 50th anniversary edition of *Humanae Vitae with Related Papal Texts* published by the USCCB.

This encyclical thoughtfully considers the human person as a whole—body and spirit—and prophetically presents the practical social implications if the document’s conclusions—based on the full respect of the totality of persons—are ignored. As a prophetic teaching, *Humanae Vitae* strengthens Christian spouses in a beautiful, holy expression of human sexuality that profoundly respects the whole person and is open to life and faithful to love.

This 50th anniversary edition includes the full encyclical, with ten-year anniversary excerpts from Blessed Paul VI’s successors affirming the teachings of *Humanae Vitae*. Also includes selections from the 1968 US Catholic bishops’ statement, *Human Life in Our Day*.

Read the encyclical for yourself to understand and appreciate the wisdom of the Church.



The 50th anniversary edition of *Humanae Vitae with Related Papal Texts* published by the USCCB is this month’s pro-life educational resource.