



# Mission Report

No. 416  
Nov. 2019

A PUBLICATION OF HUMAN LIFE INTERNATIONAL



Pictured above: Rev. Mr. Innocent Ahidje of Benin, answering the Church's call at his diaconate ordination.

- \* **Priests Gather from Eight Countries to Attend HLI's Summer Institute**
- \* **HLI Programs and Seminars Enrich a Flourishing Pro-Life Movement in Rwanda**
- \* **Rev. Mr. Innocent Ahidje and the Priest's Call to Defend Life**
- \* **This Month's Gift to Donors: "Madonna Enthroned with Saints and Angels" Triptych Wooden Ornament**

Dear Friends in Christ,

As faithful shareholders in HLI's global life-saving mission, your care, support, and commitment are having a far-reaching impact. I want to share with you a story about David and Miška Prentis of Kladno, Czech Republic, and how their service to the Gospel of Life is making a powerful difference — saving lives and families.

In a recent mission in August to the Czech Republic, I was able to spend a few days with Radim and Katerina Ucháč, HLI's affiliate leaders. During these days together, we discussed current issues in the Czech, as well as the programs Radim, Katerina, and their collaborators are promoting in the support of life, marriage, and the family. As always, I am amazed and humbled to see first-hand what our friends and colleagues are doing and sacrificing.

During this mission, I was privileged to visit the home of David and Miška, a wonderful Catholic couple, married over 50 years, who have been active for decades in the pro-life movement. Though they admitted to feeling older, their zealous commitment has not diminished with time.

Among their flower and vegetable gardens and chicken coops is a very important room — Miška's workshop. It is within this very small room, filled with empty yogurt containers and buckets, stirring sticks, dyes, rubber molds, and a vacuum pump, that Miška is making a most significant impact regarding the dignity of human life. Through the encouragement and support of Radim and Katerina, **Miška has for over 13 years dedicated her time and gifts to making 12-week baby models.** Anyone involved in the pro-life movement knows how impactful these models are in helping people recognize the humanity of a developing baby, shattering the great lie that "it is only a piece of tissue."



Fr. Shenan J. Boquet  
President

Over, please

The story of how David and Miška eventually became the “baby model makers” began when they received the first five models of babies in the 12<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy from the United States. At first, it was Radim who created a system of production, making the models in the loft of the block of flats where he lived with his family. This was in addition to his work of organizing protests, petitions, marches for life, and publishing pro-life materials.

Inspired by Radim, David and Miška discussed between themselves how they might be of assistance. “At the time it occurred to me,” said Miška, “that even though I did not have the gifts required for public activities or for political lobbying, I did have capable hands.” As if Heaven planned, David and Miška had a small room in their house suitable for use as a workshop. When they initially bought the house, David had decided to install three-phase electricity and heating into this room, even though at the time he had no plans for using it as a workshop. Was this a case of Divine inspiration?

And with everything prepared, Miška joyfully and humbly embraced the task of creating the baby models to be used extensively throughout the pro-life movement in the Czech. “Radim taught me how to make the forms,” said Miška, “by sticking plates of glass together to make boxes into which I’d place the original baby models and pour in silicon rubber. After evacuating air and allowing the material to set until the next day, I would take out the original models. There are five in each form.” With great care and detail, Miška explained to me how she made each baby model. “To make the models I pour liquid polyurethane made of two components into the forms and evacuate the air again. After an hour or so the models are hard; I take them out and clean and smooth them. One form lasts for about 300 models.”

**Over the course of 13 years, Miška has produced in her quaint workshop over 60,000 models.** They are used by pro-life volunteers in counseling, in schools, and in the Stop Genocide movement. When I asked Miška about the impact of her work, she said, “holding a baby model in your hand makes it clear that an abortion is not just about a ‘piece of tissue’ or ‘cleaning out the contents of the womb’; it means destroying a miraculous tiny human being. I am sometimes taken aback myself at the sight of a bucket full of baby models. I pray that



**Miška pours love and joy into her pro-life ministry of producing 12-week baby models.**

the models will serve to save unborn children.”

One person, one couple, is making a powerful difference, transforming hearts and minds, one baby model at a time. Only God knows how many lives have been saved through David and Miška’s loyal service to the Gospel of Life. With each 12-week baby model, they are reminding the world of the humanity of the unborn baby, how precious every life is, and our duty to serve and protect life from conception to natural death.

Because of you, this great work is made possible. Thank you!

Yours in Christ and Our Lady,

Fr. Shenan J. Boquet  
President, Human Life International

# PRIESTS' SUMMER INSTITUTE IN BURKINA FASO

By George Wirnkar, Regional Director of French-speaking Africa, July 2019

Imagine a land where the sun burns bright and extremely hot most of the year, with the exception of a brief rainy season on which all agriculture and life depends. Human Life International went to one of these countries, Burkina Faso, in the middle of the rainy season for our 2019 French-speaking Africa Priests' Summer Institute. Sadly, the rain had proved scanty this year. It was the topic of quite a few fervent prayers. Finally, during our session, the skies opened and the thunder rolled in. Life-giving water gushed from heaven in superabundance. One speaker, Fr. Anatole Tiendrebeogo, could hardly be heard over the noise of the deluge and the crashes of lightning. It was blessedly cool after the rain, and the parched earth

swallowed the water greedily as the farmers at last prepared to plant their crops. We prayed that the pro-life seeds we planted in African soil would likewise bear abundant fruit.

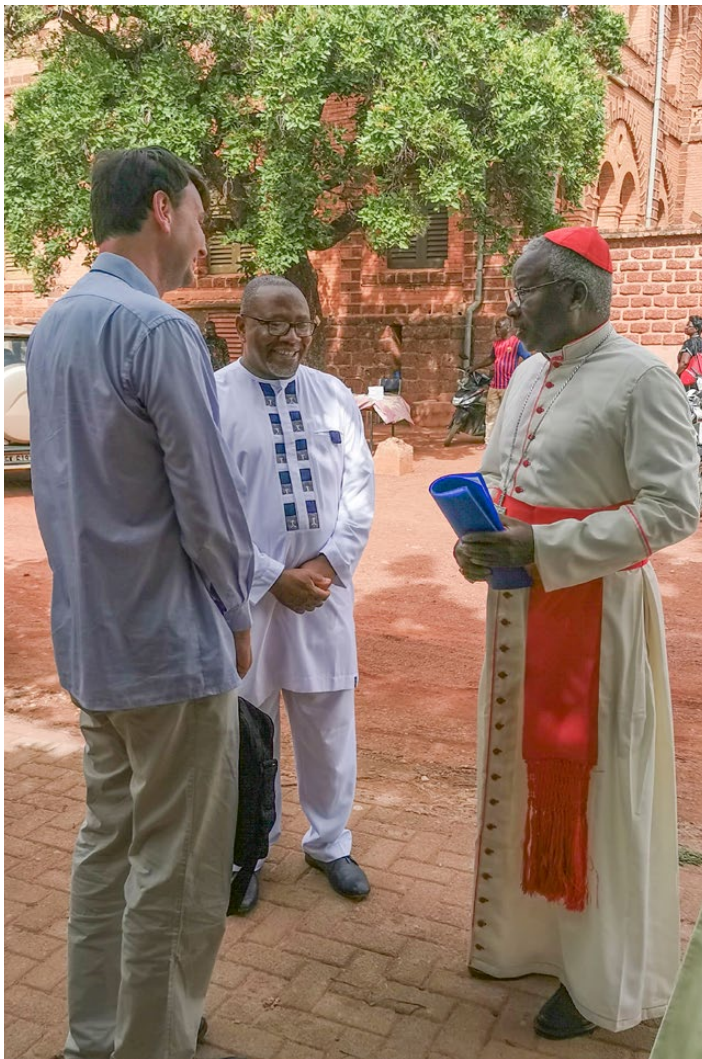


## PRIESTS ARRIVE FROM WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA FOR HLI PRO-LIFE TRAINING

HLI gathered priests who had gone through our Seminarians for Life International program in their home countries or in various major seminaries in Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte D'Ivoire, Mali, or Togo. Countries such as Guinea and Niger, which have no seminaries of their own, send their young men to seminaries in neighboring countries. Cardinal Sarah is from Guinea and had to go to Senegal for his seminary education. **The average distance covered by our participants to and from the institute was 1,150 miles, often on horrible roads and in difficult weather conditions.** It was a fine group of men who have taken up the call to proclaim the Gospel of Life as a central part of their priestly ministry.

The Cardinal Archbishop of Ouagadougou, His Eminence Philippe Ouedraogo, welcomed the priests from across West and Central Africa to Burkina Faso at the inaugural Mass of the institute. The Cardinal spoke out against the growing trend of gender ideology and of the need to rediscover *Humanae Vitae*. Addressing the priests present as fellow co-workers, **he emphasized the need for priests to see their pro-life witness as an integral part of their priestly ministry.**

On the first day of training, journalists interviewed the leaders of the event. Among other questions, they wanted to know if security for the institute would be provided, since Burkina Faso has suffered a series of Islamic terrorist attacks and kidnappings in recent months. The leaders calmly assured the journalists that proper measures had been taken for the safety of the at-



His Eminence Philippe Ouedraogo, Cardinal Archbishop of Ouagadougou, with Dr. Joseph Meaney and George Wirnkar at HLI's Priests' Summer Institute.

tendees, but added that ultimately the need to defend human life outweighed the threat of attack — a risk that all members of the institute had considered before arriving. The violence in the region shows that once respect for life has been eroded in a culture, it becomes much easier to take human lives at any time. Evil actions like abortion and terrorism can only begin to be addressed when good men embrace a life of faith and courage.

## **PRAYER AND ACTION**

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Our pro-life priests in Saharan and Sub-Saharan Africa come from young churches, all of which were founded in the late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

**Catholicism is growing by leaps and bounds in these countries, and religious vocations are abundant.** Keeping in the spirit of HLI’s two-fold approach of prayer and action, we punctuated the days of pro-life training with moments of prayer and Eucharistic adoration.

As HLI’s regional director for French-speaking Africa, I held the grave responsibility of opening the first session. I spoke to the priests about my experiences as a father and a pro-lifer. I described the unique challenge of preserving the innocence of one’s children in the face of modern entertainment and certain school programs.

Dr. Joseph Meaney, who served many years as HLI’s director of international coordination and is now the president of the National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia, lectured on the use of pro-life parables to explain pro-life truths. He showed how we should follow the example of our Divine Teacher, Jesus Christ, who taught by using parables. This approach touches hearts and stays in one’s memory, since it illustrates the

effect of divine truth in our day-to-day experiences. Many more people can recite the parable of the Prodigal Son or the Good Samaritan than can recite the Beatitudes or even the Ten Commandments. Dr. Meaney provided numerous pro-life stories to make his points.

## **THE COMPASSION OF THE CULTURE OF LIFE**

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One story came from an incident that happened to Sr. Anne-Sophie Meaney (Dr. Meaney’s sister), who assists many people spiritually at the end of their lives. It was about a woman who was dying of cancer. She had made great spiritual progress in her life, and now she had fallen into a coma. She was not conscious but groaned loudly, showing that in spite of her pain medication, she still suffered greatly. The medical personnel who observed this immediately offered the typical solution: increase her morphine drip so that she would die more quickly.

Sister Anne-Sophie had another idea. She asked if there was something unresolved in her life, a reconciliation she needed to make? Her son answered that his mother and her sister had been estranged for years, having fought over an inheritance. They called the sister and told her this was her last chance to reconcile — to give and seek forgiveness. Putting the phone to the ear of the dying woman in a coma, her sister poured out her heart. Suddenly, the groaning ceased. In a few minutes the woman died peacefully. The sister came to the funeral, and there was a genuine reconciliation in the family!



The smiles of these priests show the joyful love of God that they take into their parishes.

# SUBSCRIBE ONLINE TO HLI'S **SPIRIT & LIFE** WEEKLY E-NEWSLETTER

Every Monday, HLI President Fr. Shenan J. Boquet writes on current issues that affect life and family.

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A simple overdose administered to a suffering patient could never bring about the peace and reconciliation achieved by the personal solution of the Culture of Life. **Such a pro-life parable illustrates well the difference between euthanasia's cold efficiency and the warmth and compassion of the Culture of Life.**

## **PROMOTING ADOPTION**

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Another speaker at the training was Pathove Gaoungba from Benin, who spoke about promoting a Culture of Life in families. He made a point of urging the priests to have compassion on couples suffering from infertility in Africa and to continually work with local communities to promote adoption — an option that few African couples consider. A series of other speakers gave practical and academic lectures on pro-life topics over the three days of the HLI institute.

Throughout our time together with these priests, we

heard numerous stories of their journey to the priesthood and the role the pro-life movement had played in their individual lives. **Fr. Sam Theodore from Côte d'Ivoire told us that his life as a seminarian was blessed by HLI training and his priestly ministry has been enriched by continued training and materials from HLI.** Fr. Vincent Sodio from Mopti, Mali remarked, "I could only have made this difficult journey for something as important as the defense of life and family."

After our intense days of training together, it was hard to leave these brothers in the pro-life apostolate. Just as the blessed rain had made the hard soil of Burkina Faso fertile, our prayer and talks prepared us to go forth with renewed fruitfulness to spread the Gospel of Life. We thank our gracious donors who so generously support programs like the life-changing Priests' Summer Institute.

# MISSION TO RWANDA

By Dr. Brian Clowes, Director of Education and Research,  
September 2019

Rwanda is a visually spectacular nation, locally known as *Le Pays des Mille Collines* (The Land of a Thousand Hills), thanks to the endless mountains that cover this beautiful little country. The population of Rwanda is about 12.5 million, and it is one of the most Catholic countries in Africa. It has eight dioceses and one archdiocese (Kigali). However, this dense population, which totals about 1,230 people per square mile, has led to the presence of **more than 100 Western-funded population control groups, who aggressively promote graphic sex education, abortion, and homosexuality.** The most outspoken of these groups include the International Planned Parenthood Federation, Marie Stopes International, Population Services International, the Population Reference Bureau, EngenderHealth, Family Health International, and the homosexual group OutRight Action International. Signs promoting their activities are everywhere, especially in the capital city of Kigali. Slogans include statements such as “Family Planning



is a Human Right” (sponsored by the United Nations Population Fund), “Use a Condom and Be Safe” (by the United States Agency for International Development), and countless others.

I met our regional director of English-speaking Africa, Mr. Emil Hagamu, at



Students at the Marist Teachers College listen eagerly to a talk by Fr. Longin Nduwayezu, who has dedicated his life to pro-life ministry in Rwanda.

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## This was our first national pro-life training in Rwanda attended by representatives of dioceses from all over the country.

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the Kigali International Airport after flying in from Washington, D.C. We took the short trip to Kamembe, a town located at the southern end of Lake Kivu. Our host for this mission was our HLI representative in Rwanda, Fr. Longin Nduwayezu, who is also the chancellor for the Cyangugu Diocese. Fr. Longin drove us to the newly-built Cyangugu Diocesan Pastoral Center, where we spent many hours over the next week in discussion and planning. The Pastoral Center is directly across the street from the Cathedral and boasts a superb view of Lake Kivu and the Democratic Republic of the Congo on the opposite shore. But even more spectacular than the scenery are the people, who are so welcoming and friendly. I actually felt more at home here than in the United States!

The first item on our agenda was a three-day pro-life training for 24 priests and five seminarians. This was our first national pro-life training in Rwanda attended by representatives of dioceses from all over the country. The Vicar General, who is also the Apostolic Administrator, gave the opening remarks. Each day

began with Holy Mass as the sun rose, followed by a total of 15 presentations on topics of direct interest to Rwanda and her priests, including “The Dignity of the Human Person,” “Spirituality of the Pro-Life Movement,” “Homosexuality,” “Faith and Family under Siege,” and “The Population Control Agenda.” We emphasized the last topic strongly because it ties together all of the other issues that face Rwanda.

Emil and I distributed many different types of materials, including the *Pro-Life Pastoral Handbook*, little feet pins (the symbol of the international pro-life movement), fetal development pamphlets, prayer cards, and HLI’s blue thumb drive, which contains both *The Facts of Life* and the *Pro-Life Missionary Training Program*.

We received many positive comments about our three days of training. Upon my return to the United States, I received an e-mail message from Deacon Innocent Mbarushimana of St. Charles Borromeo Major Seminary in Nyakibanda, Rwanda. He thanked Emil and me for providing the pro-life training. He wrote, “I was very satisfied, and now **I am totally with you in this fight**

### December 2019 Events

#### Please Pray for HLI’s Mission Work in December:

- November 30-December 6: Fr. Shenan J. Boquet will lead an Advent retreat in the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux, Louisiana.
- November 29-December 1: Raymond de Souza will speak at a diocesan conference in Quesada, Costa Rica on the de-Christianization of Western culture and the Gospel of Life.
- December 10-20: Emil Hagamu will be in Malawi, where he will join Mr. Brighton Kalulu and Fr. Alpheus Zikomankhani, HLI Director of Malawi, to give NFP seminars in the Archdiocese of Lilongwe, the Archdiocese of Blantyre, and the Diocese of Dedza.

**Watch for details of these events in future issues of HLI’s *Mission Report*.**



Dr. Brian Clowes with seminarians who attended this three-day seminar at Cyangugu Diocesan Pastoral Center in Kamembe, Rwanda.

**for the safeguarding of life.** As I am Dean of Students, I will do my best in protecting life and teaching others to respect life at every stage.”

One of the messages we stressed was that there are only two things that will make you truly happy and content: your faith and your family. And these are precisely the things that the Culture of Death attacks most directly and vigorously. Emil and I identified the enemies, exposed how they operate, and outlined how to defend against them. We stressed that we must make maximum use of the greatest advantage we have — a Church that is already organized and a hierarchy that is willing to fight these evils.

One of the things that seemed to surprise people was my speaking of the contrast between “first world” and “third world” nations. I spoke about the economic power and military might of the United States, which is certainly the most powerful secular nation on Earth. But this is a view that people see through their worldly eyes. What good, however, does all this power do if it is used to spread evil and misery? **We must look upon**

**the situation as God does.** From His point of view, certainly Rwanda, with its strong Faith and resilient families, is a first world country. If Africans can only overcome their internal corruption and, even worse, the corruption that is being forced upon them by foreign nations, demographic science tells us that Africa, with its vast wealth of natural resources and its large, young, and vigorous population, will lead the world. I told the young seminarians that if they do their part as good and holy priests who preach the truth, they will contribute greatly towards seeing this vision of faith, life, and family as the foundation of a vibrant society.

**We also had the wonderful opportunity to speak to nearly 2,000 young people** at St. Aloysius Minor Seminary, St. Vincent Seminary, the Marist Teachers College, and the University of Rwanda’s Rusizi Campus. Every single one of these young men and women will now have the opportunity to positively affect for the better the lives of tens of thousands of people of all ages and walks of life. They will have the tools and formation necessary to guide others in how to



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**“There are only two things that will make you truly happy and content: your faith and your family. And these are precisely the things that the Culture of Death attacks most directly and vigorously.”**

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live healthy, happy, and holy lives for the greater glory of God. Upon our return to Kigali, we had an audience with Archbishop Antoine Kambanda, who was very interested in what we had to say. He pledged his support of continuing pro-life activities in his nation.

At our side every step of the way during our week in Rwanda was Fr. Longin who, like many pro-lifers, has an interesting story to tell about his own life. He is a young priest, ordained on July 10, 2016. **During his**

**time in seminary, he had attended several conferences organized by the seminary’s HLI Club.** After meeting American pro-lifer Henry Monroe, he adopted this as his philosophy: “The concern for human life is among the priestly ministry’s priorities. It’s for that reason that I feel personally bound by all efforts to safeguard human life.” Soon after ordination, he contacted HLI Central and was put in touch with Emil Hagamu, which was providential since Emil did not have any previous contacts in Rwanda.

## GOT STOCK?

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## APPRECIATED STOCK

to Human Life International rather than a cash gift may allow you to provide a larger gift with transformative impact and at the same time give you a larger tax deduction. If you have held your stock for over one year, you may take a charitable deduction for the Fair Market Value of the stock on the day of the gift. By donating your stock directly, you will also avoid paying capital gains tax on the increase of the stock’s value. This assumes you are taking itemized deductions. The same benefits also apply to bonds and mutual funds.

Please contact Stan Kuta at HLI’s Development Office ([skuta@hli.org](mailto:skuta@hli.org) or phone at 540-622-5272) and your broker to discuss the process.

*This information does not constitute and is not intended to be a substitute for specific individualized tax, legal, or investment planning advice from a qualified tax advisor, CPA, financial planner, or investment manager.*

Fr. Boquet and I met Fr. Longin in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, in July 2017 to plan future pro-life activities in Rwanda. These included a three-day training program for diocesan priests in Cyanguu in May 2018, the founding of the national pro-life platform “Gospel of Life Apostolate,” and the translation and publication of the encyclical *Humanae Vitae* in the local language, Kinyarwanda.

**Fr. Longin has been a tireless worker for life and family,** and we can attribute the strong pro-life presence in Rwanda to him and Emil, since **such a movement would die unless it has strong leaders continuously animating it.**

## Combine Federal Campaign



Federal employees and members of the Armed Services: Support HLI with your CFC pledge.

HLI's CFC number is  
**10253**

We thank our generous donors for their support that allows us to raise up strong leaders for the pro-life movement. They are truly like that small mustard seed that becomes a great tree of faith.



Emil Hagamu speaks to seminarians about the dangers of gender ideology, which is beginning to make worrisome progress in the small country of Rwanda.

## Impact of HLI Training: Rev. Mr. Innocent Ahidje and the Priest's Call to Defend Life

There is hardly any doubt at all that Africa and Asia are prime targets of the Culture of Death. Western population control groups attempt to control educational and youth programs, as well as foster political support in the executive and legislative branches that are sympathetic to their goals. Through measures like these, they influence moral and lifestyle values. Even in areas where they have planted a strong foothold, **they continue working hard to conform the culture to their liberal vision of the world.** In all of this, the Church continues to be a bulwark against the machinations of these groups. Although every priest is supposed to be pro-life, it is nonetheless rare to see a clergyman who is not only pro-life by virtue of his baptism and ordination, but who is particularly interested in fighting the Culture



Rev. Mr. Innocent Ahidje, receiving his diaconate ordination.

of Death. Priests are called to shine the light of our Christian values and magisterial teaching on the battleground of pro-life and pro-family issues.

As a transitional deacon, Rev. Mr. Innocent Ahidje is currently completing his theological studies at the Grand Séminaire St. Gal in Ouidah, Benin. He clearly has his eyes set on the families, marriages, and people he will soon serve as a priest. Little wonder then that he chose for his thesis an in-depth study of “*Pastoral Strategies for the Defense of Life and Family in Benin Today.*”

Deacon Innocent Ahidje, **who hails from a faithful family of 10**, understands from personal experience the challenges of large families and how these are often used in negative ways by the Culture of Death. Although Deacon Ahidje’s journey with the pro-life movement started nearly six years ago during his philosophical studies for the priesthood, **he traces his pro-life calling to an institute organized by HLI in 2018** in celebration of the 50th anniversary of *Humane Vitae*. He states that of all the pro-life principles he embraces, both as a baptized Catholic and as an ordained minister, nothing is dearer to his heart than the admonition of the Church to “**defend life from conception to natural death.**” This, he adds, remains his guiding principle in all he does and will do in defense of life and family. As he concludes his theological studies, he sees his vocation as that of “a foot soldier for



Rev. Mr. Innocent Ahidje.

Christ and His people, especially the most vulnerable.”

Anyone speaking with Deacon Ahidje can feel the fire of determination he has to win the world for Christ. In his future ministry, he will certainly have to speak the truth of our faith in a terrain where the Culture of Death is firmly established. He will speak to the youth who love Christ and His Church **but whose minds are confused by the relativism that is gaining ground around them.** These young men and women already suffer from the absence of youth-oriented, pro-life ministries in many churches. When Deacon Ahidje becomes Fr. Ahidje, he will have the opportunity to touch the lives of many, to teach the truths of the Faith in a very deliberate manner, and to administer the sacraments through which God provides

strength for His people in the challenges they must face in relation to life, faith, marriage, and the family.

HLI salutes Rev. Mr. Innocent Ahidje and is most grateful to the Almighty to have allowed him to contribute his strong determination to the service of life, marriage, and family. HLI continues, through the generosity of her donors and the prayers of her friends, to ensure that more deacons and priests like Innocent Ahidje rise up to the defense of life and family in Africa.

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P.S. I am often asked the question, “Father, with all the problems in America, why does HLI spend so much time in Africa?” The answer is very simple: **The future of the Catholic Church and Her ability to influence society depend on the growing Church in Africa.**

In 2013, USA Today reported:

“As the number of regular churchgoers drops in Europe and the United States, the number of faithful in Africa has risen dramatically, greater here than anywhere else in 50 years. In Africa, between 1978 and 2007, the number of Catholics grew from 55 million to 146 million, according to the Vatican. A recent study by Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life shows the continent’s Catholic population at more than 175 million.”

Some estimates predict that by 2025 one-sixth of the world’s Catholics are expected to be Africans, approximately 230 million! The world’s largest seminary is in Nigeria, and Africa produces a large percentage of the world’s priests.

As reported in the mission to Rwanda, more than 100 Western-funded population suppression groups operate in that country, promoting graphic sex education, abortion, and homosexuality. We see this all over the continent.

That is why Africa is important mission territory for HLI’s pro-life educational apostolate.

**That is why training African seminarians and priests on the truth of the Gospel of Life is a major piece of HLI’s strategic mission plan.**

These young men will influence thousands over their 40-50-year priestly ministry, many of them serving in American parishes. It is vital that they be well grounded in the Church’s teaching on human sexuality and marriage.

Every year, thousands of seminarians and priests in Africa and around the world attend HLI’s educational programs — programs designed to instill in these men a love of Truth and a desire to preach the Gospel of Life.

**We cannot do this without your generous financial contributions.** With your gift today of \$53 or more I will send you a beautiful and holy ornament for your Christmas tree. As you place it on your tree in preparation for your celebration of the birth of the Lord of Life, please reflect upon how your gift to HLI is working to build a Culture of Life around the world!

Yours in Christ and Our Lady,



Fr. Shenan J. Boquet  
President, Human Life International



**This month, when you donate \$53 or more to support HLI’s life-saving mission, you’ll receive this Madonna Enthroned with Saints and Angels Triptych Wooden Ornament.**