



# Mission Report

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Dear Pro-Life Friend in Christ,

In this month's newsletter, HLI Director of International Outreach and Expansion, Dr. Joseph Meaney, reports from Fatima, Portugal, where HLI held a World Prayer Congress for Life. This was a wonderful occasion for prayer and reflection on the battle we all find ourselves in, which is primarily a spiritual battle and for which we are always in need of supernatural assistance.

This gathering in Portugal also served as an excellent opportunity for us to meet with many of our affiliates from Eastern and Western Europe who attended the Congress. We were able to take advantage of being together for extended strategy meetings and make plans for our missionary work in 2016. It was also an occasion for us to award Mr. John Smeaton with the new HLI Fr. Paul Marx Award for his decades-long work in defense of life.

You will also read in this issue the beginnings of an article taken from our hli.org website that relates a battle over a stolen HLI banner in Kenya. This is just one of many incidences in the on-going struggle there with those who would have the truth about condoms buried. There is a web address given where you can find the complete story on our website.

Finally, you'll find an article on our Symposium on the Family and Marriage, held in Rome this past October, where HLI and the Kolbe Center for the Study of Creation brought together leaders to speak on the traditional doctrine of the Church on creation and the nature of marriage. An address is given at the end of the article where copies of the talks may be obtained.

Please continue to pray with us in the New Year that, through our work, the innocent may be protected and the truth may be defended.

Yours in Christ and in Our Lady,

Fr. Shenan J. Boquet  
President, Human Life International



Fr. Shenan J. Boquet  
President

## HLI WORLD PRAYER CONGRESS FOR LIFE

*By Dr. Joseph Meaney, HLI Director of International Outreach and Expansion, October 2015*

HLI Austria and our US Headquarters teamed up to organize a spectacular and unique pro-life event, part pilgrimage/retreat and part pro-life educational conference and activist training, October 2-7, 2015. The seventh World Prayer Congress for Life in Fatima, Portugal, was a return to the site of our first global prayer congress in 2006. With the assistance of the World Apostolate of Fatima (WAF), who hosted the congress at their headquarter's hotel and conference center, and other groups such as the UK Society for the Protection of Unborn Children (SPUC), the Helpers of God's Precious Infants, LifeSiteNews, Voice of the Family, and others, this international pro-life gathering proved a great success.

Timed to coincide with the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of the great pro-life encyclical *Evangelium Vitae* by Pope Saint John Paul II and the opening of the Synod on the Family in Rome, this prayer congress had a full agenda. The overall theme was, "That they might have life" (John 10:10). The participants plunged right in with a talk by HLI President Fr. Shenan J. Boquet, "*In hoc signo vinces*—The pro-life generation will win." His supernatural perspective left no doubt that unless we are rooted in Christ, we will labor in vain.



## HLI EUROPEAN LEADERS' MEETING

HLI took advantage of this gathering to bring in leaders from our affiliates of both Western and Eastern Europe. A delegation of Belarussians from HLI's affiliate actually drove all the way across Europe in a van! Fr.



HLI affiliates from both Western and Eastern Europe meet to to discuss strategy and initiatives across the continent.

Boquet led several private meetings with these pro-life leaders to discuss strategy and initiatives across the continent. There was a great atmosphere of friendship and collaboration. John Fusto, the International Network Manager for HLI in Front Royal, Virginia, played an active part in the discussions. The Slovaks in particular were proud to report that they had just supported a pro-life march with over 85,000 participants that the Slovak Catholic bishops sponsored.

All the speakers made a point to emphasize the need for strong spiritual lives among pro-lifers. My talk included the observation that since the struggle between the Culture of Life and the Culture of Death is a battle between two clashing spiritual positions, those who defend life should be prepared for attacks from the Devil. This is why HLI promotes the powerful St. Michael the Archangel Prayer throughout the world and has printed and distributed millions of prayer cards for the conversion of abortionists and others who partake in the Culture of Death. (For details on this program, visit [www.stmichaelprayercampaign.com/](http://www.stmichaelprayercampaign.com/)) We need supernatural assistance in the struggle to gain respect and protection for the dignity of every human person.

Pro-lifers can easily suffer from “burnout” when faced with their inability to prevent the unrelenting slaughter of preborn children and the power and influence of the Culture of Death lobby. It is only by cultivating one’s faith and trust in God that we can persevere. Blessed Mother



**Fr. Boquet speaks at the World Prayer Congress for Life in Fatima, Portugal.**

Teresa of Calcutta famously said, “God has not called me to be successful; He called me to be faithful.” Her smile and joy were infectious even while going through a dark night of the soul for decades.

During the HLI World Prayer Congress, the delegates attended the nightly rosary procession at the shrine of Fatima. It is a beautiful international experience in which thousands of pilgrims recite the different decades of the rosary prayed in different languages. Pro-life leaders had the privilege of leading some of these prayers. We also made a Way of the Cross in Fatima along the path created by Hungarians just next to the site of some of the apparitions of Our Lady and the angel. One afternoon we had Mass at the Carmelite monastery in Coimbra where Sr. Lucia lived and prayed until her death in 2005. All those present were invested with brown scapulars in a simple but beautiful ceremony. HLI also organized all-night Eucharistic adoration prayer vigils for the cause of life.

The culminating event of the international gathering was a Mass, Eucharistic adoration, and a rosary procession in Leiria from the Church of Our Lady of the Annunciation down the hill to the regional hospital where abortions are committed. Our large group of participants lined up on the sidewalk facing the hospital and prayed the rosary. Portugal has had abortion on demand during the first ten weeks of pregnancy after a three-day waiting period since 2007. This past July, the parliament revoked the previous practice of government-subsidized abortions and required more stringent counseling prior to allowing the procedure, but it remains readily available.<sup>1</sup> The prayer vigil brought many of the hospital staff to the windows. There, they would stare us, as would people entering and exiting the building. Hopefully, it was a moment of grace and awareness of the gravity of killing preborn children in the land that Our Lady blessed with such important apparitions.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.epfweb.org/node/373>



**Participants of the Prayer Congress for Life pray the rosary across from a hospital where abortions are performed.**

Several bishops addressed the prayer congress, most notably His Excellency Juan Antonio Reig Plà of Alcalá de Henares in Spain. He gave a rousing talk on paragraph 92 of *Evangelium Vitae* on the family as the sanctuary of life. Bishop Reig Plà is a past recipient of HLI's Cardinal von Galen Award and courageously defends life and morality in Spain in the face of much criticism. He reminded the delegates of the satanic attacks against the Holy Trinity through the Sexual Revolution. Pope Saint John Paul II pointed the way to the civilization of love through his magnificent magisterial teachings on Life and Family.

### **FIRST RECIPIENT OF HLI FR. PAUL MARX PRO-LIFE AWARD**

Mr. John Smeaton had the singular honor of being the first person to receive the new HLI Fr. Paul Marx award. He is a longtime friend and collaborator with HLI, having started his work to defend life in the early 1970s with SPUC in London. He led several pro-life coalitions at the various United Nations (UN) conferences in the 1990s. Currently, he spearheads the Voice of the Family group to defend Catholic teaching on the family. He went to Rome for the Synod on the Family, and I joined him there after the Fatima congress, even doing an Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN) live interview on the synod. It is a blessing for HLI to have such a strong ally in John Smeaton.

Another milestone at this event was the first screening of the HLI "Ocean to Ocean" documentary by Lech and Ewa Kowalewski of HLI Poland. Ewa made the icon of Our Lady of Czestochowa that embarked on an epic pro-life peregrination from Vladivostok on the Pacific Ocean by van all the way across Central Asia and Europe



**Mr. John Smeaton receives the new HLI Fr. Paul Marx Pro-Life Award**

to Fatima, Portugal, in 2012 and 2013 and finally arriving at the Atlantic Ocean. In 2014, Our Lady continued the pilgrimage through the USA and Canada with HLI Central organizing the transportation.

Currently, she is proceeding through Mexico and will bring a pro-life message throughout Central and South America. It all began with an act of entrustment to the Virgin Mary, calling for a new civilization of life

and love in the Jasna Gora monastery with many HLI leaders. Several million people came out to pray for life, as well as over a hundred bishops and cardinals, in the dozens of countries the icon crisscrossed. It was a beautiful ecumenical success as well, with the Orthodox Church enthusiastically supporting this initiative. Pro-life collaboration with them has continued since the passage of Our Lady.

Perhaps most inspiring of all, the final abortion clinic in Corpus Christi, Texas, closed its doors forever soon after a prayer vigil with the icon of Our Lady of Czestochowa. As many as 2,000 children a year died there by abortion for many years. The last doctor decided he could no longer commit abortions in the city named after the Body of Christ.

Msgr. Philip Reilly, founder of the Helpers of God's Precious Infants, gave a moving talk about his experiences on September 11, 2001 in New York. He said everything in the city stopped that day when the planes

crashed into the Twin Towers, except for the abortion centers. They continued their work of death, so he stayed outside praying. He commented that if you are not being persecuted, you are probably not active enough as a Christian. Gloria Polo, from Colombia, also gave her testimony of a dramatic near death experience and her conversion from being a pro-abortion feminist to a fervent Catholic.

This HLI congress was jam-packed with wonderful teaching and events. The participants were challenged and refreshed by these days of prayer, study, and action. We look forward to the next World Prayer Congress for Life organized by HLI Austria. It will probably be held at the shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa in Poland in 2017, which will continue the tradition of holding them mainly at Marian shrines. These congresses remind us of the precious and inimitable contribution of HLI to the global pro-life movement on all continents.



Fr. Boquet leads a meeting with affiliates of both Western and Eastern Europe.

## The Attack on Africa Continues

by Fr. Shenan J. Boquet

I WONDER HOW MANY HAVE HEARD about the strange “condom controversy” underway in Kenya. It began when Doctor Nelson Muiru of the National AIDS Control Council made a strange series of claims. He admits that his organization is in possession of a banner that was stolen from Human Life International’s Kenyan affiliate, adding that the NACC will remove any other such banners placed in public places. Yet, NACC Regional Director Muiru also tells reporters “I heard they are saying we confiscated their banner, that is not the case we are just holding it.”

We had hoped that the journalists of Kenya would have a field day with this, yet it has only been challenged by our affiliate. When an official like Dr. Muiru feels free to openly contradict himself in public, he expects some help from the media in covering it up.

Nor is this the NACC’s only contradiction. The more serious one has to do with Dr. Muiru’s odd statement: “We have made a great step towards achieving ‘Zero Infection’ but the church seems to be pulling us back to 1980s. We won’t allow this to happen anywhere in this country.”

The message on the stolen banner is completely factual, a graphic representation of the condom producers’ own admission and other researchers’ well known claim that, on average, one in twelve condoms fails. There is little factual debate over this, as Dr. Muiru and every knowledgeable public health journalist know. And if one in twelve condoms is likely to fail, how safe will you feel using one if you are with a person who has Aids? Should you feel safe?

Would you eat at a restaurant if every twelfth customer was poisoned?

Dr. Muiru’s continued employment with the NACC depends on you answering “yes” to these questions. A large part of his job is to get as many Kenyans as possible to feel “safe” using a product with a one-in-twelve failure rate, even when the failure of the product can lead to death. His agency, as every knowledgeable public health journalist in Kenya knows but has yet to report, receives a great deal of its funding from Western sources – the exact same groups who think that there are too many Africans and that “overpopulation” threatens the lifestyle of “elites” in the West.

Dr. Muiru knows that the HIV/Aids pandemic began not because people followed the ancient and very well-known position of the Catholic Church: that sex should occur only within the exclusive, lifelong, sacramental union of marriage between one man and one woman. Indeed, if men and women only had sexual relations with one person their entire life, every scientist knows that the disease would never have been able to spread. *(Continue reading at [www.hli.org/2015/12/the-attack-on-africa-continues/](http://www.hli.org/2015/12/the-attack-on-africa-continues/))*





Centro Congressi Cavour • Rome, Italy • 2015

“We live in times when there is a great deal of confusion, even among those who profess themselves to be Christian, over two of the most elementary realities of our lives as human beings—marriage and the family” affirms Dr. D.Q. McInerny, professor of philosophy at Our Lady of Guadalupe Seminary in Denton, Nebraska.

The Kolbe Center for the Study of Creation in collaboration with Human Life International, organized an International Symposium entitled “The Two Shall Become One” in order to shed light on the family and marriage, using the creation of Adam and Eve as the point of departure for the Church’s doctrine on marriage. In the series of conferences and lectures that filled Roman calendars during the month of October for the Synod on the Family, this was the first.



Fr. Francesco Giordano, Director of HLI’s Rome Office, speaking at the Symposium in Rome.

These topics are essential to discuss as a basis from which to engage modern questions about marriage: Even if the theology of creation might not appear to be connected to modern debates about marriage—like the conference in Norcia at the end of October on the rapport of Church and State—it is a hinge upon which these other themes are based. If one gets such an “iota” principle wrong, one gets the whole picture wrong.

Experts in theology, philosophy, and the natural sciences demonstrated how the traditional doctrine of the Church on creation affirms the truths that the Church has always held about the nature of marriage. With a clear frontal attack on the philosophical errors of idealism when compared to the more credible forms of philosophical realism, Dr. McInerny stated, “Idealism creates the proper mental context for the nurturing of what Alasdair MacIntyre identified as emotivism, the attitude that effectively rejects any objective standards for morality and reduces it to feelings.” He continued: “re-define the meaning of marriage, and the meaning of family is open to discussion; it becomes subject to the aggressive manipulation of ideologues who want to reshape it to accommodate aberrant behaviors.”

The Symposium hosted among the eight speakers Fr. Thomas Hickey, a professor of Sacred Scripture at Holy Apostles Seminary. He clearly demonstrated that any definitive statement made by the Church regarding Holy Marriage has always been based on the historical reality of the special creation of Adam and Eve.

Then Fr. Thomas Crean, in his lecture “The Perfection of our First Parents, According to St Thomas Aquinas” elucidated how beautifully the writings of the Angelic Doctor expound the perfection of our first parents in their state of original holiness. He showed how “in the natural order, what is perfect precedes what is imperfect”, a principle that is contrary to “the evolutionary manner of thinking, which assumes that imperfection necessarily precedes perfection.”

Mrs. Bai Macfarlane of *Mary's Advocates* examined the current marriage crisis in light of the Code of Canon Law. She pleaded that we need to implement canon law on separation of spouses especially where the civil-courts have “no-fault” divorce. In her presentation, she described no-fault divorce and summarized the canon law on separation and divorce, exploring how the annulment mentality contributes to broken families. Lastly, she read excerpts from diocesan authorities wherein they denied the faithful’s request to help stop marital abandonment in particular cases.

In the realm of natural science, internationally-renowned plant geneticist Dr. John Sanford, Professor Emeritus of Cornell University, and author John Wynne discussed several of the historical and scientific problems with various “evolution” narratives, demonstrating the ideological motivation behind certain very influential errors. Science is indispensable as a means of knowledge and is certainly compatible with the Catholic Faith as has been taught consistently, but as we have seen so often, its practitioners can at times let ideology distort findings, to the detriment of both faith and reason.

Finally, Fr. Francesco Giordano, Director of HLI’s Rome Office, demonstrated that the nature and the ends of Holy Marriage, inscribed in the very way that God created Adam and Eve, cannot be violated without doing great harm to souls, to marriages, to families, and to societies. This is the case whether it is through the practice of contraception or in a more subtle way through the practice of Natural Family Planning (NFP) methods with a contraceptive mindset. With the proper disposition of the spouses, NFP can indeed be a wonderful support for marital health and fidelity.

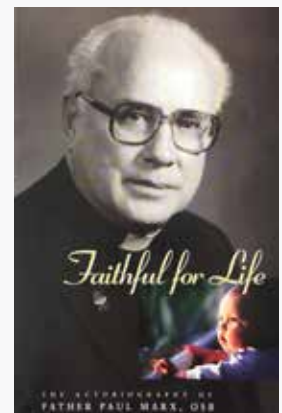
Copies of the talks are available through the HLI office in Rome. If you should wish to have a copy, please email us at [vuiroma@tin.it](mailto:vuiroma@tin.it).

## 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 autobiography of our beloved founder, Fr. Paul Marx, *Faithful for Life*.

Fr. Marx’s autobiography documents his amazing life as the “Apostle of Life.” Learn how he got involved in the pro-life movement, how he has fought the anti-life agenda worldwide, how he founded Human Life International, and what he foresees in the future. An incredible journey, rich in insights, inspiration, humor, Catholic nostalgia and fascinating details. 385 pages.

**Please send your gift of \$53 or more to HLI today,** and we’ll ship this wonder pro-life resource today!



***Faithful for Life* is this month’s pro-life educational resource.**