



Mission Report

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- * **Pro-Life Training in Zambia**
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Pictured left: Group of the Friends of the Family speak at the United Nations on the primary role of the natural family and the environment in which children are to be raised. See page 6.

Dear Pro-Life Friend in Christ,

In this issue of *Mission Report*, Emil Hagamu reports from Zambia, Africa, where he was able to give pro-life training and promote the sanctity of life. Emil's presentation included videos on fetal development, which always prove a powerful means of illustrating life in the womb, as well as videos on abortion, which, although shocking and disturbing, prove an eye-opener to the realities of this horrible act. Emil finished the training with instruction on Natural Family Planning.

Also in this issue, Joannes Bucher, HLI Regional Director of Europe, reports on the 2016 March for Life in Brussels. A small but dedicated group of 1,000 people publically stood for Life in a nation that is literally dying from its extremely low birthrate.

Finally, we re-publish in this issue a report originally posted in my weekly e-newsletter, *Spirit & Life*, on HLI's presence at the United Nations and at the 10th World Congress of Families in Tbilisi, Georgia. At both events, HLI united its voice with others from many nations in an effort to stem the tide of destruction of the family that has gained such momentum in recent years.

My dear friends, our efforts in standing for life and defending the 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



Fr. Shenan J. Boquet
President

MISSIONARY TRIP TO ZAMBIA

By Emil Hagamu, Regional Director of English-Speaking Africa, April 2016

This mission to Zambia was my sixth visit to the country, my third in the Copper Belt and my second in Kitwe, one of the four towns forming the Copper Belt. Kitwe belongs to the Ndola Diocese, which is under the Metropolitan See of Lusaka. The Ndola Diocese has a Catholic population of 850,000, which is about 32 percent of all people living in the area. At the national level, only 20% of the population are Catholic. Because it is so small, the Catholic Church has very little influence in the politics of the country compared to the other Christian denominations: Lutherans, Anglicans, Pentecostals, Seventh Day Adventists and a booming number of immerging “new churches.” These denominations make up 70.3 percent of the total population and have a huge impact on the lives of people in Zambia.



POPULATION FACTS

According to 2015 estimates, Zambia’s population is slightly above 15.5 million. Zambia is one of the most highly urbanized countries in sub-Saharan Africa with 44% of the population concentrated in a few urban areas along the major copper transport corridors, while rural areas are sparsely populated. The fertility rate was 6.2 as of 2007 (6.1 in 1996, 5.9 in 2001–02). The population of the Copper Belt is 2.362 million people.



Emil Hagamu, HLI Regional Director for Anglophone Africa, with Axon Manyanga and Dr. Brian Miyoi, participants at HLI pro-life training in Kitwe, Zambia.

MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH CARE

The 2010 maternal mortality rate per 100,000 births for Zambia was 470. This is compared with 602.9 in 2008 and 594.2 in 1990. The mortality rate of children under 5, per 1,000 births is 145. The number of midwives in Zambia is extremely low, only 5 per 1,000 live births, and the lifetime risk of death for pregnant women is 1 in 38. Female genital mutilation (FGM), while not widespread, is practiced in parts of the country. According to the 2009 Zambia Sexual Behavior Survey, 0.7% of women have undergone FGM. According to UNICEF, 45% of children under five years are stunted.

HIV/AIDS EPIDEMIC

Zambia faces a generalized HIV epidemic, with an estimated prevalence rate of 13.5% among adults (ages 15–49) in 2009. HIV incidence in Zambia has declined by more than 25% from 2001 to 2010, an indication that the epidemic appears to be weakening.

ABORTION AND CONTRACEPTION

According to Ruth Mwale, my host and the Director of Lamp of Life Health Centers of Zambia, contraception

is widely practiced in Zambia. This is a result of the Catholic Church being a minority in the country, as the majority of other churches allow contraceptive use. Women of all ages are clients of the contraception ideology and practice, thus the contraceptive mentality among the population is very high in Zambia. Pre-marital sex is common among teenagers, so contraceptive behavior begins at an early age. Abortion is legal under the “Maternal Health Care Bill,” in order to save the life of the mother. This has opened the door to many women seeking abortions. However, Jessica Mutake, a practicing midwife and nurse who was one of the participants in the training group, said abortion still remains illegal in most cases. So despite the new law, the people of Zambia are generally opposed to abortion practices.

TRAINING “PEOPLE OF THE NATIONS”

The primary concentration of my mission in Zambia in the past has been to train seminarians and other pro-life leaders, most of whom have been of non-Catholic denomination. I have trained seminarians twice at St. Dominic Major Seminary and once at St. Bonaventure College, a school of philosophy run by Franciscan Friars. The Church hierarchy, however, has not always been welcoming to my mission. The Church herself is certainly very pro-life, in accordance with the mission given to her by the Lord Himself, but it may take time for the pastors in Zambia to welcome an “outside visitor” to put that mission into practice. For this reason, I have turned to the “People of the Nations” as my main focus.

We had in attendance ten participants representing six denominations at

this training program. The participants were all very seriously seeking knowledge, which they could not get elsewhere. I believe this group was a gift from God to HLI. It was composed of a medical doctor, a midwife nurse, four high school teachers, an Anglican Deacon, a businessman, and two pastors. We had four training sessions each day, two in the morning and two in the afternoon, with a mid-day lunch break in between. The program lasted four days. During the first two days, I trained the group on the Culture of Life with the motive of raising their consciousness so they might embrace and promote the pro-life mission in their churches. I showed them videos on fetal development to illustrate the inviolability and sanctity of every human life from the moment of conception to natural death.

On the third day and in the morning of the fourth day, I gave talks on the Culture of Death, revealing to the trainees the philoso-



Trainees watching a video on abortion during HLI's pro-life training in Kitwe, Zambia.

phy and practice of the Culture of Death embodied in contraception, abortion, homosexuality, and reproductive technologies. For practical learning, I showed them abortion videos – *The Silent Scream*, *The Hard Truth* and *The Slaughter of the Innocents*. These videos were shocking to most female participants, who confessed they did not understand abortion was such a horrible and evil practice. The message was clear: the unnatural evil of abortion is practiced by exploiting people’s lack of knowledge on the matter.

I spent the afternoon of the fourth day teaching them Natural Family Planning, according to the “Billings Ovulation Method.” In the introductory part, I explained why Natural Family Planning was important for couples and the advantages couples gain when this practice is properly taught and truthfully applied. I instructed them how to recognize and chart days of fertility and infertility. I also taught them to recognize the unchanging long periods of infertility in breastfeeding mothers. The aim of this lesson was to take their fixed gaze off

the contraceptive mentality so they can embrace God-given natural methods for child spacing.

WAY FORWARD

The participants were moved by the program and resolved to make use of the knowledge they received to educate members of their churches on the need to make the Culture of Life a living reality. They will now educate their churches and families on the Culture of Death and its coercive population control agenda. They will teach their community the importance of welcoming, appreciating, and protecting human life from the moment of conception until natural death. As most female participants had used some form of contraception before the training, their knowledge of Natural Family Planning will give them power and motivation, first to stop using contraception and second to teach fellow women that Natural Family Planning is the best and only healthy option for child spacing.

This training has been one of the most successful programs I have conducted in Zambia.



Emil Hagamu (second from left standing) with Kitwe pro-life trainees. On Emil's right is Brian Minyoi, MD.

Participating in the March for Life in Brussels 2016

By Joannes Bucher, Regional Director of Europe

It's amazing how much coverage the Brussels bombings were given in the mass media and how strongly they were denounced, and yet the opinion-makers, as well as the reigning personalities, don't seem to perceive the diabolical ideology behind them. Bomb attacks are seen as evil but the question arises, are the motivating persuasions behind them also perceived as evil?



Another terror is spreading, which seems to have escaped the opinion-makers' and politicians' attention. This terror is protected by state law and is usually looming in the dark. I am referring to the legal killing of unborn children.

It was of utmost importance that the March for Life 2016 was held again in Brussels. The March remains a necessary counterpoint to this gruesome farce. The organizers and participants deserve our praise for speaking out on behalf of human life. Too many people in Brussels are prioritizing alleged immigrants' rights over the real evil of abortion. Because of this, Europe

is flooded with immigrants while at the same time millions of innocent Europeans lose their lives because of the widespread abortion mentality.

The March was small, but zealous. HLI members joined about 1,000 Belgians in calling for an immediate stop to the murder of innocent children. At the beginning of the March, police arrested many pro-abortion activists who tried to disturb the rally.

Can we call the March a success? Most probably, we can, albeit a small one given the anti-life circumstances. But we should not underestimate the courageous commitment of noble-minded people. In participating in the March, HLI showed its solidarity with the victims of the Brussels bombings, with the participants in the March and, above all, with the victims of abortion.

Europe is dying. It is imperative that opinion-makers and politicians find new ways to support mothers so they don't kill their own babies. All humans, unborn and born, should be protected by law! 'STOP ABORTUS NU – Pour la Vie'! It is our fundamental right. Or as they say in a famous declaration: 'All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act in a spirit of brotherhood today.'



Uniting Nations for a Family Friendly World

By Fr. Shenan J. Boquet

“The Family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the state.” – Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 16

Shortly after returning from very productive mission trips to Rome and Malta, I traveled to New York to participate in a one-day event at the United Nations focused on defending the natural family. Twenty-five Member States and over 100 Civil Society Groups forming the *Group of the Friends of the Family* participated in the program. I was honored to be among those who were asked to address the full body of participants.

One of the most moving moments of the program occurred when seven children read *A Declaration on the Rights of Children and Their Families*, which garnered a standing ovation. One thousand children representing every continent of the world signed the declaration. The declaration is based on existing international state treaty obligations and foundational United Nations agreements. Each stressed the primary role of the natural family and

the environment in which children are to be raised. Let me highlight two in particular:

We call upon State Parties and the United Nations system to respect family autonomy and the responsibilities, rights, and duties of parents to direct the upbringing of their children. – Convention of the Rights of Children Art. 3, 5, & 18; ICPD 1994, II, Principle 11

We call upon State Parties and the United Nations system to respect the rights of children with regard to thought, conscience, and religion, and to respect the rights of parents to guide the moral and religious education of their children. – Convention on the Rights of Children, Art. 14

Regardless of creed, national origin, or cultural background, a nation’s strength fundamentally depends on the stability of the family. We must emphasize this immutable role of the natural family in cultivating and sustaining a Culture of Life.

The common good requires that laws recognize, promote, and defend the institution of marriage, an



Fr. Shenan J. Boquet, President of HLI, and John Martin, Vice-President, at the United Nations in New York.

indissoluble and exclusive union between one man and woman, as the basis of the family, the primary unit of society. Within natural marriage, man and woman give themselves completely to one another, begetting and raising children. Within this sacred environment children learn love, goodness, care, responsibility toward their neighbors, forgiveness, mercy, and charity. Society owes its health and continued survival to the natural family.

This is also why HLI participated this week in the tenth World Congress of Families in Tbilisi, Georgia. As presenters in this historic event, Stephen Phelan represented our headquarters along with Dr. Ligaya Acosta from the Philippines and Lech and Ewa Kowalewski from Poland. With other leaders from over 20 nations, we were very pleased to help plant a flag for life and family in this crucial part of the world at a crucial time. Despite decades of Soviet occupation and further provocations from Russia, Georgia itself has a strong pro-family culture and great support for the Georgian Orthodox Church, whose patriarch is internationally renowned for his stalwart defense of life and family. We pray that this event will help stir into flame a movement to fight pressure from the West to place Georgia and the region under occupation again, though this time it would be under a different form.

The Church stands strongly with those who would fight what she understands as an “ideological colonization” originating from wealthy nations. As Pope Francis stated:

You were given a role to recognize the dangers to our families and protect them from new ideologies. There is an ideological colonization for which we have to be careful of those trying to destroy the family. Challenged by the redefinition of marriage and openness to life, as families we have to be very wise with fortitude to this colonization which will destroy the family. – Encounter with Families, Philippines, Jan. 2015

We see this ideological colonization vividly in the attempt by the State and its agencies in their overarching desire to monopolize the education of children – usurping the role of fathers and mothers. Compulsory sex education programs violently and disrespectfully expose children to pornography, sexual promiscuity, gender ideology, and homosexuality. Parents, the primary



Fr. Boquet, speaking at the United Nations in New York.



Stephen Phelan, HLI Director of Mission Communications, speaking at the 10th World Congress of Families in Tbilisi, Georgia.

educators of their children, are ignored, or worse yet, are threatened with having their children removed from their custody if they prevent their children from participation in so-called “educational” programs.

This ideological colonization is not only exported to the developing world, it is being inflicted upon our own nation from our highest political office. A recent declaration by the Obama Administration has unlawfully mandated that public schools allow students to use bathrooms and locker rooms of the opposite sex. The Administration even threatens to remove Title IX monies if a given State refuses to comply.

This is not democracy, it is the edict of a corrupt dictator, or one who thinks himself a king. Such tactics are expected from banana republics, not the United States. Mr. Obama’s unjust mandate jeopardizes the safety of children while potentially creating a public education-funding crisis. Without any demonstrable evidence of

benefit, these irresponsible tactics place the well-being of children at risk.

We are so grateful when the Church speaks clearly against such evil. In his keynote presentation at the Catholic National Prayer Breakfast in DC, His Eminence Robert Cardinal Sarah told the more than one thousand participants, “Do not be afraid to proclaim the truth with love, especially about marriage according to God’s plans.” Referring to Pope Francis’ comments about ideological colonization, he chastised those promoting gender ideology and homosexual unions, as well as attacking religious freedom. Those of us in the room were moved when he stirringly called out the society that rejects God while trying to build its own utopia.

This is why it is so important to fight to protect the family, the first cell of the life of the Church and every society. It is not about abstract ideas. It is not an ideological war between competing ideas. This is about defending ourselves, children, and future generations from a demonic ideology that says children do not need

mothers and fathers. It denies human nature and wants to cut off entire generations from God.

At times I feel like I am in the Twilight Zone. Sadly, this is not a dream or television program that we can turn off. Our very way of life and the values we hold precious concerning life and family are being threatened at every level of society. The challenges require a heroic response from civil and spiritual leaders, as well as each citizen.

We cannot say this task belongs to others, for the task belongs to each of us. I believe Cardinal Sarah states it best when he says that in order to combat the ideologies and agendas threatening life and family we must “be prophetic, be faithful, and above all, pray.”

Along with our missionaries from Rome, Malta, the Philippines, Poland, and around the world, I am deeply grateful for your prayers and support of our mission. Let us all follow Cardinal Sarah’s call in our own lives as well as in the higher level fights around the world, and let us pray that our efforts are truly in line with the will of the only One who can win this battle, the One who has already defeated sin and death.

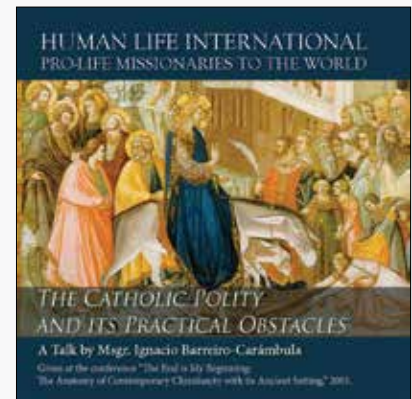
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This month, when you donate \$53 or more to support HLI’s life-saving mission, you’ll receive the CD, *The Catholic Polity and Its Practical Obstacles* by Msgr. Ignacio Barreiro.

In this talk, Msgr. Ignacio Barreiro, former director of HLI’s Rome office, explores the idea of the ideal Catholic society, which can be achieved, even in today’s environment. The world is dominated by secular humanism and Marxism, which believes not in freedom, but in self-indulgence.

We are called to transform society. We cannot and should not expect to make it perfect, but we should work to change it by combating moral relativism, which can lead a democratic society that is not based on natural law toward totalitarianism. This is part of our mission as the Church Militant.

Please send your gift of \$53 or more to HLI, and we’ll ship this CD out to you today!



***The Catholic Polity and Its Practical Obstacles* by Msgr. Ignacio Barreiro is this month’s pro-life educational resource.**