



Mission Report

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- * **Saipan** Becomes the 156th Country Visited by HLI
- * **HLI Romania** Houses and Feeds Mothers and Children
- * **This Month's Pro-Life Resource: Our Lady of Guadalupe: Model for Life**

Left: Dr. Ligaya Acosta, HLI Regional Director for Asia and Oceania, at the Memorial for the Unborn at Mount Carmel Cathedral in Saipan of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Dear Pro-Life Friend in Christ,

In this issue of *Mission Report*, Dr. Ligaya Acosta reports from Saipan, the largest island in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and new mission territory for HLI. Through her talks, Dr. Acosta touched the hearts of the locals by relating her own conversion story and bringing to them the powerful message of Life. Abortion is technically illegal in Saipan, but it is easily accessible on nearby islands, and contraceptives are rampant. The population is receptive, though. At one of her talks, the crowd was so engaged in her message that what was planned for one hour turned into three as she shared the pro-life message to many who were hearing it for the first time.

Also in this issue, we reprint an article originally published online about HLI's *Darul Vietii* affiliate in Romania. *Darul Vietii* is fighting the pro-life battle in the most fundamental way—offering direct help to women in need. Volunteers provide food, clothes, and medicine to pregnant women all over Romania. *Mater Misericordia* house is the newest addition to their ministry. This newly remodeled house provides shelter for mothers and their babies for as long as they need it. May God bless the important work that they are doing at the front line of the pro-life movement.

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



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President

MISSIONARY TRIP TO SAIPAN, NORTHERN MARIANA ISLAND

By Dr. Ligaya A. Acosta, HLI Regional Director for Asia and Oceania, Sept/Oct 2016

September 2016 saw HLI expanding to new territories, as I made my first mission trip to Saipan, the largest and most inhabited island of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). **With my visit, CNMI became the 156th country visited by HLI.**

A “commonwealth in political union” with the United States of America, CNMI is composed of 14 islands located in Oceania in the North Pacific Ocean, about three-quarters of the way from Hawaii to the Philippines. Though a U.S. Territory, Asians comprise 50% of the population, 35.3% of whom are Filipinos – more than the combined native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islanders, which comprise 34.9%. Throughout my stay, I saw many of my countrymen in Saipan. Some were contract workers, some were permanent residents, and some were U.S. citizens.

From many conversations with the locals, I confirmed my fears that behind the façade of seeming peace and quiet in the islands, abortion, contraception, the marriage and family crisis, promiscuity, homosexuality, and its related consequences are common, and not talked about. Abortion is still illegal here, but the flight to Guam where it is legal is a short one. The youth have been greatly influenced by American culture. Condoms are freely distributed in schools. With the legalization of same sex unions in the U.S., 10 same sex “marriages” have been officiated by civil authorities.

Most people here also don’t want to have children. In fact throughout my 12 days in Saipan, I didn’t see a single native baby. The handful of strollers that I did see were children of tourists. **The Total Fertility Rate here is a dying 1.18**, and the total population is only 53,467. Tourists keep the island alive.



I heard first-hand from many people the familiar problems of migrants and contract workers who left their families in search of greener pastures, which ended up ruining them instead. Stories of spouses finding “new loves” and children ending up in teenage pregnancies and early marriages are all too familiar problems of migrants. Ironically for many, the dollars they earn through sweat and tears also become the cause of many vices by family members to whom they send it. Not all stories are sad though. There are also many people who have been very fortunate in Saipan, like Edgar Orpiano and his pretty wife, Nora, who now own several businesses on the island. The couple was advised to abort their first baby when Nora got pregnant at 18, **but they decided to trust in the Lord and keep the baby, a decision they have been greatly rewarded for.** Now the same child has finished school in Europe, runs her own business in the Philippines, and actively serves the Church.



Dr. Ligaya Acosta (center) with Gary and Nora Orpiano in front of their restaurant and grocery in Saipan.

THE DIOCESE OF CHALAN KANOA

My mission trip began on September



From left to right: Rev. Fr. Jason Granado, Rev. Fr. Kenneth Hezel, Dr. Acosta, and Rev. Fr. James Balajadia.

21 with a visit to the Chancery of the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa, located in the premises of the Mt. Carmel Cathedral. I was received warmly by the chancellor, a newly ordained young Chamorro priest, Rev. Fr. James Balajadia. Before I could even tell him the mission of HLI, Fr. James gave me a tour of the office, where I met a Filipino priest, Rev. Fr. Jason Granado, who had just been appointed Director of the Family Ministry, and his assistant, Sister Annie, another Filipino. I took this opportunity to introduce HLI to all three of them. **They were happy to hear of our mission and to receive my gifts of several HLI materials,** which included the most comprehensive HLI Pro-Life DVD Library, the Pro-Life Handbook, and the contraceptive series. Father James promised to discuss my visit with the bishop, looking forward to HLI's return to conduct pro-life training for clergy, religious, and lay leaders, and a possible speaking tour to the islands in the Commonwealth.

On our way out, I met Kristo Rai parish priest, Rev. Fr. Kenneth Hezel, SJ, who also serves as Vicar General of the diocese. Father Ken, as he is fondly called, had just

gotten back from the island and was obviously still tired from his travels, but he arranged an appointment with me. I was touched that he offered to open the adoration chapel for me to spend time with the Blessed Sacrament. There I spent an hour in praise and thanksgiving for the wonderful reception and begged Our Lord again to continue to bless the mission.

VISIT TO THE MOUNT CARMEL CATHEDRAL PARISH

Desiring to introduce HLI to the widest possible audience, I visited the parish office of the Mount Carmel Cathedral. There I met the bishop's secretary, who facilitated my audience with the chancellor, and I spent time with another Filipino Pastorelle sister in charge of youth programs, Sr. Emma Lusterio.

Sr. Emma was glad to hear of HLI's programs, especially for the youth, and expressed a desire to have us in the next diocesan youth camp, which is attended by around 500 youth from all over CNMI. She was also grateful to receive HLI materials for use in their different programs.

THE FRIDAY TALK

People of all ages, most of whom were Filipinos, came early for my 6:30 p.m. talk that Friday. Some of them were people I had met in the course of my mission, who also brought friends along. With all the questions and discussion, my hour-long talk was extended to three. My main message was on “Marriage and the Family: Bedrock of Civilization,” interspersed with my conversion and life story. They were so touched that they prodded me to go on. No one realized that the time had moved to 9:30!

St. Pope John Paul II in *Evangelium Vitae* says that “Proclaiming the Gospel of Life means the proclamation of a living God who is close to us, who calls us to profound communion with Himself and awakens in us the certain hope of eternal life.” “It is the affirmation,” he says, “of the inseparable connection between the person, his life, and his bodiliness. It is the presentation of human life as a life of relationship, a gift of God, the fruit and sign of His love. It is the proclamation that Jesus has a unique relationship with every person, which enables us to see in every human face the face of Christ.”

Indeed in every talk, wherever God sends me, I have one not-so-hidden agenda—to let people feel that we have a great and living God, and that if we follow His precepts and give Him first place in our lives, He will do the rest. In my nothingness and sinfulness, I am always overwhelmed by God’s goodness and mercy, which I desire all people to experience. **To those who have committed sins against life, I always say that we have a great and merciful God who is always waiting for us to go back to Him in the sacrament of reconciliation.** Indeed, He only desires our “YES”, and then He will be free to mold us according to what He wants us to be and use us powerfully for His glory.



Dr. Acosta gives a talk to the Legion of Mary group at Kristo Rai parish in Saipan.

The talk earned for me a wonderful dinner and, even more importantly, an invitation for another talk, this time with the El Shaddai Catholic Charismatic Community.

TALK WITH EL SHADDAI

With the help of my new-found friends, I spent the Saturday before my talk with El Shaddai on a pilgrimage to the beautiful churches of Saipan, and a very nice lunch with three Filipino priests from the Order of Augustinian Recollects.

About 100 people came for my Sunday talk, held at the San Antonio Parish Church. Even some who had attended my Friday evening talk at

Kristo Rai came with their friends. **Many people came to me after my talk telling me how touched they were, and that they wanted more.** One woman, a contract worker, had tried to convince her boss to come—he was one of the 10 homosexuals on the island who was “married” to another man. Unfortunately, she was unsuccessful. For most if not all of the participants, this was ever the first time they attended a pro-life talk.

My talk earned for me a special dinner at a fancy hotel in the good company of new friends, where we had a lot more sharing until almost midnight.

Soon it was time to leave again. Despite a lack of sleep and the hectic schedule, my heart overflowed with joy and gratefulness to the Lord for hearing my earnest prayers to bless this mission. **Truly, if we commit all our plans to the Lord, He will bless them!**

As always, I thank with all my heart the many generous benefactors of Human Life International, without whom this mission would not have been possible. Please know that I always thank the Lord for you, and beg Him many times each day to grant you and your family good health, and multiply your resources abundantly, so that we will be able to continue proclaiming the Gospel of Life wherever He wants us to be. I also thank everyone at HLI Central who never fail to support and inspire us in the front lines.

May everything we do glorify the Lord!



Dr. Acosta, speaking at San Antonio parish church in San Antonio, Saipan.

Invite Father Boquet
or another HLI expert
to speak at your parish!

Call 540-635-7884 or
email us at hli@hli.org
for details.



Host a weekend mission on how to rebuild
a Culture of Life, featuring an HLI speaker!

Make a Gift to HLI and Reduce Your Taxable Income!

IRA Charitable Gift

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

Donating IRA assets can be a financially rewarding strategy for you while at the same time giving glory to God and defending life and family around the world. As always, it is advisable to contact your personal tax advisor or financial representative before making a decision that alters your tax situation. Here are some scenarios that may make sense for you:

- Generally, in order to claim a charitable deduction, you must itemize your tax return. For retirees who no longer pay mortgage interest, the deductions may be too small to itemize. The provision offers the tax benefits of a charitable contribution without your having to itemize your deductions.
- If reporting additional income on your form 1040 increases your Medicare Part B premiums or negatively affects the taxability of your Social Security benefits, then making a charitable contribution from your IRA may be appropriate.

To get started with a contribution from your RMD, contact your financial advisor, your IRA administrator, or HLI at 540-635-7884, ext. 225.



Make Your Year-End Gift to HLI and Save on Your Taxes!

Gifts of Appreciated Stock

Donating long-term appreciated securities directly to HLI — rather than selling the assets and donating the cash proceeds — is one of the best and easiest ways to give more.

Why donating stocks and other securities is one of the most tax-efficient ways to give

A charitable contribution of long-term appreciated securities is one of the most tax-efficient of all ways to give because of two key advantages:

- Any long-term appreciated securities with unrealized gains (meaning they were purchased over a year ago, and have a current value greater than their original cost) may be donated to HLI and a tax deduction taken for the *full fair market value of the securities* — up to 30% of your adjusted gross income.
- Since the securities are donated rather than sold, *capital gains taxes from selling the securities no longer apply*. The more appreciation the securities have, the greater the tax savings will be.

Questions? For answers call Human Life International at 540-635-7884, ext 225.

HLI's Romania's New *Mater Misericordia* House

Of course, there are alternatives to abortion. But what if they were promoted instead of the more profitable choice? What if Planned Parenthood, instead of hiding their true profit center with the offer of free pregnancy tests, something available at every crisis pregnancy center, instead offered free maternity clothes to women in need? What if, instead of emphasizing the cost of having a baby, the National Abortion Foundation offered baby food and clothes, or even shelter, to new mothers? What if, instead of covering birth control and abortions free of charge (as many have started doing under Obamacare), insurance companies fully covered birthing costs and treatments? Wouldn't this make the alternatives to abortion much more attainable?



This is the mission of HLI's Romanian affiliate's new *Mater Misericordia* house, which welcomed Maria Anastasia into the world on July 6th. Maria Anastasia is the third child to be born at *Mater Misericordia* since they opened their doors in January to pregnant women seeking shelter.

REAL ALTERNATIVES TO ABORTION

HLI Romania started in 2003 as a prayer vigil group outside of the abortion clinic in Timisoara. The group was called *Asociatia Darul Vietii* (Gift of Life Association). With Gerda Chisarau and Father Ioan as directors, *Darul Vietii* soon began counseling on the sidewalks in front of the clinic. As they suspected, **many women wanted alternatives to abortion, but could not afford to give birth to a child**, much less feed and clothe one.

Darul Vietii's mission expanded due to demand. They began to offer women maternity and baby clothes, food, diapers, medicine, treatment, and even firewood. When a single mother of six came to them in danger of losing her house, *Darul Vietii* took on her rent.

A HOME FOR MOTHERS

Two years ago, Gerda Chisarau, executive director of HLI Romania, was collaborating with a similar group in Switzerland that has been supportive of *Darul Vietii*. The Swiss group "Yes to Life" asked Gerda what HLI Romania



does to help pregnant women with nowhere to live. Gerda replied that, although *Darul Vietii* had solutions to many problems, providing housing was not one of them. Yes to Life suggested building a house for mothers, where women could stay safely and free of charge if they had no other option. With the help of Yes to Life, *Darul Vietii* bought *Mater Misericordia* house.

The house welcomed its first mother in January 2016. In March, she gave birth to twins. Several women have passed through *Mater Misericordia* this year, and the house is becoming busier as the word gets out. Mothers are welcome to stay as long as they need to. The staff at *Mater Misericordia* participate at each birth with great joy, thanking God for the opportunity to save another life.

FUNDING FOR DARUL VIETII'S WORK

Such great work, of course, requires financial backing. The Swiss foundation provides the house with some funding, but HLI Romania relies on God for the rest.

And God is very good. *Darul Vietii* successfully provides about 15 to 20 women with care and supplies each month, and *Mater Misericordia* houses anyone who comes to them. By the grace of God, HLI Romania will continue to provide women with alternatives to abortion for as long as they possibly can.

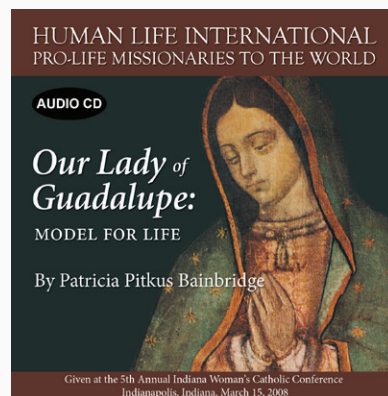
DONATE \$53 OR MORE TO HLI THIS MONTH AND GET OUR LATEST PRO-LIFE RESOURCE!

P.S.—In appreciation of your sacrificial support of \$53 or more this month, we would like to send you a CD talk entitled **OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE: MODEL FOR LIFE.**

Listen as Patricia Pitkus Bainbridge tells a true story of faith—*the apparition of Our Lady of Guadalupe*. At a time when human sacrifice was rampant in Mexico because of the influence of the pagan Aztec Indians—even after Cortez outlawed the practice—Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared to Juan Diego in Mexico City to help evangelize the Mexican people.

Mrs. Bainbridge explains the amazing symbolism contained in the miraculous image of Our Lady of Guadalupe, which was given to the humble Juan Diego. Just as Our Lady used Juan Diego to change the hearts and minds of the Mexican people to embrace a Culture of Life, so she can change the hearts and minds of people today through you and me, if only we accept her holy Son's calling for our lives.

Please send your gift of \$53 or more to HLI this month, and let us rush this wonderful CD talk out to you!



Our Lady of Guadalupe: Model for Life is our gift to you this month in appreciation for your financial support of \$53 or more!