



Mission Report

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- * **Support for Life and Family in Ivory Coast**
- * **Countering Population Control Groups in Nigeria**
- * **This Month's Gift to Donors: *The Population Control Agenda* audio CD.**

Left: Pro-life leaders meet to discuss ways of protecting Life and Family in Nigeria.

Dear Pro-Life Friend in Christ,

In this month's issue of ***Mission Report***, we have two reports from Africa, each discussing the battle with promoters of the Culture of Death and how to counter these destructive forces. First, we hear from George Wirnkar, HLI Regional Director of French-Speaking Africa.

George reports on a mission trip he made to Ivory Coast held earlier this year, where he spent five days working with bishops and pro-life leaders to discuss the best ways to counter the threats to family life there and preserve traditional values. In George's report, we see both how difficult it can be to witness the onslaught of the Culture of Death but also how encouraging it is to see the fruits of years of labor in the field. This is especially gratifying to see in a pro-life priest who has been trained by HLI since his early seminary days.

Next, we hear from Fr. Jonathan Opio, HLI Country Director for Uganda, who likewise attended strategic meetings earlier this year in Nigeria. As in Ivory Coast, support from the Church hierarchy is a critical component. This is especially true when considering the training of seminarians, who will become our future Church leaders.

Ensuring seminarians have the proper formation needed in dealing with Life and Family issues is central to HLI's work and is indispensable for their future apostolate. And yet, without HLI providing this training year after year, there would be a terrible gap in their readiness to confront these issues. Thanks to you, our benefactors, we are able to do this. May God reward you for your critical role in this pro-life mission.



Fr. Shenan J. Boquet
President

Yours in Christ and in Our Lady,

Fr. Shenan J. Boquet
President, Human Life International

MISSIONARY TRIP TO IVORY COAST

By George Wirnkar, HLI Regional Director of French-Speaking Africa, February 2017

Skyscrapers, shiny new bridges, and state-of-the-art toll roads make Ivory Coast look like a brand new country. It is hard to believe that less than nine years ago this same country was embroiled in a civil war that lasted four years. The results of this war were thousands killed, displaced, and forced into exile. The economy was crippled both by the physical destruction brought about by the war and by the compromised business climate that set back one of Africa's biggest economies by decades.

THE UNSEEN WAR

Yet the calm we now see on the surface masks a war that lies beneath: The war against Life and Family. As in many countries on the continent, **some notorious international NGO's involved in "Sexual and Reproductive Health" services operate freely and extensively.** In fact, Planned Parenthood has established in Ivory Coast (as it has done in many other nations of Africa) an organized, heavily funded and well-introduced local affiliate called *The Ivorian Association for Family Welfare*.

Although the name of this association gives the impression that it is working for family welfare, it is investing heavily and working tirelessly to undermine the family. **Organizations and associations of this type are legion. Many of them are funded by European and US tax payers' money.**



Their promotion of "sexual and reproductive rights" – which is aimed especially at the youth – as well as their promotion of contraception to young people indisputably undercut parents' rights and undermine the family.

A THRIVING NATION

Ivory Coast has a total population of about 23 million, of which nearly 20%



Basilica of Our Lady of Peace in Yamoussoukro, Ivory Coast.

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is said to be Catholic. Her Churches are full, her seminaries and houses of religious formation are flourishing, and the practice of the faith is very strong. The Basilica of Our Lady of Peace in Yamoussoukro, which is second in size only to St Peter's in Rome, not only earns this great nation a place in the Guinness Book of Records, but also epitomises a prospering people for whom faith and religion are not vestiges of their past.

It is obvious, therefore, that while civil strife is gone and many of the scars of the civil war are healed or repaired, **one war rages on – the war for faith and family.**

Ivory Coast's economy is second only to Nigeria's in West Africa, and she is the world's largest cocoa producer. For this reason, she is a choice business partner of many Western nations. One good thing this has brought to Ivory Coast is a well-developed road system and ICT infrastructure (Information Communication Technology). This has attracted leading continental organizations like the African Development Bank to set up base in Ivory Coast. **But it has also attracted many population control organizations.**

The bishops of Ivory Coast have kept the work of the numerous population control organizations from compromising Ivory Coast's youth completely and taking over the family.

The presence of these population control organizations and initiatives in Ivory Coast is strong and growing. But the position of the Catholic Church in general, the fidelity of the bishops, and the heroic and public stance these bishops have taken on the true nature and sanctity of Life and Family have been an invaluable help to the nation. The bishops of Ivory Coast have kept the work of the numerous population control organizations from compromising Ivory Coast's youth completely and taking over the family.

SUPPORT FOR LIFE AND FAMILY

Our work in Ivory Coast is supported not only by the Catholic hierarchy here but also by a strong and growing base of pro-life activists. Among these are a committed youth and an emerging

group of young Catholic priests who encourage and support pro-life activities sponsored by parishes and other institutions. Our Affiliate here, Oyoyo (which means “Love” in Abidji - an Ivorian dialect) coordinates our efforts with the hierarchy as well as our work with priests and seminarians.

One unfortunate but common feature of the pro-life movement is burnout. If we are not careful, we can get to the point where we see everything moving in favor of the Culture of Death, and our best efforts seem to produce nothing but poor results. Even after more than 25 years of fighting for life, this temptation is all too real for me. From the time you begin talking to a freshman seminarian in Africa to the time he preaches his first sermon and gets his first pastoral assignment, you can expect a minimum wait time of seven years. This is a long process of cultivation and preparation. But **when you do finally see the fruits of your labor, it becomes enough to sustain you for some time again.** One example of this is Fr. Sam Theodore.



George Wirnkar (far left) with Fr. Sam Theodore (back row in the white cassock) and leaders of the pro-life group of St. Elizabeth Parish.

THE FRUITS OF OUR LABOR

Fr. Sam was ordained in 2016 for the diocese of Youpougon in Ivory Coast. Assigned to the Parish of St. Elizabeth, he immediately saw the need for organizing, training, and supporting the youth in his parish on life issues. The group he organized attracted the interest of many parents and other adults. Today, Fr. Sam meets with them twice a week. He has organized the group into committees focused on key aspects of this ministry, like community watch, peer counselling, training, and spiritual support. This past Lent, they developed, together with our Ivorian Affiliate Oyoyo, a Way of the Cross for Life, which they piously meditated on twice every week.

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!

Fr. Sam is a providential product of the solid seminary training he received from the Sainte Ceour de Marie Major Seminary in Anyama, Ivory Coast. Fr. Sam acknowledges: **“The training, materials, and conferences provide throughout my seminary training by Human Life international prepared me well for meeting and serving the young people in my parish today as a priest.”** It took a full seven years to grow, but the first fruits of this tree are abundant.

SUPPORT FROM THE CHURCH

Although personal commitment to the cause of fighting for Life and Family is critical, episcopal leadership is a tremendous support to this. The Bishop of Youpougon Diocese, Bishop Salomon Lazoutey, welcomed our team and encouraged us, acknowledging the need for our work and stressing the importance of lay organizations for working directly with communities and with people in challenging circumstances. He assured us of his support for all our activities and promised to pray for us.

I must also acknowledge the interest and support of the Bishops’ Conference of Ivory Coast, expressed through its president, Bishop Alexis Touably Youlo of the Diocese of Agboville. After driving through a lush green road to a quiet little town that sprung out of the savannah north of the national capital, we were warmly received by Bishop Youlo and we discussed a wide range of opportunities for which our work and ministry could be useful. He supported our initiative to hold our Institute for Priests in Ivory Coast and promised both his blessing for this project and his presence at the inaugural celebrations.

For five days we were able to take the pro-life pulse of this nation. Armel Angodji, the head of our Ivorian Affiliate Oyofe, had organized meetings, lined up talks, and set up high-level hierarchy audiences for us. He also connected us with many young people and volunteers. Armel knows his home turf well. He knows the ills that threaten his people, but he also knows how to motivate them in this epic fight for Life and Family.

BATTLE-READY SOLDIERS

When we met with volunteers at St. Matthias Parish in Youpougon, all I could see were battle-ready foot soldiers who just needed training and direction. These



Above: George Wirnkar and Armel Angodji with Bishop Alexis Touably Youlo, Bishop of Abgboville and President of the Bishops’ Conference of Ivory Coast.



Above: George Wirnkar engaging with students at the girls vocational school in Abobo, Ivory Coast.

young women and men are full of zeal for spreading and defending the African family and promoting the many aspects of traditional family life, reinforced and supported by the Gospel of Life.

At one of the talks we gave to the girls vocational school in Abobo, I was truly inspired by the conviction of all these young people and how enthusiastically they received our message. The rapt attention of over 200 young girls spoke of a hunger for truth that they clearly recognized when it was presented to them.

While the youth are the target, the family is undoubtedly the battleground. In many cases, the Catholic Church is the only organized faith group that speaks for the unborn, that raises the alarm when pro-choice organizations play with words and mislead trusting people. The Church is continually reaffirming the truth of natural marriage and the sanctity of Life and Family. We, its lay leaders, must continually train, equip, and support each other in the Church's unchanging teaching. We must make more resources available to those studying for the priesthood and to priests on the ground. In doing so, we can hope for a new dawn of Faith, Life, and Family not just in Ivory Coast, but on the whole African continent, and throughout the world. Please support us to help make this happen.

MISSIONARY TRIP TO NIGERIA

By Fr. Jonathan Opio, HLI Country Director for Uganda, March 2017

On March 26, 2017, I had just returned from Dar Es Salam, where we held our regional strategic meeting to plan the defeat of the East African Community Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights Bill, 2017 (EAC SRHR BILL, 2017).

After taking five hours of rest, I packed my clothes and headed back to the airport for a mission trip to Nigeria. I arrived at Murtala Muhammed International Airport at 5:40pm Nigerian time, and I was picked up by a staffer from the Foundation of African Cultural Heritage (FACH) and taken to the house of Kinsley Ekwem, where I also met his wife, Angella, and their son Eberechi.

It was a blessing to stay at the home of the Ekwem's, where I received a wonderful reception. Both Kinsley and



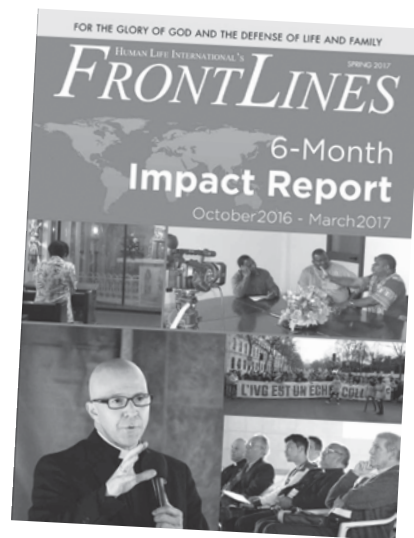
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Angella are lawyers who understand the socio-political and economic situation in Nigeria. Having discussions with them gave me the opportunity to better understand the issues in Nigeria.

Nigeria, like other African countries, is targeted by population control groups. In the streets, cinemas, schools, and media, the pro-aborts promote the Culture of Death without any hindrance and with contempt for the wishes, aspirations, and customs of the Nigerian people. As a response to this cultural assault, FACH, together with her partners Family Watch International, World Congress of Families, and others, organized a conference to provide opportunities for emerging leaders and those on the pro-life front line to discuss issues that affect the African continent.

It was a privilege to be among those invited to speak and to be a part of the team planning ways to fight back against this intrusion in Africa. The invitation to speak at this conference was the result of work we've done against comprehensive sex education, abortion, and contraception – all areas that are being heavily promoted by population control groups in Africa. I gladly accepted this invitation to speak, hoping to contribute to the discussion on policies needed to protect the people of this country. The conference lasted three days and was graced by a number of speakers from Africa, Europe, and the United States. Among the speakers were civil, cultural, and religious leaders.



Fr. Jonathan Opio (right) speaks with Archbishop Gabriel Leke Abegunrin of Ibadan on strategies needed to protect Life and Family in Nigeria.

In his opening remarks, Archbishop Gabriel Leke Abegunrin, the Archbishop of Ibadan, emphasized that **the purpose of this conference was to provide opportunities for African leaders to strategize ways to tackle the challenges that affect the continent.** Comprehensive Sex Education (CSE) was identified as one of the programs that affect and undermine African families.

In my presentations, I exposed the origins of CSE and those who have implemented and promoted this program. I spoke of laws and policies that have been used to market CSE, contraception, and abortion in Africa. I also shared some unfortunate experiences we suffered in Uganda and how, through various activities and activism, policies that had once protected children were abandoned, and in their place policies were implemented that destroy the innocence of children. These policies were promoted to further the interests of population control groups.

I had the good fortune to be accompanied by two members of parliament, Hon. Richard Oseku Oribo and Hon. Magaret Lamwaka, with whom I have been coordinating various activities within parliament. They spoke passionately about the mission of HLI in Uganda, and they informed the gathering that they stand ready to defend the Culture of Life and the Family. It was such a



His Royal Highness Igwe Gibson Nwosu, ruler of Awka, Anambra, discusses ways of promoting pro-life issues in Nigeria.

joy to hear these members of parliament speak. Other speakers kept referring back to them as models of activism to be adopted.

It was obvious that many participants and leaders within the conference needed to understand more fully how bad policies affect the pro-life mission, and the various presentations served to do just that. Many left with a better understanding of the need to affect policy in public life.

The Nigerian strategy meetings – especially the talks from the political, cultural, and religious leaders – provided an excellent opportunity for pro-life groups and individuals to discuss ways of combating the ills that affect Life and Family in that region. One of the talks, given by His Royal Highness Igwe Gibson Nwosu, ruler of Awka, Anambra in Nigeria, discussed ways of approaching the pro-life mission that would be most effective in promoting life and the dignity of the human person. He spoke of practical ways for handling the various challenges in the community. He also praised all the speakers at the meeting and thanked them for sharing their experiences. He encouraged all of us to persevere in our work, since truth is on our side, and he pledged his support and availability in promoting the Culture of Life.

Many other speakers spoke passionately about the need for Africa to rise up to defend itself against imperialism and neo-colonialism. George Wirnkar, HLI Director for French-Speaking Africa, took the participants through the basic approaches that every one needs to understand in order to counter anti-life forces.

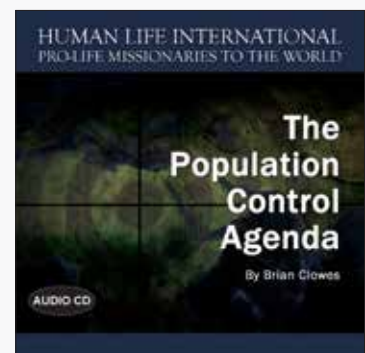
The conference ended on a happy note with concluding remarks from the Archbishop of Lagos, His Grace Archbishop Alfred Adewale Martins, who assured us that the Conference of Bishops in Nigeria is committed to standing side-by-side with pro-life and pro-family leaders in promoting the Culture of Life. He encouraged everyone to do all they can to defend Life and the Family.

DONATE \$53 OR MORE TO HLI THIS MONTH AND RECEIVE A FREE GIFT!

P.S.—This month, in appreciation for your gift of \$53 or more, **we would like to send you the audio CD talk *The Population Control Agenda* by HLI Director of Research and Education Brian Clowes, Ph.D.**

In this talk, Dr. Clowes covers the primary elements of the population control agenda — its goals, motivations, and overall strategy. Special attention is paid to the five primary motivations of the population control agenda: greed, fear of famine, environmentalism, self-hatred, and racism.

The population controllers know they can no longer directly control developing nations through means of force. Instead they must “colonize the minds” of the people in these countries and make them think like Americans and Europeans. Through this subtle brainwashing, the West continues to exert control over these nations, their people, and their resources.



The CD *The Population Control Agenda* is our gift to you this month in appreciation for your financial support of \$53 or more!

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