



# Mission Report

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George Wirnkar (on the left), and Joseph Meaney (back, center) with participants of HLI's Seminarians Summer Institute (SSI).

- \* African Seminarian Summer Institute in **Togo, Africa**, marks *Humanae Vitae* Anniversary
- \* HLI Testifies to Dignity of Human Life before the Organization of American States Assembly (OAS) in Washington, D.C.
- \* HLI Holds 15<sup>th</sup> REDESSVIDA (Pro-Life Seminarian/Priest Training) in **Trujillo, Peru**
- \* This Month's Gift to Donors: "*Humanae Vitae*," a Talk by Msgr. Ignacio Barreiro

Dear Pro-Life Friend in Christ,

This summer we held our 15<sup>th</sup> REDESSVIDA conference, which took place in Trujillo, Peru. Organized by our Regional Director for Latin America, Mario Rojas, this conference was aimed at priests and seminarians, and included a second session for religious and laity. REDESSVIDAs are great education assets for Human Life International, as you will read in this month's Mission Report!

We also share with you this month our testimony presented to the ambassadors of 35 nations at the Organization of American States (OAS). HLI spoke before the 48<sup>th</sup> Annual Assembly in Washington, D.C. in May on the value of Life in a forum where the majority of countries favor "reproductive health," or contraception and abortion. HLI is the only organization to testify with representation in all OAS subregions, so we are hard to ignore.

Finally, we bring you news of our recently completed Francophone Seminarian Summer Institute (SSI) in the African nation of Togo. The main theme for this SSI was the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Blessed Paul VI's encyclical letter *Humanae Vitae* and the future of Life and Family in Africa. This year we are also holding *Humanae Vitae* conferences in Africa, Asia and Europe.

Thank you, as always, for your dedication, support and prayer, which enable us to form hearts and minds in the Gospel of Life. May Our Lady bless you and your family in the month of her Feast of the Assumption. As always, you remain in my prayers.

Yours in Christ and Our Lady,

Fr. Shenan J. Boquet

President, Human Life International



Fr. Shenan J. Boquet  
President



# MISSION TRIP TO PERU

By Dr. Joseph Meaney, HLI Director of International Outreach and Expansion, May-June 2018

*¡Vale un Perú!* This traditional Spanish proverb, which literally translates as “It’s worth a Peru,” means something is of great value! ***Human Life International’s latest REDESSVIDA conference—this time held in Trujillo, Peru—showed how true it is that a pro-life education is the best investment one can make in today’s cultural climate.*** REDESSVIDA is an acronym for “*Red de Sacerdotes y Seminaristas por la Vida*”—HLI’s network of priests and seminarians for life in Latin America. In the last nine years HLI has held 15 REDESSVIDA conferences throughout Latin America. They are extremely inspirational events. Priests and seminarians, as well as religious and lay leaders, come to these conferences for a complete mini-course on Life and Family issues. Our most recent, in the northwestern Peruvian city of Trujillo, was hosted by the Archdiocese and the Benedict XVI Catholic University. As a special thank you, all the HLI speakers were given medals and official recognition as illustrious visiting professors of the university!

## HLI’s International Team of Speakers

***HLI has a veteran team of speakers from different countries, who make these remarkable conferences motivational and sometimes life-changing moments for the delegates.*** HLI President, Father Shenan Boquet, makes a point of speaking at almost all of the REDESSVIDA conferences. One year he went to four different Latin American countries in outreach to what can be called, without exaggeration, the Catholic continent. Mario Rojas, HLI Regional Director of Latin America, has driven this project from the start. He



came up with the winning formula for these conferences, along with Nancy Tosi from Ecuador and HLI’s longtime leader in our Miami Office, Adolfo Castañeda. Starting this year, I joined the team to put my Spanish skills and masters in Latin American Studies at the service of HLI in South America. Raymond de Souza, who helps HLI in many missions, not least in Portuguese-speaking countries, put his excellent Spanish to use at these events. Rounding off the team are Dr. Rafael Cabrera from Nicaragua, and Father Ronald Labarera, along with psychologist Lola Sheen Vergara, both from Peru.

Father Labarera organized the Trujillo, Peru, REDESSVIDA. Trujillo is one of the oldest and largest urban centers of Peru. The current city was founded by the Spanish Conquistadors in 1534, along the Moche River. The area had ancient cities as early as the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, and the Moche civilization endured until the 9<sup>th</sup> century, when it was succeeded by the Chimú civilization which was then overcome by the Inca Empire only a few decades before the Spanish Conquest. There are very impressive archeological



HLI’s International team of speakers. From the left: Fr. Shenan Boquet, Fr. Ronald La Barrera (Peru), Dr. Rafael Cabrera (Nicaragua), Raymond de Souza, Lola Sheen, Nancy Tosi (Ecuador) and Mario Rojas (Bolivia), Regional Director for Latin America.

sites surrounding Trujillo. One of them is the fabled adobe metropolis of Chan Chan, the largest city in South America at the peak of the Chimu Empire's power.

Pope Francis came to Trujillo on an apostolic voyage in January 2018. He celebrated Mass on the beach before several hundred thousand. One reason he came was to show solidarity for the many victims of the major flooding of Trujillo in 2017. Prominent signs welcoming Pope Francis are still visible all over the city. A large stone cross on the beach stands as a reminder of his passage.

The HLI REDESSVIDA conference for priests lasted for three days and was followed by a second, two-day concentrated session for religious sisters, seminarians and lay leaders. Attendees came from many different parts of Peru to this national conference, and we also had a Peruvian bishop attend. One of the most unexpected discoveries was the presence of Africans. There are now sixteen Kenyans and Congolese seminarians and priests in the Archdiocese of Trujillo. They came to help with the tremendous pastoral needs here, since there can be up to 10,000 Catholics for every priest in a diocese. In our global Catholic Church, these Africans are helping their brothers in South America. There are also Filipina nuns and missionaries from various countries.

### **Corpus Christi in Peru**

In between the two sessions of the REDESSVIDA, we had the joy of experiencing the solemnity of Corpus Christi in the Archdiocese of Trujillo as honored guests. It was spectacular. *Four bishops, hundreds of priests and religious, all the civil and military authorities, and an estimated 40,000 people in the main plaza of the city participated in the Corpus Christi events; what a witness!* The Mass and procession closed off the center of the old city. A special gilded wagon with many sculptures of angels carried the monstrance with the Blessed Sacrament and was rolled by a lay confraternity through triumphal arches and over beds of flowers and other decorations with Eucharistic themes. A military band played church music as fireworks lit up the night sky. Trujillo is known as the Eucharistic city of Peru.

We had the opportunity to give interviews on television and radio programs about the conference and the defense of Life. Peru is solidly pro-life with laws that ban abortion. Some of their marches for life have gathered



**Fr. Boquet, with a seminarian participating in HLI's latest REDESSVIDA conferences in Trujillo, Peru.**

hundreds of thousands of people. I even saw that an interviewer for a secular TV program had Our Lady of Guadalupe's image on his telephone as a background image. The challenge for Peru is to maintain their strong pro-life laws and culture.

### **The Importance of a well-formed conscience**

There is rampant confusion as to what constitutes moral conscience. The Church has always insisted the faithful follow the dictates of their consciences, but what is a well-formed conscience? It is not a personal preference or feeling as many seem to think. A heretical group that is very active in Latin America, "Catholics for a Free Choice," has a publication called "Conscience," in which they frequently assert that Catholics may choose contraception or abortion. This is simply false. A true conscience must conform itself to the objective norms of morality and not determine for itself in a relativistic way what is right or wrong.

*HLI provides a solid basis for building the Culture of Life. Many Peruvians in the audience were simply aghast when they heard about the excesses of Gender Ideology in Western countries. The conservative and Catholic culture of Peru does not accept homosexual practices or unions.* Children in their schools are not taught that they can change genders from male to female or even more exotic combinations. It is nonetheless very important that Peruvians know this mentality is inevitably going to be exported to their country, and they need to be prepared to resist it.





Dr. Joseph Meaney, HLI Director of International Outreach and Expansion, speaking at HLI's REDESSVIDA conference.

The people of Peru have a very passionate Latin American character. They love their country, their families and their Church. It is a precious heritage that must be preserved. There are certainly warning signs here of the creeping entrance of an anti-life mentality. The fertility rate has fallen by more than half since the 1970s when it was 6 children on average per family. Today it is only 2.36 children per woman on average, perilously close to the minimum necessary to keep the population from declining and eventually collapsing

*In this year that marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Blessed Pope Paul VI's prophetic encyclical letter, **Humanae Vitae**, HLI is proclaiming in Peru and far and wide that children and chaste marital love are blessings and not curses. It is a message the world desperately needs to hear.*

## The Organization of American States (OAS) and the Right to Life

*By Marlene Gillette-Ibern, HLI OAS Program Coordinator*

(Washington, D.C.) The 48<sup>th</sup> Organization of American States (OAS) held its General Assembly from June 3 to June 5, 2018, at the OAS historic central building in Washington, D.C. ***This meeting marked the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the OAS, as well as the ratification of its Charter and the OAS Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man.***

The Organization of American States is an international government organization, comprised of the 35 countries of the continent of America. Every June the OAS holds its General Assembly, where ambassadors of member states meet to discuss regional and national matters. Its influence should not be underrated; it often serves as a testing ground for matters also being run by the United Nations Assembly.

The 2018 theme revolved around the four pillars of the OAS: human rights, democracy, development, and security. In the words of an OAS Declaration from this year, ***"All men are born free and equal, in dignity and in rights***, and, being endowed by nature with reason and conscience, they should conduct themselves as

brothers one to another... The fulfillment of duty by each individual is a prerequisite to the rights of all. Rights and duties are interrelated in every social and political activity of man. While rights exalt individual liberty, duties express the dignity of that liberty."

This cited OAS document reflects sound principles and values based on natural law. Yet socialist thought heavily characterizes modern OAS documents. In particular, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, which include universal access to contraception and abortion, are represented in OAS objectives and positions, as well as gender ideology. This is a clear indication that the OAS ambassadors need to be strenuously reminded of the anti-life and anti-family language embedded in OAS documents and presented with alternative pro-life and pro-family language.

Thus, HLI led a coalition of fellow civil society organizations (CSOs) from the four official sub-regions of the OAS: North America, Central America, the Caribbean, and South America. ***Marina Salvador, serving as the spokesperson for the HLI Coalition for Human***

*Development in her address to the assembly stated the dignity of the human person from the moment of conception, the right to life and the right for the respect of biological identity are paramount.* This statement was presented directly before OAS Secretary General Almagro and the OAS member state ambassadors at the OAS CSO meeting June 3, 2018.

As part of its educational efforts, which are organized every year as side events at OAS meetings, HLI also held several seminars on Life and Family issues. HLI educational materials were distributed and sessions were led by: HLI OAS Program Coordinator Marlene Gillette-Ibern, HLI OAS Auxiliary Program Coordinator Luis Martinez, HLI OAS National Program Coordinator Marina Salvador-Velazquez, Gabriela Quadri and lastly, Andrea Flores on the human rights of handicapped persons. HLI and the Center for Family and Human Rights (C-FAM) then held a joint seminar, where HLI President Father Shenan Boquet spoke on the need to educate all sectors of society on life and family. Stefano Gennarini, C-FAM Vice President for the Center of Legal Studies, gave a talk on the 70 years of the OAS human rights efforts from a pro-life and pro-family perspective. *Among those who attended the HLI-C-FAM seminar was the recently appointed U.S. Ambassador for the OAS, Hon. Carlos Trujillo and C-FAM President Austin Ruse.*



**Luis Martinez (Auxiliary Program Coordinator - Mexico) and Marina Salvador (National Coordinator - USA), who along with Marlene Gillette (OAS Program Coordinator - Puerto Rico), were the chief members of the HLI contingent.**

Other speakers included HLI Development Department Director Stan Kuta, HLI International Department of Missions Manager John Fusto and HLI Director of Education and Research Dr. Brian Clowes, speaking on related topics.

In all, the HLI participation at this OAS 48<sup>th</sup> General Assembly was a strong and special moment in its commitment to present the truth on a global stage.

## September 2018 Events

### *Please pray for HLI's Mission work in September:*

- HLI President Fr. Sheanan Boquet, HLI President, Dr. Brian Clowes, Director of Education and Research and Dr. Ligaya Acosta, Regional Director of Asia and Oceania, travel to Papua New Guinea 9/17-9/28.
- Fr. Boquet then goes on a mission trip to New Zealand with Dr. Brian Clowes, 9/29-10/10.
- Dr. Acosta also travels to Kerala, India, to begin arrangements for ASPAC 2019 (the largest pro-life conference anywhere in Asia)
- Nancy Tosi, HLI's Vida Humana Internacional (VHI) Advisor, supervises a mission trip to Mexico 9/5-9/16.
- Emil Hagamu, HLI's Regional Director for Anglophone Africa, travels on a mission to Swaziland 9/24-9/30.

*Watch for details of these events to be reported in future issues of HLI's Mission Report.*



# HLI Francophone Africa Seminarians Summer Institute

*By HLI Staff, with input from Dr. Joseph Meaney, HLI Director of International Outreach and Expansion, and George Wirnkar, Director of French-Speaking Africa, Lomé, Togo July 2018*

Throwing out your back is not the best way to prepare for a pro-life missionary journey to Africa... but that is what Joseph Meaney did the day before his scheduled departure for Togo, in West Africa, for Human Life International's Francophone Africa Seminarian Summer Institute (SSI). HIL holds these regional events every summer as part of HLI's Seminarians for Life International program. A doctor thankfully prescribed Joseph large doses of muscle relaxants and heavy duty pain killers, and he managed to hobble onto the airplane in Paris. Arriving in Lomé, George Wirnkar, HLI's Regional Director for Francophone Africa, escorted him to John Paul II Major Seminary.

Joseph Meaney's first talk was on the history of the Cultures of Death and of Life. Starting with Cain and Abel in Genesis, he proceeded rapidly to the totalitarian regimes that legalized abortion in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, illustrating how the Culture of Life thrived among the Hebrews, and even more spectacularly with the advent of Christianity. The 140 seminarians and



priests present hailed from all across French-speaking West and Central Africa and had many questions at the end.

The main theme for this SSI was the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Blessed Paul VI's encyclical letter *Humanae Vitae*, and the future of Life and Family in Africa. HLI was greatly blessed to have several lecturers



Participants in the HLI Francophone Africa Seminarians Summer Institute.





Dr. Olivier & Laure Salmon, NFP lecturers from the John Paul II Institute in Cotonou, Benin.

from the John Paul II Institute in Cotonou, Benin. A quick look at a map reveals Lomé and Cotonou are only 85 miles apart. That made it easy for Dr. Gisèle Egounlety, Dr. Olivier & Laure Salmon, and Pathove Gaoungba to come and speak. They addressed topics ranging from the Billings Method of natural fertility regulation to marriage preparation/accompaniment, and pro-life efforts to counter population control. State population control was a famous prediction of Pope Paul VI if artificial contraception became widespread.

*Pathove is a member of HLI's affiliate in Benin, Communauté Marie Mère des Enfants à Naitre (CMMEN). This group named in honor of Mary, Mother of the Unborn, began after the World Youth Days in the Philippines in 1995.* A Beninois youth delegate brought back a pro-life prayer card given to him with a picture of the Virgin Mary, weeping over an aborted baby. Today CMMEN has over a hundred members who say spiritual adoption prayers for children at risk of abortion. They also give talks in schools, show pro-life films, and do crisis pregnancy counseling. They have saved many mothers under pressure to abort. Abortion is not legal there, but doctors can still be found who are willing to kill babies for a hefty fee.

### ***“Pro-Fam” Clinics: A Franchise Not for Fast-Food but Instead Fast-Sterility***

In the course of their pro-life apostolate CMMEN youth leaders have come across shocking Culture of Death

activities. *There are now so-called “Pro-Fam” clinics in Africa aggressively pushing birth control and franchising through existing private clinics. Doctors and staff are willing to make extra money by selling toxic contraception to women. What really garners points for many population control groups are cheap ways to sterilize African women.* Their staffs are paid bonuses for every “acceptor” they pull in for long acting methods like Norplant, which can render a woman sterile for up to five years! It is highly contraindicated for women with liver disease, breast cancer or blood clots, but it is highly doubtful that the vast majority of African women being surgically implanted with Norplant rods are evaluated for all the underlying conditions that make this form of birth control a health risk to them. Norplant was actually removed from the US market after its use in heavily African-American high schools. Up to 50,000 women sued for damages in 70 class action lawsuits against Wyeth and its subsidiaries or doctors who prescribed Norplant. But in Africa? There is no chance of medical malpractice lawsuits driving Norplant out of the market. *What pharmaceutical companies fear to offer in the US, is given out like candy to Africans.*



Dr. Joseph Meaney interviewed by Radio Maria in Lomé, Togo at the Seminarians Summer Institute.

Armél Angodji leads HLI's affiliate in Côte D'Ivoire and assists George Wirnkar in regional coordination activities. He spoke on responsible parenthood. Addressing the false belief that *Humanae Vitae* advocated people having as many children as biologically possible, he

restated the emphasis that the Encyclical calls for responsible parenthood. Pope Paul VI insisted in his encyclical that parents welcome and educate their children in a way that suits their health, financial situation and well-being, as opposed to disorganized conception and absentee parenting.

Addressing the question of finding and assigning resources for pro-life work, George Wirnkar discussed the importance of “harnessing”...employing Time, Talent, Treasure and Prayer and organizing these to successfully carry out pro-life goals. Stressing that while some people may be able to provide all of these, the vast majority may only be able to contribute one or two. Yet when properly sourced and coordinated, we find that a combination of resources will lead us to the day when the Culture of Life will overcome.

***The HLI’s SSI provides valuable pro-life training and equips our participants with pro-life materials to take back with them, but the most incredible aspect is the spiritual atmosphere and devotion.*** The Institute was preceded by a prayer *triduum* shared through Whatsapp, for all those who were working, traveling and planning for the institute in the days before it opened. Then each

day launched with 6:30 AM morning prayers and Mass. At noon, the Institute returned to the chapel, and in the evenings the group concluded with Eucharistic Adoration and Vespers. HLI’s last Mass together on Sunday, July 8<sup>th</sup> was a “send-forth” Mass, reminding all who attended of the work which lies ahead in the towns, cities and institutions in their mission fields. A peaceful monastic rhythm carried us through the three days of pro-life formation. By the end, everyone said they felt renewed and eager to go forth and preach the Gospel of Life. Now is a time for great thanksgiving and renewed vigor.

It is hard to measure the impact of pro-life events. Numbers may point to interest and dedication to the cause, but they are only indicators. However, some aspects of this SSI left us good cause to be thankful to our heavenly Father. This was more than a priestly event; many priests voluntarily made the long trip from as far afield as Mali and Burkina Faso to attend and share their experiences with their seminarian friends. These attending priests were almost all ordained in the last five or so years. The message is strong among our young African clergy; and we call upon them to be missionaries to their peers.

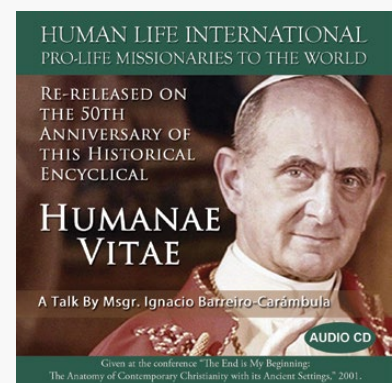
## DONATE \$53 OR MORE TO HLI THIS MONTH AND GET OUR LATEST PRO-LIFE RESOURCE!

This month, when you donate \$53 or more to support HLI’s life-saving mission, you’ll receive the audio talk entitled ***Humanae Vitae***, by Msgr. Ignacio Barreiro-Carámbula.

In this talk, Msgr. Barreiro explains that the Church has always taught that contraception is a sin. Some claims arose starting in the early 1960s that this teaching was in question, but this has never been the case. The climate of the times within the Church and in secular society, which has been dominated by humanist philosophy, influenced this ambiguous understanding.

Monsignor Ignacio Barreiro served as Executive Director of Human Life International’s (HLI) office in Rome and was interim President of HLI from 2010-2011. He departed this life on Holy Thursday, April 13, 2017.

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



***Humanae Vitae* A Talk by Msgr. Ignacio Barreiro-Carámbula is this month’s pro-life educational resource.**