



# Mission Report

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- \* Expanding into **New African Regions**
- \* **Zimbabwe Woman Transforms Health** by Embracing NFP, not Contraceptives
- \* First Bilingual Spanish-English Pro-Life Training for Religious and Laity in the **United States**
- \* This Month's DVD Gift to Donors: ***Be a Transformer: Make Life Happen***, from EWTN's Program "Women of Grace" Featuring Guest Fr. Shenan J. Boquet

Above: Emil Hagamu, Regional Director of English-Speaking Africa, after the Mass that opened the Africa Family Life Federation Conference in Mauritius.

Dear Pro-Life Friend in Christ,

As I write to you, I'm excited to share the events of this month's ***Mission Report***. Thanks to your faithful prayers, support, and commitment, we are able to proclaim the Gospel of Life to the ends of the earth, bearing witness to its life-giving and saving message. Together, we are making a difference!

In this issue, HLI's regional director of English-speaking Africa, Emil Hagamu, reports on his mission to Mauritius and his participation in the Africa Family Life Federation Conference. Emil took the opportunity to discuss goals and strategies with other African leaders on how best to spread the pro-life message throughout the continent.

Next, we share with you the personal testimony of Landirani Bwino of Zimbabwe (name changed to protect her privacy). Landirani explains how her health and marriage suffered as a direct consequence of contraception. She and her husband, now enthusiastic teachers and mentors of NFP, joyfully share their journey with us!

And finally, HLI wishes to kindly thank Bishop Olmsted of the Diocese of Phoenix for inviting us to his diocese and hosting our first bilingual Spanish-English, pro-life training event in the United States.

As you read this issue of ***Mission Report***, please consider sharing it with a friend. And as we prepare for the season of Lent, may we all grow closer to the Lord in His infinite love and mercy. Know that I continue, as always, to include you all in my prayers.

Yours in Christ and Our Lady,

Fr. Shenan J. Boquet

President, Human Life International



Fr. Shenan J. Boquet  
President

# WORKING FOR LIFE AND FAMILY AT THE AFRICA FAMILY LIFE FEDERATION CONFERENCE

*By Emil Hagamu, Regional Director of English-Speaking Africa*

HLI recently joined 122 delegates from across the continent at the Africa Family Life Federation Conference, held November 10-20 in Mauritius. Entitled “From *Humanae Vitae* to *Amoris Laetitia*: An Evangelization of Human Love; A Path of Growth, Life, Joy and Hope for Couples and Families,” this conference was held at Foyer de l’Unité, a local place of worship. Present were bishops, priests, religious women, and laity. I travelled from Tanzania, as did Bishop Titus Mdoe from the Diocese of Mtwara. **Featuring a federation of organizations working in the field of Natural Family Planning (NFP) and youth, the conference included valued keynote speakers who evaluated the effectiveness of the pro-life mission in Africa.** Speakers also discussed the latest scientific developments of Natural Family Planning (NFP).

Two notable presentations included “Fertility Restoration to Couples with Significant Difficulties” and “Natural Family Planning: The Experience of Mauritius.” Other important lectures shared youth ministry experiences across various countries.

Each country was given exhibition space, and ours attracted visitors with our colorful March for Life banner. Thanks to your generous support, HLI was able to display its many free booklets and brochures, as well as books and booklets I have written in Kiswahili, plus some pro-life t-shirts and March for Life placards.

The meeting was ideal for making contacts. **We are working to expand into new regions of Zimbabwe and Malawi and to establish**



**more of a presence in Zambia, Madagascar, Reunion, Abednego Island, Seychelles, and Sudan.**

Mission work encompasses a great deal. We seek the opportunity to visit seminaries, schools, villages, and hospitable venues for critical pro-life training sessions. We reach out to the local bishop, offering to train his seminarians and priests. We also travel to schools to teach chastity and virtue programs, as well as remote villages to explain the dangers of contraception and teach African mothers and fathers about NFP.

HLI is blessed to be making a difference, and our many personal encounters give witness to this life-giving work. While attending the conference, I was blessed to talk to a woman whom we will call Landirani Bwino to protect her privacy. This mother of four, including a seven-month old, shared the hurt contraception caused her and how it negatively impacted her marriage. Her story is detailed further in this issue of HLI’s *Mission Report*.



Emil Hagamu, HLI Regional Director of English-Speaking Africa, with Bishop Titus Mdoe of Mtwara Diocese, Tanzania, before the opening Mass in the Cathedral in Port Louis, Mauritius.



## NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING: THE EXPERIENCE OF MAURITIUS

Mauritius is well established in Natural Family Planning programs. *Action Familiale*, the Mauritius Family Planning Association, is now more than 50 years old. **Throughout these 50 years, the group has expanded to a national level, and leadership has developed a very coherent program that is both scientific and easy to learn.** Its national coordinator is responsible for the Natural Family Planning program throughout the country, assisted by district supervisors who oversee the work of trainers at the local level. These are well-trained women tasked with three major responsibilities: to increase the use of NFP, to visit those couples on a regular basis to build a helpful relationship, and to instruct users how to chart and interpret the data for either achieving or postponing pregnancy (for a grave reason).

During the last two days of our trip, 12 people—including myself—from among the English-speaking countries group, were able to make field visits and see some of the locations where those trainers operate, both in the far north of Mauritius and also the capital. We also witnessed firsthand sessions of the NFP training.



Emil Hagamu at an exhibit table of pro-life material for participants at the Africa Family Life Conference in Mauritius.

In Mauritius, we were told that **three major challenges in the pro-life, pro-family apostolate include: hostile and non-cooperating husbands, the difficulty of finding a proper time for a visit, and fierce dogs that sometimes bite trainers!** Other challenges include: drop-outs, discontinuation of the method, and couples going back to the “easy way”—contraception—after an unplanned pregnancy. Though *Action Familiale* receives government money for these programs, sometimes the money is inadequate, especially for trainers who need to travel long distances. However, the NFP program and methodology are very good, and I use them myself to promote responsible parenthood.

Thank you for your prayers and your support in helping us build a pro-life future. Long live *Humanae Vitae*, Saint Paul VI’s encyclical condemning contraception and promoting the sacredness of human life and marriage!

*For more information, see our many articles exploring Humanae Vitae for its 50th anniversary at hli.org.*



Participants at the Africa Family Life Federation Conference in Mauritius.

# POST-CONTRACEPTIVE TESTIMONY

By Landirani Bwino of Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

*This testimony comes from a woman who attended the African Family Life Federation Conference held November 10-20, 2018, in Mauritius, and illustrates the effect of Natural Family Planning (NFP) on the health and well-being of both the woman and her marriage. (See full report on this conference on page 2 of this Mission Report.)*

I am 36-year-old Landirani Bwino (name altered to protect privacy), and I have been married 15 years to Tatenda Bwino (name also altered), age 39. We have four children.



Thirty-six year old Landirani Bwino [name altered to protect privacy] tells her story about the disastrous effects of contraception and how NFP saved her marriage.

Six weeks after the birth of our first child, we visited the family planning clinic, where we chose to use Depo-Provera for child spacing. Two days after it was administered, my body became puffy and my face swollen. After three months, the nurses advised us to change brands. When we changed brands, my symptoms got even worse. So after three more months, we stopped using contraceptives, and I became pregnant with my second child. After that birth, we again visited the family planning clinic, this time choosing a brand called Jadelle. Within two days, I had terrible headaches. The clinic gave me something to ease my pain, but breastfeeding became so difficult that I weaned my child at one year of age.

After weaning the child, my menses became longer, lasting two to six weeks nonstop! This created tension at home, for I had absolutely no desire at all for conjugal relations, and I was terribly fatigued. My husband would ask, “What has become of us? What is wrong? How have I wronged you?” Though he was concerned, I could not see anything wrong; yet our peace was lost.

We futilely sought counseling from elderly people, friends, and relatives. Lastly, we headed to a priest, who told us to pray and be patient and that this trying time would pass. Unhappy, we went to second priest, but again we were given the same advice. Birth control was never explored as a potential problem. Meanwhile, I had been bleeding for six straight weeks and was incredibly pale and weak, so we decided to stop the Jadelle.

## THE ANSWER TO OUR PRAYERS

**That’s when we learned about Natural Family Planning (NFP) and the Billing Ovulation Method from the late Mrs. Maswe.** It was easy and simple



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**NFP saved our marriage, which today we live freely, faithfully, totally, and fruitfully.**

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to learn, and she kindly journeyed with us in the teachings. We came to realize that all my pain and health problems had been from the contraceptives. Gradually, healing took place, and I began to feel myself again.

NFP transformed our lives. My husband and I were at peace again with one other, and we shared love, respect, and an even greater understanding and love of life, welcoming our third and fourth child, but this time our life after was different. My husband gave me time to heal, and he was fully present and very understanding of my physical adjustments. He respected my person and womanhood. It was an amazing transformation!

Our medical problems led us on an education journey where we also learned that contraceptives are evil, because we realized we were



not open to life or to God's design of living responsible parenthood. We had closed the presence of the Trinitarian God in our marriage. NFP has taught us how to be responsible parents and how we should help our children to be responsible and fit for the kingdom of God.

NFP saved our marriage, which today we live freely, faithfully, totally, and fruitfully. I am happy and grateful to God for showing us NFP. Our marital love has grown and enhances each moment of our lives. We have both become NFP instructors and happily work in God's vineyard, helping other married couples learn to experience that same pure love and to be open to life, love, and unity with God and one another.

We recently attended a workshop in our Archdiocese of Bulawayo on *Living the Marriage Life Fully*. We shared our experience of contraceptives and the benefits of NFP. Our testimony even helped the priests understand more specifically how contraceptives affect the conjugal love and life of couples and how NFP restores and builds the couple together. The Church's family life apostolate office here teaches NFP in parishes without hindrance. We now work together in promoting this great teaching of the Church and instruct others on how to learn and live it as couples. Thank you for allowing us to share our testimony!

*For more information on the side effects of contraceptive drugs and how they are being used extensively in Third World population control, despite their abortifacient component and side effects, visit our site at [HLI.org](http://HLI.org).*

## TRIP REPORT: PHOENIX, ARIZONA

*By Dr. Joseph Meaney, HLI Director of International Outreach and Expansion, November 2018*

The Diocese of Phoenix, Arizona, recently played host to Human Life International's first Spanish-English pro-life training in the United States. We partnered with the diocese under Bishop Thomas Olmsted to hold the conference from November 8-10, 2018. This first U.S. Priests and Seminarians Encounter for Life followed the model of HLI's REDDESSVIDA conferences, held many times already in Spanish in Latin America. Giving the rapidly growing Hispanic population, it is critical to train those in Hispanic ministry. This event was a first step toward holding more events in the United States. Father Shenan J. Boquet, HLI's president, committed time and energy to this conference that combined the expertise of our Miami office, the Latin American regional coordination office, and the Parish Hispanic Leadership Support program in Phoenix.

We all gathered at St. Paul's parish, which features a stunning perpetual adoration chapel and a large conference center behind the church. Naturally, there were prayers and Mass every day. **Videos of the conference will be available online through the Diocese of Phoenix and feature a strong lineup of HLI speakers**, with simultaneous translation in both Spanish and English.

### HOPE FROM THE SOUTH

**The HLI network of Priests and Seminarians for Life in Central and South America is extensive and growing.** Given the proximity to Mexico, we were delighted by the large Mexican presence at this



Fr. Shenan J. Boquet with Bishop Thomas Olmsted of the Diocese of Phoenix, Arizona. The bishop's welcoming remarks preceded Father Boquet's keynote speech.

## Impact of the first US Priests and Seminarians Encounter for Life

Below is feedback from participants of the first U.S. Priests and Seminarians Encounter for Life:

- “It is good to know that there is an excellent international organization capable of educating and training seminarians, priests and lay leaders in the work for life.” — Luz Maria Martinez Arredondo
- “Thank you for calling priests and seminarians to be better equipped in their vocation and to take the lead in inviting others to regain what has been taken from us.” — Fr. Peter Welsh
- “This conference has enriched my knowledge in the teaching on life from the moment of conception to natural death.” — Fr. Jerome Cayetano, SVD
- “As a seminarian, this conference has helped me realize how much there is to do. It has also shown me why this training needs to be in seminaries throughout the world.” — Jaris Alberto Maldonad-Pacheeo

**Thank you, our faithful supporters, for making this impact possible.**

conference. The priest charged with pro-life work by the Mexican Bishops Conference attended, as did a youth leader who works with the new Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life in Rome. The situation in Mexico is quite disturbing, as the new populist and leftist government there is threatening to pass a national law legalizing abortion.

Our speakers came from a cross-section of the Americas: Peru, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Puerto Rico,

Cuba, Venezuela, and the USA. Father Victor Salomón from Venezuela made an excellent point that, “when it comes to the pro-life struggle, human lives are lost for every sin of omission.” Father Boquet gave a “pep talk” to the priests attending who are persecuted for standing up for Life. He added that the lay faithful need their priests to speak out against the Culture of Death. Nancy Tosi, from HLI in Ecuador, presented on the hidden agenda behind the U.N.’s sustainable



The organizing team of the first US REDDESSVIDA in Phoenix, AZ.



development goals. Mario Rojas, our Latin American director, would have given the talk, but he has been quite ill. Please keep him in your prayers.

Adolfo Castañeda and Adriana Thurdekoos introduced our HLI Miami office to the delegates and explained the nature of its pro-life work for U.S. Hispanics via internet and mass media. I spoke on the racist/eugenicist origins of many abortion-promoting groups and the importance of conscience. Tom Grenchik, who directs pro-life activities for the U.S. bishops, and Mary McClusky, from the Project Rachel post-abortion ministry of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, spoke about Christ as the Divine Physician who heals after abortion, when those responsible turn to Him in prayer and earnestly seek sacramental forgiveness.



HLI Director of Education and Hispanic Outreach, Adolfo Castañeda, with HLI Miami assistant Adriana Thurdekoos.

**In the midst of this conference, Bishop Olmsted and his auxiliary, Bishop Eduardo Nevares, hosted a pro-life gala banquet to support pro-life diocesan efforts.** Father Boquet served as keynote speaker and reminded everyone that “the truth about the sanctity of human life does not have an expiration date.” Bishop Olmsted told us that “the Gospel of Life

## March 2019 Events

### Please pray for HLI’s Mission work in March:

- March 1-11: HLI Delegate for International Missions, Raymond de Souza, goes to Australia and New Zealand on an HLI mission trip.
- March 7: Mission to Czech Republic and Slovakia concludes (began February 26). HLI President Fr. Shenan J. Boquet joins HLI’s Rome Office Director, Father Francesco Giordano , and HLI Regional Director for Europe, Joannes Bucher.
- March 12: HLI Board of Directors hold their quarterly meeting in Front Royal, VA.
- March 16: Fr. Boquet holds a retreat for the Catholic Daughters of America in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.
- March 11-16: HLI Regional Director for English-speaking Africa, Emil Hagamu, leads an HLI mission to Botswana.
- March 27-April 1: Fr. Boquet goes on mission to Calgary and Edmonton, Canada for a three-day pro-life training program for CouplesForChrist Foundation for Life and Family (CFC-(FFL) with Dr. Brian Clowes, HLI Director of Education and Research.

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

needs to begin on our knees, then in our minds and finally in the public square.”

We concluded with the “Phoenix Declaration for Life, Dignity, and Family.” This document emphasizes the need to pray “on our knees” to defend Life and Family. It also reaffirms the importance of pro-life formation for seminarians and priests, as well as the lay faithful, and points to the pro-life pastoral outreach of dioceses as the fundamental pillar for all pastoral work. The declaration stresses the dignity of the human person, created male or female, all called to holiness according to the various states of life.

Thanks to the generosity of donors, HLI has a Spanish online training course in pro-life topics that is very popular in Latin America.

HLI is always thrilled when we can bring our international pro-life experts together to serve the Church and further the cause of defending innocent human life. There is an urgent need to roll back the Culture of Death, and a spiritual solution and conversion of the heart are required to bring our societies back to following God’s loving plan.



Dr. Felipe Vizcarrando speaking at the first U.S. Priests and Seminarians Encounter for Life.

## 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 a copy of HLI President Fr. Shenan J. Boquet’s recent appearance (December 2018) on “Women of Grace.” The program, entitled ***“Be a Transformer: Make Life Happen,”*** was hosted by Johnnette Benkovic Williams, and aired globally on EWTN Global Catholic Network.

In a ruptured society where there are many people demanding false “rights” and freedoms, how do we define true freedom? Actions recognizing our God-given human dignity! As Father explains, today with the family unit disintegrating, our society is “broken” and confused. Basic things we take for granted — like knowing the Gospel, even gratefulness and thankfulness — can no longer be taken for understood as a “given.” As you listen, you’ll appreciate even more the gift that the family is and how important it is to support the family and rebuild and renew family life today.



***“Be a Transformer: Make Life Happen”* is this month’s pro-life educational resource when you give \$53 or more!**

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