



Mission Report

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- ✳ **Asia-Pacific Conference on Life, Faith and Family — Planning Begins in India!**
- ✳ **Tanzanian Woman Forcibly Implanted with IUD Hears HLI Radio Show, Reaches Out and Gets Help**
- ✳ **This Month's Gift to Donors: *St. Gerard Majella, The Wonder-Worker and Patron of Expectant Mothers***

Left: Dr. Ligaya Acosta, HLI's regional director of HLI Asia and Oceania, speaking at a seminar for health care service providers in Goa, India.

Dear Pro-Life Friend in Christ,

We just returned from one of our favorite countries, the Philippines, where we clearly see pro-family, pro-life policies adopted by the people. While we will report on this in next month's Mission Report, we were recently asked why do we return? Why not seek out another country where the battle isn't won?

No battle is ever "won." Even in Catholic nations, there are constant inroads to be fought, laity and clergy to be educated. Think of it this way: our battle for Heaven is a life-long journey, we don't stop trying just because we go to Mass once a week.

This month's main focus is India, where Kerala will be the site of our 22nd Asia-Pacific Congress on Life, Faith and Family (ASPAC) in January 2020. Some might say the reverse, why try to evangelize in India, where abortion rates exceed 15 million babies per year? Because we also follow the example of St. Thomas, the disciple who heard Christ's call to "put out into the deep" (Luke 5:4).

Amina Khamis Juma in Tanzania experienced an abortion and years of failing health due to one type of contraception after another. When she said, "No more!" she was forcibly implanted with an IUD. HLI got her help. Not only did her physical but also her health spiritual health improved. Please pray for Amina, that the good Lord may continue to help us reach her and so many others.

Yours in Christ and Our Lady,

Fr. Shenan J. Boquet
President, Human Life International



Fr. Shenan J. Boquet
President



MISSION TRIP TO INDIA

By Dr. Ligaya Acosta, Regional Director of HLI Asia and Oceania, August 2018

With over 1.2 billion people, India is the second most populous country in the world. In January 2020, HLI will host the 22nd Asia-Pacific Conference on Life, Faith, and Family (ASPAC) in Kerala, located at the southern tip of the country. Held every two years, ASPAC is the largest Asian pro-life conference worldwide. In preparation for this conference, Dr. Ligaya Acosta, Regional Director of HLI Asia and Oceania, visited India from November 25, 2018 to December 4, 2018.



HLI has a strong presence in India, with active affiliates in both Goa and Bangalore. In 1971, abortion became legal in this country, and today the overall total fertility rate is barely above replacement level at 2.2 children per woman. In Goa and Kerala, the rates are significantly lower at 1.5 and 1.8 respectively. **The Indian abortion rate is also staggeringly high at an estimated 15.6 million per year.** (US abortions have dropped to below one million per year.) Perhaps this is not surprising considering that Margaret Sanger herself made several trips to India, starting in November 1935, which ultimately led to establishing Planned Parenthood there in 1952.

OUR VISIT BEGINS IN GOA

After chaotic travel arrangements, I finally began my long journey to India from my home in the Philippines on November 25, accompanied by my invaluable husband, Sandy.

Goa is home to HLI's affiliate Artists for Life, and HLI Goa is headed by founder and president Milagres Pereira. The focus of my speech that first

night was aimed at healthcare workers. Nearly 100 attended, including 50 doctors, nurses, and other healthcare providers, as well as 30 members from Artists for Life. I spoke on the "Humanization of Medicine and Health Care: A Transcendent Vision of Man" and made a very positive impact on participants, not all of whom were Catholic.

Indeed, many participants continued to communicate with Milagres after the fact, thanking him for the event and promising to attend ASPAC 2020. Sister Reina Fernandes of the Hospicio Sisters, who works as a nurse in a government hospital, said she was "enlightened" after attending this talk—the first pro-life talk she had ever heard. She wrote: "God bless you all for the toil behind this program. . . . This has given me more space for reflection." Betty Luis, another nurse and first-timer, said she was "boosted to work to save lives." Vally and Anne Coelho, husband and wife co-directors of Couple to Couple India, wrote that they appreciate my "unabashedly giving all the glory to Jesus" and the way I linked suffering and pain to Our Lord's salvific work. Maria Joaquina Pires, retired assis-



The first meeting to discuss the 22nd ASPAC presided over by Bishop Mar Pauly Kannookadan, Eparchy of Irinjakulada, Kerala, India.

One participant had intended to separate from her husband, but, after hearing me, she changed her mind.

tant matron, became aware of an “intense knowledge of human life and dignity.” She said she had only attended on request of a friend and was so glad she came.

Though participants were also free to give negative feedback, none did, as they seemed to all recognize the inherent dignity of the lives for those in their care.

The next day, I presented talks at the Congress on Marriage and the Family, attended by over one hundred persons. Other speakers included Milagres, his daughter Ethel, and Francis Xavier Fernandes—who have all attended many ASPACs—along with homeschooling parents Louie and Dr. Zenita Vas. My talks were entitled “The Threat of Ideological Colonization” and “Understanding God’s Plan for Marriage and the

Family,” after which some stayed to seek counseling. **One participant had intended to separate from her husband, but, after hearing me, she changed her mind.** She said she and her husband were deeply touched when I shared my marriage experiences, and she thought to herself: *If she and her husband could do it, so can we!* This was but one of the many stories shared with us and that could not have happened without your generous contributions and fervent prayers.

ON TO BANGALORE . . . THE MISSION CONTINUES

Early the next day, together with Milagres (whom I asked to sit on the 22nd ASPAC organizing committee), we



Dr. Ligaya Acosta gives a talk at the Congress on Marriage and the Family in Goa, India.

headed to Bangalore. We met with Fr. Milton Gonsalves, Executive Secretary of the Commission for Family of the Catholic Bishops Conference of India. Some time back he wrote HLI of his interest to partner with HLI in some pro-life efforts. The meeting with Fr. Milton of the CBCI went extremely well! **He invited us to come for a three-day pro-life training session for all priests, religious, and lay leaders involved in family and life in the whole of India and to be held in Bangalore.** Additionally, he is supportive of the upcoming ASPAC.

Over lunch, I met with Amitha Braganza, the newly elected chair of the board for Respect for Life India (RFLI). Then, prior to our afternoon meeting with the governing board and staff of RFLI, we arrived early and found our dear friend, 85-year-old Sister Annunciata, RFLI foundress, excitedly waiting for us. Though now in a wheelchair due to walking difficulties, she enlivened us with her ageless enthusiasm! As Sister is quick to say, “No one can ever stop me from doing this work!” She is a loving inspiration for us all.

THE 22ND ASIA-PACIFIC CONGRESS FOR LIFE, FAITH, AND FAMILY

On November 29 we flew from Bangalore to Kerala, the heart of my trip to India. Calling itself “God’s own land,” Kerala is the “cradle of Catholic faith in India” and follows the Syro-Malabar Rite. Many saints recognized by the Church walked in this land, most notably St. Thomas who brought the Catholic faith here. Thanks to your sacrificial gifts, we had the opportunity to network with many pro-lifers during our stay.



Dr. Acosta with His Excellency Bishop Mar Pauly Kannookadan and the members of the local organizing committee for the 22nd ASPAC.

The 22nd ASPAC will be held in Kerala and promises to be an exciting time! The dates are still being set and we will update you as the conference draws closer.

Hosted by the diocese and cohosted by the group Jesus Youth, the conference is blessed with enthusiastic and committed leadership and is headed by the bishop of Irinjakulada, Bishop Mar Pauly Kannookadan.

The bishop wishes to maximize local participation and take advantage of the rare opportunity of having ASPAC in India. In addition, he would like one focus to be on inviting healthcare workers to help them fully understand the preciousness of human life. **He has also decreed that Indian participants will have subsidized registration rates, and all will be provided accommodation.** We are thus appealing to kindhearted individuals to please donate to ASPAC and help sponsor a priest, nun, seminarian, student, or other pro-lifer to attend what is Asia/Oceania’s largest international pro-life event of the year, attracting 1,000 global participants.

Aside from the usual three-day conference sessions, the organizers will offer an extra three-day pilgrimage and tour of beautiful Kerala at the conclusion of the conference for a minimal fee. This is sure to sanctify and refresh participants.

We extend to all our audience an invitation to attend ASPAC and register early once we release the details. These you will find on our site at hli.org and on Facebook, but please call or e-mail HLI anytime. And, most importantly, please pray for us!

ESCAPING THE SLAVERY OF CONTRACEPTION:

The Story of Amina Khamis Juma of Tanzania

Amina Khamis Juma is 22 years old and lives in Mbande-Kisewe, near Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. After delivering her first child in 2016, she was persuaded by her sisters to begin using contraception. “I had never used any method of family planning in my life,” she states. “I never knew what family planning was all about!”

Her sisters suggested using condoms, but those caused discomfort and pain, so Amina and her husband soon stopped. They then began basic charting of her



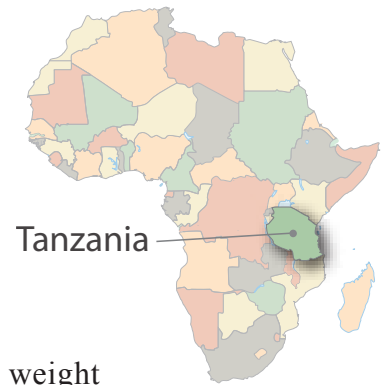
Amina Khamis Juma of Tanzania.

fertile periods, but Amina nevertheless became pregnant. Unwilling to have a child at that time, the couple tragically opted to abort. As HLI so often teaches, **when couples with a contraceptive mentality engage in the marriage act but shut out the procreative element, they are often unwilling to consider pregnancy.** Thus, when they become pregnant, the couple often succumbs to the fear sometimes associated with an unplanned pregnancy and opts for abortion as the new “birth control” choice.

CONTRACEPTION AND ITS SIDE EFFECTS

After giving up on the basic charting method, Amina began taking birth control pills, though her husband opposed the idea. Soon, she began to experience the side effects that so often accompany contraception. She states: “My stomach felt bloated. I vomited, experienced dizziness, nausea, etc. My husband said, ‘I told you not to use the pills, now you see the side effects! I want you to stop right now.’”

Unfortunately, Amina did not stop, and the strain on her marriage intensified. She secretly received a Depo-Provera injection, which led to yet more side effects, including excessive and continuous bleeding and weight loss. “Those conditions threatened to break up my marriage,” she states. Eventually, she resolved to stop using contraception. “But the damage had been too great,” she relates, “and in the end my husband divorced me.”



REPEATING THE SAME MISTAKES

Amina married a second time, but she was still unwilling to become pregnant, so she approached a hospital in Tandika, requesting Norplant this time. “They asked me ‘What about your husband?’ I told them to ignore him and give me a four-year Norplant insertion. But, surprisingly, *they inserted two seven-year Norplant rods.*” This time, she asked about side effects and was told they would be minor, but if they were not, the implants could be removed.

She began again to experience health problems, claiming, “I lost weight and became very thin. I could not eat, I experienced dizziness, my menses ceased, I was constantly tired, and I had severe headaches.” **As her health continued to deteriorate, her husband asked if she’d ever used contraception. When she confirmed that she had, he immediately knew that**

was the problem and sent her to the health clinic to have them removed.

But removal of a contraceptive device can be a harrowing experience, as readers of the HLI *Mission Report* know. The medical personnel managed to locate and remove one rod but could not find the second. These rods can migrate, and although newer ones have “tracers” to locate them under an X-ray, these are not the kind generally found in Africa. After some hours, the doctor found and removed the rod, though Amina passed out from the pain. After that, she became pregnant but suffered two miscarriages in a row, which she blamed on the Norplant. Finally, in 2018, she and her husband were blessed with a beautiful baby boy.

FINALLY FED UP WITH CONTRACEPTION!

During Amina’s complex delivery, the nurse asked her what type of contraception she wished to use, but now Amina emphatically refused to be given any! When she awoke, despite having insisted against any contraception, she found that the nurse had inserted an IUD without permission. “As she noticed I was really angry, she used a polite tone to convince me to accept what she had done. She gave me a prescription card that showed the date of insertion (2018) and the date of removal (2030). I was not pleased!”



**Amina with her daughter (born in 2016)
and son (born in 2018).**

After less than two months, Amina began again to experience side effects. She sought medical care, but after multiple visits to the hospital, she still received no assistance in removing the IUD. “I began experiencing health changes—very high fever, extreme tiredness, leg

April 2019 Events

Please pray for HLI’s Mission work in April:

- April 5-9: HLI President Fr. Shenan J. Boquet directs a Lenten Mission at St. Anthony of Padua Church in Casa Grande, Arizona.
- April 13: Fr. Boquet offers a one-day conference in Gainesville, Virginia, for Holy Trinity Catholic Church Marriage Ministry Date Night.
- April 19-21: Holy Triduum.
- April 24-May 9: Fr. Boquet travels with Dr. Brian Clowes, Director of Education Research, to Lesotho Africa. They will be joined by Emil Hagamu, Regional Director of English-speaking Africa.

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

I thank God for guiding me to HLI Tanzania, whom I believe saved me from impending death.

pain, migraines, excessive back pain, amenorrhea, and loss of weight. I felt like I was dying.”

AMINA HEARS HLI'S RADIO MARIA PROGRAM

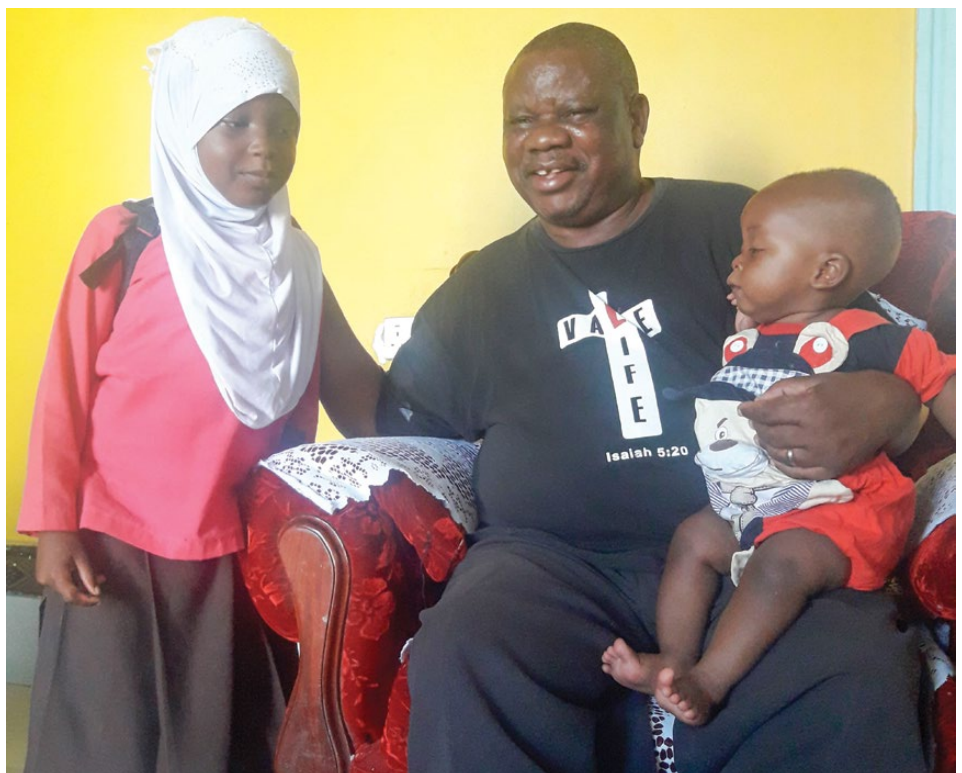
During the worst of her angst and suffering, Amina providentially had her radio turned on during one of HLI Tanzania's regularly broadcasted programs on Radio Maria. The topic that day was the grave consequences of contraception. As she listened, Amina discovered that the program was a product of HLI Tanzania. She also heard something like the word “pro-life” mentioned. Looking back, she tells HLI:

I listened attentively till the end of the program. I felt very blessed and wrote down the phone number of the director [Emil Hagamu] and decided to reach out to him. On the morning of January 18, 2019, I called and Mr. Hagamu answered! I explained to him my health problems and hoped for his assistance. Although he was leaving the country in the morning [on an HLI mission], he advised me to contact his office secretary and assured me I would get the help I needed.

The next Monday morning, Amina called the HLI office and then met in person with Emil's secretary. The secretary advised her to waste no time and directed her to Vikindu Vincentian Catholic Hospital, where she would receive treatment. Amina joyously relates:



Above: Amina meets with Grace, her NFP trainer at HLI Tanzania.
Below: Emil Hagamu, HLI's regional director of English-speaking Africa, with Amina's daughter and son, Yusra and Abdul.



I went! There I met a religious sister, explaining I was sent by HLI Tanzania. I was so well attended [to]; the IUD was located and removed, and I was given medication to help improve my health.

I thank God for guiding me to HLI Tanzania, whom I believe saved me from impending death.

Now I am healed and have started NFP lessons. I am so well now that I am very happy. My health is slowly returning to normal. I used to be skinny, but I am beginning to put on weight. After I graduate in my NFP studies (Billings Ovulation Method), my goal is to help HLI Tanzania spread this wonderful method to my friends and relatives and those in need. I strongly urge women not to rush into using contraception, which is dangerous and deadly! And I invite all women to visit HLI Tanzania for true support and advice. It's never too late, and they will find help and increased marital happiness.

Amina's story is just one of so many similar stories. HLI Tanzania works to spread the pro-life message and teach the adverse effects of contraception so that people like Amina can lead healthy lives and thrive in their marriages.

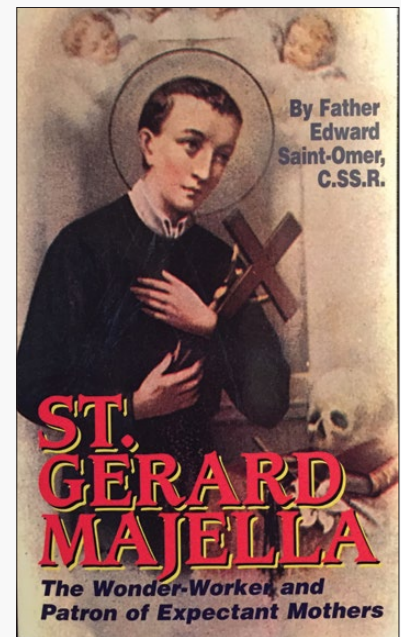
DONATE \$53 OR MORE TO HLI THIS MONTH AND GET OUR LATEST PRO-LIFE RESOURCE!

This month, when you donate \$53 or more to support HLI's life-saving mission, you'll receive the book, *Saint Gerard Majella: The Wonder-Worker and Patron of Expectant Mothers*, by Edward Saint-Omer.

St. Gerard Majella is the patron of expectant mothers. A tailor by profession, he entered the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, the Redemptorists, at age 26. He became famous for his miracles, cures, charities, prayer life, obedience and love for others. One miracle attributed to him was when he was visiting in a home with a young pregnant woman about to lose her baby. His white handkerchief fell out of his coat, and the woman picked it up and was healed. She delivered a healthy baby.

St. Gerard is a major Saint of the Catholic Church. Though he died of tuberculosis at only 29 and was only a lay brother, he achieved great sanctity — such that his superiors attested that he had not only not committed any mortal sins, but that they could not detect that he had ever been guilty of any sin at all!

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



Saint Gerard Majella: The Wonder-Worker and Patron of Expectant Mothers is this month's pro-life educational resource.