



# Mission Report

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- ✳ **Building a Pro-Life Tomorrow in the Czech Republic & Slovakia**
- ✳ **Impacting Over 600 Seminarians in the Philippines**
- ✳ **Promoting Life Amidst Extreme Poverty in Kenya**
- ✳ **This Month's CD Gift to Donors: *How to Build a Culture of Life* by Fr. Shenan J. Boquet**

Pictured left: Fr. Boquet with priests and seminarians at the Seminary in Nitra, Slovakia.

*"Thank you Fr. Boquet for visiting our seminary and sharing with us the Gospel of Life. Please return to spend more time with us, so that we may learn more about how to serve Life and Family."*

— Seminarian from Olomouc Seminary, Czech Republic

Dear Pro-Life Friend in Christ,

On March 6, I departed the U.S. for a one-week mission to the Czech Republic and Slovakia. The focus of this mission targeted a central group primary to HLI's mission strategy – seminarians – our future pastors and shepherds. Accompanied by Fr. Francesco Giordano, HLI's Director in Rome, and our affiliate leaders, we visited regional bishops and nine seminaries, giving lectures on "The Global Pro-Life Movement and the Irreplaceable Role of the Priest in Defending and Serving Life and Family."

Many European nations suffered terribly under the most destructive ideologies in modern history – Nazism and Communism. Though free from these realities, the Czech Republic and Slovakia still suffer the negative consequences of these ideological systems that radically altered the mentality of their people, culture, and viewpoint on Life and Family. Today, new secular ideologies exploit an already dire situation. Both countries suffer from low fertility rates, ever-increasing divorce rates, higher percentages of cohabitation and children born to unwed mothers, and the normalization of contraception and abortion, making it ever more difficult to promote and cultivate a Culture of Life.

While our primary focus was on seminarians and priests, we were asked to visit with Deacon Miroslav Wajsar, founder of St. Agnes Hospice and St. Joseph House. St. Agnes Hospice cares for over 400 terminally ill patients a year, and St. Joseph House ministers to approximately 80 residents with Multiple Sclerosis (MS). We also visited Bethlem House, a home for mothers and their children. Here we had the blessed privilege of meeting with the foundress and her staff who dedicate their lives to this mission. Bethlem House was founded eleven years ago and

Over, please



Fr. Shenan J. Boquet  
President



**Fr. Boquet with priests and seminarians at the Archdiocesan Seminary in Prešov, Slovakia. He spoke on “The Global Issues Affecting Life and Family” and “The Irreplaceable Role of the Priest in Defending and Serving Life and Family.”**

has cared for 180 women and 200 children. These three are the only such apostolates in the Czech Republic.

At St. Agnes Hospice we had the joy of meeting Pavol, a gentle soul suffering with terminal brain cancer. He was admitted to help prepare – spiritually and temporally – for his death. Most residents spend the last weeks of their lives in St. Agnes being lovingly cared for by a staff dedicated to living out Catholic teaching and a solid Christian Anthropology anchored in the dignity of the human person. In the room with Pavol was his wife of over 30 years, his daughter, son-in-law and six-month-old grandson. Smiling, he told us he was preparing to meet Our Lord. Fr. Giordano and I were able to pray with Pavol and his family before celebrating Mass for the residents. Each of these apostolates is a fruit of the pro-life movement. HLI’s mission has fostered many programs like these.

Later, in each of our trainings, I shared these stories with the seminarians and bishops we met, asking them to be as committed to supporting Life and Family and to consider these questions: “What will *I* do to cultivate, build, and sustain a Culture of Life? ... How can *I* help prosper family life?”

During each presentation we discussed the global anti-life agenda, identified various organizations working to further entrench the Culture of Death, and what must be done to counter such efforts. *In most cases, the seminarians and priests were unfamiliar* with the overarching anti-natalist agenda, and had little to no knowledge of which groups were at work in their respective countries and how these organizations operate. By bringing these issues into the light, *HLI seeks to build an impenetrable coalition to protect*

*Life and Family*. Afterall, it is our priests and bishops who are on the frontlines influencing the hearts and minds of their people and bringing to bear the Church’s perennial teaching.

A single priest has potential to impact the Church and society for 40-60 years. Think of how many individuals, families, and professionals he may influence within this timeframe! Magnify this a thousand-fold across the planet. The potential is limitless. By working with seminarians and clergy, HLI is poised to impact society for generations.

I have often said that this apostolate is a “ministry of encouragement.” Many times in my travels I meet people – clergy, prelates, laity – who feel overwhelmed by the amount of time, energy, and sacrifices required to defend and serve Life and Family. Some have been engaged in this battle for decades. I respectfully remind seminarians and priests that the faithful have a right to hear the truth from their spiritual leaders on bioethical issues. “Contemporary man goes to the priest seeking Christ. *Priests are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through them* (2 Cor. 5:20). The priest is a preacher of the truth. He speaks with charity and, at the same time, with true freedom.” (Cardinal Sarah, *The Power of Silence*). Priests do not create the faith; the faith is always a gift of God. People today ask the priest to show them Christ.

People often say, “I never hear any homilies in my church about contraception, abortion, promiscuity, homosexuality, or euthanasia. We don’t receive much leadership or encouragement for the pro-life and

family activities we suggest in our parish. Father doesn't seem to be very interested in the pro-life movement. He seems afraid to address any issues affecting Life and Family." This is why I recently integrated into HLI's training a presentation on "The Irreplaceable Role of the Priest in Defending and Serving Life and Family." Stressing Church teaching, the presentation primarily focuses on *who is the priest* and *what is his role?*

Many are confused about the fundamental choices. It is here, in the midst of confusion, doubt, and fear that the priest offers guidance, assurance, and hope. He speaks a unique language and reveals a truth that leads to authentic freedom. This is the fundamental reason why, as central to her strategy, HLI focuses upon seminarians. A seminarian who becomes a well-formed pro-life priest, versed in all the Life issues, can influence hundreds to thousands of souls over the course of time – transforming people, culture, and society.

*"Please thank everyone who helped you [Fr. Boquet] visit us today to share the beauty of Life and Family and the unique role of the priest in proclaiming the Gospel of Life. Your enthusiasm and message of encouragement inspires us. Thank you! Come back soon!" — Seminarian in Bratislava, Slovakia.*

Yours in Christ and Our Lady,



Fr. Shenan J. Boquet  
President, Human Life International

## MISSION TRIP TO THE PHILIPPINES

*By Dr. Ligaya Acosta, Regional Director of HLI Asia and Oceania, February 2019*

The Philippines, my beloved home country, is an archipelago comprised of 7,641 islands. The Philippines is a predominantly Catholic country with a population of 104.9 million (2017 estimate).

Being a Catholic country and thus traditionally pro-God, pro-life, and pro-family, the Philippines has long been a target of international death peddlers who pour in mind-boggling amounts of money to make advances in both government and non-government organizations. With their limitless funds, they reach the remotest villages and even incorporate their evil agenda into school textbooks, wreaking havoc on the minds of children. Thus, there is a pressing need to unceasingly educate and re-evangelize Filipinos in true Christian values, constantly reminding and encouraging them of the beauty, purpose, and goodness of God, Life, and Family.

With the intensive implementation of the Reproductive Health Law forced upon the Filipino people in 2012 and greased by seemingly infinite financial resources, our total fertility rate has drastically dropped to 2.7 children per couple (2017 National Demographic and Health Survey). This situation is expected to worsen with the recent presidential approval of the



Fr. Boquet speaks to 80 seminarians at Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary in Taloto City of Tagbilaran on "The Irreplaceable Role of the Priest in Defending and Serving Life and Family."

National Family Planning Program. The goal of this program is to provide contraceptives to 11.3 million women and to raise the contraceptive prevalence rate from 40 percent to 65 percent by 2022. Instead of eliminating poverty, the government aims to eliminate the poor.

With your generous help, HLI relentlessly advocates for the rights of the poor and educates our people on the truth behind eugenics, and the evils that would follow the legalization of abortion, divorce, and euthanasia in the country.

## THE MISSION

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On February 8, despite a midnight arrival and jet lag, HLI's president Fr. Shenan J. Boquet, Dr. Brian Clowes, HLI's Director of Research and Education, and I set out early for Cebu City's Annual Congress of the Episcopal Commission on Family and Life (ECFL) of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines. We were invited by the ECFL Chair, Archbishop Gilbert Garcera. The whirlwind stop was followed next by Legazpi City, then to Sorsogon City for a two-day diocesan pro-life congress on February 9-10. Day one was attended by priests, religious, lay leaders, couples, teachers, and other professionals. Day two concentrated on educating youth, including seminarians from Our Lady of Penafrancia Seminary. Sorsogon bishop, His Excellency Arturo Bastes, and pro-life Sorsogon City mayor, Sally Lee, actively supported the full two days' events. By God's grace, all the young people who attended took the vow of chastity.

One young seminarian in attendance stated: "This conference has really opened me up to a new perspective, a new world, and new experiences and teachings . . . I was taught that having a small family was great, condoms and contraceptives were beneficial, and being gay, lesbian, etc. was no problem, especially as I come from a family with relatives that support gay rights . . . and a parent who is a physician that advertises condoms and contraceptives."

At Sorsogon City, Fr. Boquet began by celebrating morning Mass at City Hall on February 11, after which we traveled almost seven hours to my home city of Tacloban. Two days of pro-life training ensued, with 265 seminarians from St. John the Evangelist School of Theology and Sacred Heart Seminary of the Archdiocese of



Over 250 seminarians from St. John the Evangelist School of Theology and Sacred Heart Seminary gather for an HLI two-day training program that includes: "The Threat of Ideological Colonization," "The Impact of Dissent and the Role of the Church," "Understanding Homosexuality and the Assault on the Institution of Marriage," "The Wisdom of God's Plan for Our Lives," and "The Irreplaceable Role of the Priest: Living and Promoting the Gospel of Life."

Palo. Most of the seminarians said the two-day congress strengthened their calling and provided a better understanding of the issues affecting Life and Family.

### **REACHING OUT TO RECORD NUMBERS OF SEMINARIANS AND OTHERS**

On St. Valentine's Day, we flew back to Cebu City, speaking two more hours before additional seminarians and priests at San Carlos Seminary College, then we were off to the Diocese of Tagbilaran in Bohol Province. On February 16, we conducted our final session with seminarians from Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary. All in all, HLI impacted almost 600 seminarians from five seminaries across the country.

During this leg of the trip, we also spoke with student leaders of St. Mary's Boystown in Minglanilla, Cebu Province, as well as Church leaders and heads of Catholic organizations in the Diocese of Tagbilaran.

### **WALK FOR LIFE**

At dawn on February 16, just before we departed for the city of Tagbilaran, we joined thousands in the Walk for Life in the Archdiocese of Cebu, headed by Cebu Archbishop José S. Palma. Fr. Boquet addressed the congregation in the huge Metropolitan Cathedral just before the Mass. Though the schedule was very hectic for our ABC Team (Acosta, Boquet, and Clowes) as we spoke and traveled from city to city, it was another hugely fulfilling mission, doing what Pope St. John Paul II said is the "greatest and most important work on earth."

## **MISSION TRIP TO KENYA**

*By Emil Hagamu, Regional Director of English-Speaking Africa, February 2019*

After my arrival in Kenya, Fr. Samuel Gatimu, HLI Kenya Director, drove me to the African Bible Retreat Center – a remote, beautiful, and holy place northeast of Nanyuki. Once at the retreat house, we began our mission by making the so-called Salvation History stations, which focus on the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible) down to Revelation. I felt spiritually renewed for the mission.



### **REACHING OUT ON THE AIRWAVES**

During one of my talks on Radio Maria, a listener from Saudi Arabia called in to express his gratitude for my talk on "The Challenges of the African Family Today." During the next two and half hours, we fielded nearly two dozen questions and comments live. The program received a great response, especially among Kenyan listeners, and it proved to us just how critical tools such as Radio Maria are in promoting a Culture of Life in Kenya. Families called in to voice their desire for proper catechetical and pastoral solutions on subjects ranging from handling a child who deviates into immorality after being faithfully raised, to what should be done with parents who behave badly or immorally (sometimes sexually) in the presence of their children.

As we fielded the questions, we realized that they illustrated the fact that families lack accompaniment by pastors, ongoing family formation programs



Fr. Samuel Gatimu with Emil Hagamu on Radio Maria in Kenya.

at the parish and diocesan level, and gatherings of like-minded Christian support groups.

### **CHILD PROSTITUTION COMMON IN KENYA**

Enormous poverty confronts Kenya. Fr. Lucas Onge'sa Manwa, Deputy Secretary General of the Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops, said that girls as young as 14 are forced into prostitution to help feed their families. With great sadness, Fr. Gatimu added that some young women even prostitute themselves in order to earn enough to cover their university fees. He continued, emphatically stating, "This tragic reality affecting children, young girls, and women in Kenya must stop!" HIV infection rates are high, and reliance on condom use has only exacerbated the problem. It pained me to hear these stories,



**Emil with Fr. Lucas, Deputy Secretary General of the  
Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops.**

## **May 2019 Events**

### **Please pray for HLI's Mission Work in May:**

- April 24-May 8: Emil Hagamu, Regional Director for English-speaking Africa, HLI President Fr. Shenan Boquet and Dr. Brian Clowes, Director of Education and Research, complete a long pro-life mission to Lesotho.
- May 10-20: Dr. Ligaya Acosta, Regional Director of Asia and Oceania, travels to Taiwan, Province of China, for mission work and to participate in the country's March for Life.
- May 21-31: Mario Rojas, Regional Director of Latin America, and Nancy Tosi, travel to Bolivia for HLI's second mission in the country.
- May 24-29: Emil Hagamu engages in a second mission this month, this time to Burundi.

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

as I compared those poor girls and young women to my own daughters and granddaughters.

## DREAMING

There is a growing need in Kenya for pregnancy help centers. Pregnant girls are desperate, with abortion seeming the only easy way out. Fr. Gatimu, who intervenes in such cases, envisions a pregnancy help center providing life-supporting psychological, emotional, and spiritual help.

## AT THE OTHER END OF THE SPECTRUM

At Paul II Huruma Health Center in Nanyuki, I was shocked to discover some 20 terminally ill cancer patients supported almost entirely by the hospital. The director, Sr. Josephine, told me that nearly a quarter of the patients have no relatives to support them and that she frequently digs



Emil Hagamu with pro-life students after a presentation on chastity in Burrito, near Nyeri, Kenya.

into her own pocket to foot the bills. In addition, many hospital employees use some of their own money to help the patients most in need.

The hospital, located in a remote rural area, is an ideal place for the elderly and sickly to receive life-affirming services. There are 128 permanent working staff. At times, the hospital receives a helping hand from volunteers and fieldwork students.

## Buying or selling a home?

You can support Human Life International at no cost to you by taking advantage of the **Real Estate for Life** program.

HLI is pleased to announce our brand new partnership with Real Estate for Life. If you are looking to buy or sell a home, you can support HLI's pro-life work at no cost to you. Contact Real Estate for Life and they'll refer you to a pro-life realtor in your area, who will then donate a portion of their commission to HLI. If you aren't in the market right now, but know someone who is, please help us spread the word.

*The sale of a \$150,000 home through Real Estate for Life will generate about \$1,000 for HLI, at no cost to you!*



**Call 877-LIFE-US1 or visit [realestateforlife.org](http://realestateforlife.org)**

## **“I ASKED FOR BREAD, I WAS GIVEN A SPIDER TO EAT.”- ANONYMOUS SAYING**

Few care about improving Kenya’s infrastructure with roads, electrical power, medical supplies, or agricultural supplies. Yet, there are plenty of condoms to be had. Nairobi, Kenya’s capital city, is headquarters to many international world organizations, including UNFPA, IPPF, and UN-Habitat. All push extreme population control. The contraceptive mentality has deeply cemented itself here, especially among the younger generations, as evidenced by the presence of staff from Marie Stopes International as they patrol remote villages either by foot or on bicycles to “serve” the people. Their answer is never to help the living, but rather to make fewer living among us.

## **REMAKING A CULTURE OF LIFE**

Throughout the mission, we spoke on the sanctity of human life and our need to welcome, protect, and defend it. We stressed chastity, married love, and the sacred unit of the family as the foundation of human society. The groups we addressed included Nyeri Catholic Medical School students, the pro-life university chapter at the University of Nairobi, and youth groups, couples, and catechetical school students in Nyeri.

I was also privileged to share our mission work in a talk with the Deputy Secretary General of the Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops at the Secretariat within Nairobi.

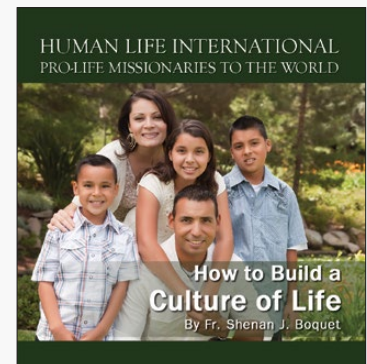
As always, we thank you, our faithful donors, for your continued and generous support, through which we were able to make this mission trip a success and help build a Culture of Life in Kenya. May God reward you.

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

**P.S.** This month, in appreciation for your gift of \$53 or more, **we would like to send you the audio CD talk *How to Build a Culture of Life* by Fr. Shenan J. Boquet.**

In his talk, Fr. Shenan J. Boquet gets at the heart of what makes building a Culture of Life truly possible. He explains the disposition we must have toward those we’re trying to bring into this culture – what we must do on a daily basis to cultivate that culture within ourselves in order to share it with others.

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



**The CD *How to Build a Culture of Life* is our gift to you this month in appreciation for your financial support of \$53 or more!**