



HLI MISSION REPORT

Pro-Life Missionaries to the World®

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By Joseph Meaney and
Emil Hagamu

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- * Pro-Life Doctor Specializes in Prenatal Psychology!
- * New Federation of Pro-Life Organizations in Croatia
- * “Wrongful Life” Lawsuit
- * New Organized Pro-Life Movement in Swaziland
- * University Students Take Pro-Life Training to the Classroom
- * The Continuing Passion of Christ



Dear HLI Friends and Supporters,

This edition of *Mission Report* takes you to two countries where HLI missionaries are helping lead the pro-life cause. Pro-Life Swaziland is just getting off the ground as an active pro-life organization and is making strides to fortify this region against population control organizations who are working hard to promote a pro-death agenda. Emil Hagamu, HLI’s Regional Coordinator for English-speaking Africa, gives us a full report of his work there this past September. But first, Joseph Meaney, HLI’s Director of International Coordination, reports from Croatia, where HLI has had an active presence for many years, thanks to our longtime affiliate there, Dr. Antun Lisec.

MISSIONARY TRIP TO CROATIA—Reported by Joseph Meaney, December 2009.

God frequently brings good out of evil. This reflection accompanied me throughout my journey for Human Life International to Croatia, or Hrvatska, as it is known there. This lovely European nation is slightly smaller than the US state of West Virginia and is home to 4.5 million inhabitants. Croatia has seen more than its share of suffering over the centuries, and rapidly declining popu-



lation must now be added to that list. The average family has only 1.4 children, slightly more than Germany or Russia.¹ Despite this demographic tragedy, a trend I first learned about on my 2006 trip has continued: for the past 15 years, **20% of Croatian births come from families with three or more children.** Many Croats are having either one child or none at all, which is why their average is still 1.4, but the more pro-life and faithful Catholics are quickly enlarging their share of the population.

PRO-LIFE DOCTOR’S SPECIALTY IS PRENATAL PSYCHOLOGY!

My main host on this visit was Dr. Petar Kresimir Hodzic. He directs the Office for the Family of the Croatian Catholic Bishops. I love telling people that I know a doctor whose specialty is prenatal psychology! This new medical discipline is already yielding some profound discoveries. For instance, Dr. Hodzic told me that **brainwave measurements for preborn babies are virtually indistinguishable from those of children up to several years old.** They eventually change to the adult brainwave pattern before puberty, but I was amazed to learn about a subsequent finding: when adults engage in contemplative prayer, their brainwaves revert to those of a preborn or young child! Christ said, “I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the Kingdom of God.” (Matthew 18:3) It is often observed that youngsters find it much easier to pray and to lead holy lives than adults. Science is now confirming that prayer is the path to becoming “like little children.”

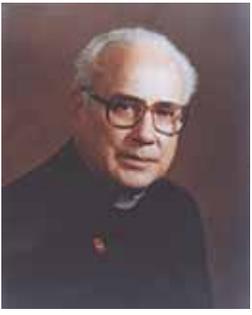


Dr. Hodzic conducts classes to increase mother/child communication during pregnancy and to prepare for less stressful deliveries. One of his objectives for these classes is to save children from abortion. Croatian demographic statistics are quite detailed, and they

reveal the heartbreaking fact that **the average “pro-life” for abortion there is a married woman who already has one child and does not want a second.** (At least teenage/young adult promiscuity and abortions are much lower in Croatia than in most industrialized nations.) Dr. Hodzic hopes that by teaching mothers throughout his country to have a closer relationship with their preborn children, they will find it impossible in subsequent pregnancies to abort.

All the former Communist Block countries were forced by their tyrannical governments to legalize abortion in the 1950s. Only Poland managed to repeal the abortion-on-demand law after returning to democratic rule. **Slovakia, Lithuania, and Croatia—all heavily Catholic nations—are striving to follow Poland’s lead.** In 2009, pro-life legislation was passed in Slovakia, requiring parental consent

THE PRO-LIFE WISDOM
of
Fr. Paul Marx
THE APOSTLE OF LIFE



[Mahatma Gandhi said that]
“The difference between a married woman using contraception and a prostitute is that the one gets paid and the other does not.”
—*Fighting for Life*, page 169.

Fr. Paul Marx

¹ Croatia ranks 192nd out of 223 countries and territories with recorded total fertility rates (TFR).



Pro-life leaders Mario Zivkovic (of the Family Center), Jelica Stipanicev Mustapic (leader of the Catholic Nurses Association), and Dr. Petar Kresimir Hodzic (Director of the Office for the Family of the Croatian Catholic Bishops).

for abortions on girls under 18 years of age, disclosure of information on the medical risks and alternatives to abortion, and a mandatory waiting period. Lithuania just missed enacting a sweeping abortion ban. Croatia hopes to catch up. They almost amended their constitution in 1995 to defend human life from conception.

A federation of pro-life movements in Croatia was recently created. Their hope is to better coordinate the efforts of good groups and make them more effective. HLI is supporting this excellent initiative. I met with Dr. Jasenka Markeyevic, a professor of medicine and member of the national bio-ethics committee, who heads up the federation. She is an influential person and teaches bio-ethics to medical students. This is great news in terms of inculcating pro-life values in the next generation of doctors there.

I also met with pro-life lawyers who laid the legal groundwork for the pro-life federation. Dr. Hodzic informed me that a pro-life legal challenge to the constitutionality of the 1978 Yugoslav abortion law has yet to be heard by the Constitutional Court, despite the fact that it was presented 15 years ago! If they ruled against the law, it would be a *Roe v. Wade* in reverse court decision. It seems, however, that the Croatian judges are hoping the issue will simply go away. ***They do not realize that the pro-lifers are here to stay and are multiplying!***

One of the most dynamic professional groups I met in Croatia was the Catholic Nurses Association. They have a large and active membership. Jelica Stipanicev Mustapic leads them, and the international conference for Catholic nurses is set to take place in Zagreb in 2011. HLI will be happy to participate and encourage the pro-life side of their work. The Catholic nurses have offered part of their own office space for the new coordinator of the pro-life federation to use.

THE PRO-LIFE PRIEST OF CROATIA

It was my privilege on this missionary journey to meet Fr. Marko Glogovic. He is a Pauline Father, part of a congregation founded in the 13th century in Hungary. They have a strong Marian and pro-life devotion. In 1382, they were made custodians of the icon of Our Lady of Czestochowa. I was happy to learn that the Paulines were among the first to promote devotion to the Holy Innocents. From his monastery in Karlovac, Fr. Marko has proved a pro-life prayer dynamo! He has established prayer groups throughout Croatia and distributes small statues of Our Lady with a preborn child on her Immaculate Heart for private devotion in the homes of families.



Fr. Marko Glogovic with pro-life displays in Karlovac, Croatia.



Joseph Meaney at the first monument to the preborn in Karlovac, Croatia.

Father also puts his prayer into action. **I visited the first pro-life monument to victims of abortion in a Croatian cemetery, which he partnered with a local mayor to create.** It is next to the monument to soldiers killed in the recent war of independence. Another project he launched with donations is a home for mothers experiencing crisis pregnancies. The home itself was a gift, and it is almost ready to take in its first guests. While I was with him, Fr. Marko's cell phone seemed to be constantly ringing—and he did pro-life counseling over the phone while I met with him! It is encouraging to see such wonderful priests around the world.

HLI's longtime representative in Croatia is Dr. Antun Lisec. **Like Fr. Marko, he never stops defending life.** I accompanied him on one of his frequent missions of mercy. He brought some donated goods to a family in Slavonsky Brod (on the border with Bosnia) who had decided not to abort after speaking with him. Marijo Zivkovic and

his Family Center provided the food/clothing that is donated from abroad to help those in need.

Dr. Lisec took me to stay with his family. He and his wife, Bosa, now have three lovely girls. His daughters help package pro-life materials and assist their father any other way they can. We drove around in Antun's old blue van that has over 270,000 miles on it from his years of pro-life trips throughout Central and Eastern Europe. Thanks to some generous HLI donors, we are close to raising enough money for a new pro-life van.



Joseph Meaney with Antun Lisec and his children, (left to right) Jacinta, Clara, and Ana.



The home for unwed mothers in Karlovac, Croatia.

Before returning from this trip to Croatia, I recorded two radio interviews for the Catholic radio network based in Zagreb. We discussed many pro-life issues, but euthanasia was one of the most pressing. Amazingly, **Croatia recently had a case of a “wrongful life” lawsuit. This is when the person sues seeking payment because the doctor saved his or her life!**

Croatia has applied for membership in the European Union (EU), but the anti-life bias emanating from the EU has a powerful influence on candidate countries. **Please join me in praying that Croatia will make strong pro-life strides in 2010.** We hope to ar-

range for an in-depth training session with Dr. Brian Clowes this year and to help the new pro-life federation touch many hearts with an intense love for God's precious gift of life. 卐

MISSIONARY TRIP TO SWAZILAND—Reported by Emil Hagamu, September 2009.

My visit to Swaziland in September 2009 was a follow-up of my first two visits to this small Kingdom. My first visit was in February 2008, when I gave talks to various groups in Manzini and Mbabane. The aim at that time was to lay the foundation for a future pro-life movement. **A pro-life presence is definitely needed in Swaziland because of the encroaching culture of death.** There are many population control groups working in the country, trying to convince the people that condoms are the answer. This is why a new pro-life group is needed—to fight against the misinformation spread by anti-life organizations.

In my second visit, which took place in February 2009, Fr. Euteneuer and I gave additional talks and made plans for a future pro-life training course designed to start an effective pro-life organization—Pro-Life Swaziland. A draft constitution was presented and discussed with a group of six founding members. The organization of the envisaged pro-life training rested in the hands of Mr. Velaphi Mamba, the Youth Programs Officer of the Council of Churches of Swaziland, and Fr. Larry McDonnell, a priest from the Salesian House in Manzini.



PREPARING THE FUTURE OF PRO-LIFE SWAZILAND

Mr. Velaphi Mamba and I managed to arrange the training, which finally took place with HLI sponsorship. As Fr. Euteneuer could not personally participate, he sent Dr. Brian Clowes, HLI's research manager, to join me in the training that was conducted at a hotel overlooking Mbabane, the capital city of Swaziland. A total of 19, mostly young people, participated. These participants represented different churches in Swaziland, signifying an ecumenical dimension of the pro-life ministry. There were also three pastors, a Roman Catholic priest from the Mater Dolorosa Mission in Mbabane, an Anglican priest, and a pastor of an independent church.

During the training, each participant wrote out their action plan, outlining the major areas where they would work on advancing the culture of life. These plans encompass a year of work, and among the topics were:



From left to right: Mr. Velaphi Mamba, Emil Hagamu, Madam Khangezile Dlamini, and Brian Clowes.

- ✓ Showing abortion videos to students in schools, colleges and universities
- ✓ Educating on the problems and consequences to youth of using condoms and all other contraceptives
- ✓ Explaining the Maputo Protocol and its implications to the people of Swaziland
- ✓ Explaining the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Swaziland and the need for the Abstinence and Faithfulness (fidelity) approaches for its control, even in sero-discordant couples (when one person is HIV positive and the other is HIV negative)

- ✓ Conducting workshop on legislative issues
They will run these programs by:
- ✓ Taking advantage of social gatherings
- ✓ Approaching church leaders and traditional elders in their societies
- ✓ Reaching out to the youth in churches and neighborhoods
- ✓ Using grassroots campaigning and education
- ✓ Working with schools, colleges and universities
- ✓ Conducting workshops for members of parliament



Above and below: Training in Mbabane, Swaziland.

They will get funding for these programs by:

- ✓ Asking church leaders for financial assistance
- ✓ Approaching SWAGAA (Swaziland Action Group Against Abuse – a non-governmental organization) for financial assistance
- ✓ Requesting office space in the Council of Churches building
- ✓ Utilizing other fundraising approaches

Mary Da Silva, one the most active members, and possible leader, of the movement in Swaziland offered to integrate each individual action plan into one national program. This national action program



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will be coordinated from the Council of Churches under the direction of Mr. Velaphi Mamba. An office at the Council of Churches will be allocated to the Executive Director, who will be appointed at a future date, and all pro-life programs will operate from it.

At the end of the training program, participants were given copies of the proposed constitution and were asked to read it and give their input. Fortunately, they all accepted the proposed constitution and adopted it.

A PRO-LIFE SWAZILAND

The constitution for this new pro-life group in Swaziland stresses that “its sole purpose is the protection of human life, marriage and family.” **The group will focus on educating the youth, since that is where the future lies, and working within the already pro-life Swazi culture.** It will aim to “defend and protect [the sanctity of] human life from the moment of conception or fertilization until natural death” and will also defend traditional marriage. It will teach alternatives to contraception—Natural Family Planning for the spacing of children and chastity and abstinence as the effective way to slow and stop the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The group will work to provide counseling and material services to the elderly, the sick and orphans. It will educate people on the dangers of abortion, fight attempts to legalize abortion in Swaziland and take legal action against those who perform abortions (since they will be breaking the law).



Pro-life trainees and trainers in Mbabane, Swaziland.

In sum, Pro-Life Swaziland is an ecumenical group consisting of individuals who agree on traditional Christian morality. It will go out into the country actively educating and demonstrating in order to fulfill its mission.

IMMEDIATE IMPACT

The training thus far has had a huge impact on the trainees. They were at first skeptical, entrenched in the anti-life mentality surrounding them through the many population control groups working in Swaziland. All of these groups advocate the need to reduce Swaziland’s population through condoms, contraception and abortion. (No wonder every time I visit Swaziland, I read a story about abortion in the newspapers!) **This training, though, has transformed the trainees into pro-life activists. At the end of the program, every participant appreciated it and admitted that the training changed them.** To that effect, two of the participants, who are first year sociology students at the University of Swaziland, immediately took the knowledge gained during the training to their classroom and shared it with their professor and peers. The students reported that their professor and peers were surprised at the new information and are now waiting to receive a full package of pro-life material. They are looking forward to watching the videos on abortion. **One of the students expressed to me that it was a miracle: a new horizon for the pro-life movement has started to emerge at the university!** Other participants I met in town in the two days I stayed after the training were jubilant at the training and reported that work has already started.

Thanks to Pro-Life Swaziland, there will be a new presence promoting the Gospel of Life in that country. No longer will the people be left defenseless among the ravages of the encroaching culture of death. With the grace of Almighty God, these brave pro-lifers will be strengthened in the knowledge that they are speaking Truth and spreading that Truth to the world.

I would like to convey my heartfelt gratitude to Mr. Velaphi Mamba for his tireless efforts in preparing the logistics of the training and to Madam Khangezile Dlamini, Secretary General of the Council of Churches, for the support she offered during the preparation period, as well as everyone else who participated in the planning and implementation of this training. I thank HLI President, Fr. Euteneuer, for sending Dr. Brian Clowes for the training. He did his job with the intensity that was expected. Dr. Clowes and I provided the expertise that enabled participants to learn and grow, and, in the end, a pro-life minded group was formed and ready to permeate its society with new strength and knowledge. Finally, I extend my thanks to HLI for its financial support of this training, without which it would not have taken place. 卐

And thank YOU for your support of HLI. We would not have been able to provide Emil the financial support he needed to pursue this training course in Swaziland without you sending your financial support to us. So, thank you very much for your continued partnership in our mission. Thank you for all the lives and souls that will be saved, by the grace of God, through the future work of Pro-Life Swaziland. Every soul—all over the world—is precious to God and worthy of our concern.

God bless you always!



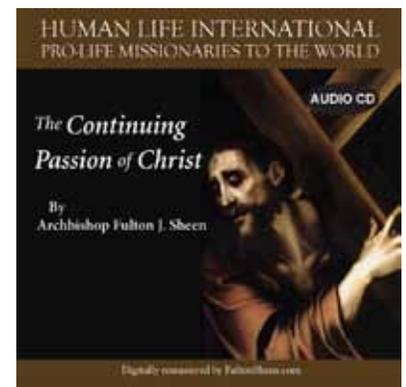
Rev. Thomas J. Euteneuer
President

P.S.—This month, to thank you for your contribution of \$49 or more to HLI’s mission, **I will send you an audio CD of a talk given by Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen, entitled *The Continuing Passion of Christ*.** In this talk, produced and digitally remastered by FultonSheen.com, Archbishop Sheen discusses the cross of suffering.

Everyone deals with crosses in their lives; the question is, how do we live with those crosses? **Christ’s Passion is not finished, as far as we are concerned.** Archbishop Sheen explains that, “Christ’s afflictions are continuing in us...in His Body, the Church.”

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