

January 1, 2008 *Helpers Newsletter*

Dear Friends of God's Precious Infants,

A Blessed, Holy and Prosperous New Year!

A Blessed, Holy and Prosperous New Year to one and all! I am grateful to all of you for your contribution to the Helpers' Apostolate last year, whether through counseling pregnant women on the sidewalk or Life Center, counseling women after an abortion, by your prayerful presence outside an abortion mill, by faithfully attending a larger monthly Helpers Prayer Vigil, or by your financial generosity and prayers. May we include also in our prayers all the Helpers who God called to Himself last year, and all those Helpers still carrying the cross of sickness.

The People Came to Find Out if I Was Okay

Forty years ago, in fall 1967, I warned the people in Incarnation Church that a small group of pro-choice activists were trying to legalize abortion in New York. After Mass, people asked if I was okay, stating "You could never legalize abortion in New York or any other state, this is America." They were wrong, because in 1970 abortion up to the seventh month was legalized in New York. Thus, if the 1973 Decision, Roe v. Wade was overturned tomorrow, it would not help our efforts in New York. The present leadership in New York, fearful the Supreme Court might overrule Roe v. Wade, wants to pass a law maintaining legal abortion throughout the nine months, including partial birth abortions.

It Was Unthinkable

In 1997, thirty years later during a homily I insisted we have to change our laws to protect all unborn children. After Mass, people asked if I was okay, stating: "You could never make abortion *illegal* in this state or any other, this is America." Suddenly I realized what the late Holy Father, John Paul II, warned in his Encyclical, the Gospel of Life, that when the voices of good people fail to be heard in the marketplace, in the public square, a Culture of Life can slowly, then rapidly become a Culture of Death. In 1967, for the majority of Americans, a law allowing the unjust killing of innocent unborn children was unthinkable. For them, America and a Culture of Life were synonymous. In 1997, for the majority of Americans, to outlaw abortion was unthinkable. For them, America and a Culture of Death were synonymous.

Silence Is Not A Luxury for Anyone

The people were wrong in 1967, when they believed legalizing unjust killing was impossible. It happened. Well, I am convinced that the people were wrong in 1997, who believed outlawing abortion in America was impossible. We will persist. Today, ten years later, every poll shows America is increasingly pro-life,. Young and old are letting their voices be heard in the marketplace. Come and lift up your voices in the public square, proclaiming to all, in song and prayer, the sacredness of every human life in the eyes of God. Silence is not a luxury for anyone living amidst of a Culture of Death. Don't foolishly be left out of the growing worldwide choir of prayer for life, if you want to be part of that heavenly choir, proclaiming and praising the God of Life from whom all life flows. Set aside time to participate in the Helpers Prayer Vigils for Life, until America and a Culture of Life are again synonymous in the hearts and minds of all.

THE UNBORN BABIES AND MOTHERS NEED YOUR PRAYERFUL PRESENCE AT THE UPCOMING HELPERS PRAYER VIGILS

DATE	LOCATION	CELEBRANT
Sat Jan 19, 2008	St Gerard Magella 188-16 91st Ave Hollis, Queens, NY 11423 718-468-6565	Bishop Daily
Sat Feb 16, 2008	St Peter-St Paul 234 Congress St, Brooklyn NY 11201 718-624-3425	Bishop DiMarzio
Sat Mar 15, 2008	Blessed Sacrament 34-43 93rd St Jackson Hts, Queens, NY 11372 718-639-3888	Bishop Catanello
Sat Apr 12, 2008	Saint Catherine of Genoa 520 Linden Blvd Brooklyn, NY 11203 718-282-7162	Bishop Sansaricq
Sat May 17, 2008	Queen of Martyrs 110-06 Queens Blvd Forest Hills, NY 11375 718-268-6251	Bishop Cisneros
Sat June 21, 2008	St John Vianney 140-10 34th Avenue Flushing, NY 11354 718-762-7920	Bishop N/S
Sat Aug 30, 2008	Our Lady of the Cenacle 136-06 87th Av Richmond Hill NY 11418 718-291-2540	Bishop Catanello
Sat Sept 20, 2008	Saint Joan of Arc 82-00 35th Avenue Jackson Hts., NY 11372 718-429-2333	Bishop Caggiano

Sat Oct 18, 2008	Saint Patrick's 39-38 29th Street Long Island City, NY 11101 718-729-6060	Bishop DiMarzio
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PRO-LIFE MISSION TRIP TO CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

On August 8th I departed JFK airport for Eastern Europe, assisted by *Elizabeth Hickson* who has done volunteer missionary work in South America, Africa and India. On the flight, my seat remained upright and refused to go back during the nine hours of flight time. To my left, I was accompanied by a very loud little boy who also remained talkative for nine hours. So I decided if I could not sleep I would get a lot of reading done and prepare for the talks I planned to give. Well that was a nice thought, until the lights went out where I was sitting, and malfunctioned for the duration of the flight. However in the darkness of the plane not able to sleep, while praying my rosary and recognizing the Lord's way from experience, I knew it would be a great trip!

Cardinal Schonborn and Apostolic Nuncio to Austria Support Helpers Apostolate

We arrived in Vienna, Austria at 7:30am and were met by *Dietmar Fischer*, the faithful man who first brought the Helpers and I to Europe. Dietmar is the leader of the pro-life centers in Austria, and head of HLI Austria. The Helpers had a wonderful breakfast waiting for us and as we ate the Austrian Helpers shared with us wonderful stories of how God was working through them to save His little ones and to help their mothers. In the afternoon, I celebrated Mass in a chapel full of Helpers from Vienna and the surrounding area. The Mass was followed by a talk and training session. In the evening following a Dominican feast celebration at the Cathedral, I met again with Cardinal Schonborn who from the beginning has given his blessing to the Helpers Apostolate in Austria. Today, Dietmar joyfully informed me that on Dec. 28, 2007, the Feast of the Holy Innocents, the Apostolic Nuncio to Austria came to the Helpers Prayer Vigil in Vienna as the main celebrant, joining with Bishop Andreas Laun, the homilist. The Nuncio came in the name of the Pope to state this holy Apostolate has the full support and backing of the Church, and encourages continuing this holy work.

Dr. Imre Teglasz Starts a New Project in Hungary

Early the next morning we set out for Budapest, Hungary with our driver Herfried, who has faithfully counseled each day for nine years outside the abortion mills in Vienna. Dr. Imre Teglasz and his friend waited for us upon our arrival in Budapest for a brief lunch. Then, we continued our journey to the City of Nyiregyhaza where I spoke that evening on the Church's encyclicals and documents dealing with human life to an audience of multi-denominational ministers. The presentation received a warm response and hopefully instilled a new understanding of Church teaching on issues such as contraceptives and abortion. The day ended in good fellowship while sharing a wonderful Hungarian meal. On Friday morning, Aug. 8th, Dr. Imre and his friends drove us outside the city to a beautiful, peaceful area containing a wildlife preserve, to view and bless their new project, a home for unwed pregnant mothers. After blessing the home still under repair and bidding farewell to the Helpers in Hungary, we set out for the Life Conference in Romania.

A Pro-Life Conference in Lugoj, Rumania

An hour after passing through the city of Timisora, Romania where we picked up Casiana Roos, my translator for the upcoming conference, we finally arrived in the town of Lugoj at the residence of the Greek-Catholic Bishop Alexander Mesian. There we were met by my good friends, Fr. Ioan Chisarau, President of the Gift of Life Association and a Romanian Catholic priest, and his wife Gerda, who for years have been faithfully organizing the Helpers prayer vigils in Timisora . Father Ioan and his wife Gerda received permission and encouragement from Bishop Mesian to have the Pro-Life Conference at the Bishop's residence, a very large complex suitable for holding such an event. After the opening Mass, in the dining area we shared a pleasant dinner with the Catholic Byzantine Bishop Alexander Mesian, the other conference speakers, and the conference participants.. During the next three days I gave talks on Humanae Vitae, Donum Vitae and Evangelium Vitae to an audience including seminarians, priests, and families from Greek Orthodox and Catholic traditions. Casiana Roos, who previously translated the Helpers prayer book into Romanian, was an excellent translator. Other speakers included Brian Clowes from HLI and Sr. Caroline, a pro-life leader from Paris, France. On the last day of the life conference, at the Byzantine Mass celebrated by Bishop Mesian at the Cathedral Church in Lugoj, I preached to the people about establishing a Culture of Life. At the end of the conference, after sharing meals, ideas, prayer and fellowship, we said our goodbyes to all our friends in Romania, and began the long trip back to Vienna. We drove the entire day and reached Vienna at nightfall, where we were again welcomed by Dietmar and the other Helpers.

St. Maximilian Kolbe Life Center in Salzburg

The next morning, Herfried, Claudia, Sylvia, Elizabeth, Dietmar and I left for Salzburg to participate with other Helpers in the fifth year jubilee of the St. Maximilian Kolbe Life Center. There, we were greeted by the directors of the Life Center, Johannes Bucher, a ten year Helper, and Manfred Muller, author and scholar, who recently completed his studies as a candidate for the priesthood in the Diocese of Vienna. The Life Center in Salzburg, similar to the Austrian Life Centers, includes a Perpetual Adoration of the Eucharist Chapel. Following a Mass of Thanksgiving in Saint Maximilian Chapel, with many other Helpers and Benefactors from the Salzburg area, the Fifth anniversary celebration took place in the Life Center. After Dietmar Fischer, President and Director of the Helpers in Austria, spoke words of recognition and distributed awards, I gave words of thanks and encouragement, and the party concluded with song and prayer.

Archbishop Consecrates Salzburg to the Immaculate Heart of Mary

The following morning, Thursday Aug. 16th accompanied by Dietmar Fischer, I offered Mass and spoke to the sick and the elderly in a senior residence in Salzburg. Then we joined a prayer procession already in place up the small mountain to the famous Maria Plain Basilica overlooking Salzburg. There, I concelebrated Mass with the Archbishop of Salzburg, Dr. Georg Eder. After Mass, the Archbishop again consecrated the City of Salzburg to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Later, at a famous ice cream parlor, Father Johann Ebster, who frequently leads the Salzburg Helpers Prayer Vigils., joined us. We said our goodbyes to the Salzburg Helpers, and with Dietmar as our driver, headed to Germany.

Oberndorf, Austria to Passau, Germany

Before leaving the Salzburg area of Austria on Aug. 16th, we went to Oberndorf to visit St. Nicholas Church where in 1818 “Silent Night, Holy Night” was first sung. Father Josef Mohr, the parish priest, wrote the words of the song “Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht,” while Franz Xaver Gruber composed the melody. Everything has a purpose, in God’s plan. The chewing of a little church mouse prevented the organ from playing that Christmas evening and enriched the Christmas celebration in Oberndorf and since then, around the world. Though it wasn’t Christmas, while in that little church, we sang “Silent Night, Holy Night.” By evening, we reached Passau in Germany, where Wolfgang Hering, President of the Helpers in Germany, gathered a group of young adults with the help of Simone and Lothar Eck. After Holy Mass, we explained that the Magisterium’s teaching on Life, and emphasized the documents *Humanae Vitae*, *Donum Vitae* and *Evangelium Vitae* contained the Church’s positive response to the ever-growing Culture of Death. Later that night, we stayed in a lovely hotel in Bavaria, compliments of Dietmar Fischer.

Five Thousand Young People Gather in the City of Tabor

The next morning we set out for the Youth Conference in the City of Tabor, in the Czech Republic. There, 5,000 young people, from all over the Czech Republic came together through the efforts of the Czech National Catholic Bishops Conference. The pouring rain did not dampen the young people’s enthusiasm. The young people walked great distances through the rain to the sites of various workshops. The young people who came to my workshop on “Establishing a Culture of Life” remained listening, though many missed dinner. These young people, whose families lived under communism, were open to the teachings of the Church, since they know what happens to a society that rejects God and a people who deny the need for a Redeemer. I illustrated that the Helpers Apostolate positively responds to the Church’s call to establish a Culture of Life. Later I shared with the presiding Archbishop that in America, God’s people bring the Gospel of Life to the streets through public prayer vigils. At the closing Mass on Sunday, the Archbishop challenged the 5,000 young people not to be afraid to stand up for life and bring the Gospel of Life to the streets. The young people all responded affirmatively aloud to the Archbishop. There is hope for the flowers. I am grateful to Radim and Katerina Uchae of Prague, in the Czech Republic for being instrumental in our invitation to the event, organizing our activities and translating my lectures. On our way back to Vienna, we offered Mass at the residence of Dr. Josef PreBlmayer who is constructing the first Abortion Holocaust Museum in Europe.

Three of the Five Hospitals in Bratislava No Longer Do Abortions

On Sunday August 19th we left Vienna early for the pastoral center “Quo Vadis” in Bratislava, Slovakia where I gave three lectures to the Helpers and their friends. During lunch the Bratislava Catholic Newspaper and Radio Lumen Slovakia interviewed me. Later, Mass was celebrated in St. Ladislav Church, followed by Exposition and an evening candlelight Helpers Prayer Vigil. Under the leadership of Eva Cerovska and Marek Michalcik, among others, the Helpers organized more than 100 large prayer vigils in Bratislava. Now, three of the five hospitals in Bratislava no longer perform abortions. The Helpers Vigil ended with Benediction. After brief friendly farewells we returned to Vienna.

Bishop Laun Receives Cardinal Von Galen Award

On Monday the 20th following afternoon workshops with the Helpers in Vienna, I concelebrated an early evening Mass with the courageous Bishop Dr. Andreas Laun of Salzburg, Austria. Later that evening, I had the privilege of presenting the HLI International Cardinal Clemens August Graf Von Galen Pro Life Award to Bishop Laun for his courage in word, writing and action, throughout Europe, in defense of the Sacredness of Life, especially the life of the unborn child.. A celebration dinner in his honor followed the award., an appropriate end to this mission trip for life in Europe.

HELPERS' ACTIVITIES IN THE NEW YORK AREA

Before departing for Europe, at the request of Father Lawrence CFR, I drove to Philadelphia on the afternoon of Saturday, August 4th for an evening address to a varied group of young people, many from the Generation for Life, at the Shrine Church of St. John Neumann. After a well-received talk, I spoke to many wonderful people, including a young woman named Wenqi Dwyer. Since then, she has traveled here to the Monastery to correctly learn the Helpers' approach and has started doing sidewalk counseling in Philadelphia. Wenqi, a computer software engineer, also uses her talents to assist the Helpers Apostolate in other ways. With the help of Drs. David and Monica Aachen, Wenqi has just finished translating all of the Helpers' materials into Chinese and has forwarded them electronically to people in Taiwan who wish to start using the Helpers' approach.

On Friday evening August 24th a few days after returning from Europe, I drove to St. Matthew's Church in Wilmington, Delaware to celebrate a Pro-Life Helpers Mass. After Mass, we had a candlelight prayer procession to the abortion mill, and found a sign outside the entrance indicating the property was for sale. Our prayers became prayers of reparation and thanksgiving.

Bishops Daily and DiMarzio Lead Helpers Prayer Vigils

Idrove back to Brooklyn that Friday night, since Bishop Thomas Daily was offering the 7:15 AM Helpers' Vigil Mass in Our Lady of Cenacle Church on Saturday, August 25th. After praying outside of the building in Jamaica Hospital where the abortions are performed, we returned to church for a closing Benediction.

On Saturday September 15th, Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio offered the Helpers Vigil Mass in St. Joan of Arc. Then, Bishop DiMarzio joined by the new Pastor, Msgr. Garcia, the parish priests, Msgr. Ogle, the Vicar and Father Sweeney, the Diocesan Vocation Director, led the Helpers in Prayer outside of two abortion mills in Jackson Heights. The local Helpers were joined in this Vigil by Wolfgang Hering , the President of the Helpers in Germany, and Helpers from Rochester, in upstate New York.

CUA Students Join Bishop Caggiano

On Oct. 20th Bishop Frank Caggiano offered the Helpers Mass at St. Patrick's Church in Long Island City and led the Helpers in a prayerful rosary procession to Choices abortion mill. We were joined by a wonderful group of college students from Catholic University of America in Washington D.C. who spent the weekend at the Monastery of the Precious Blood taking part in a Helpers Retreat Training Program. On

Saturday Nov. 17th, Bishop Daily led the Helpers Prayerful Rosary Procession to All Women's Abortion Mill on Austin Street in Forest Hills, Queens after offering the 7:30 A.M. at Queen of Martyrs Church. For many years Dotty Doyle, Mary Murray, and Maryann Mazzella faithfully counseled at this site, supported by faithful prayers as Dennis O'Shea, Chuck Haunns, John Gorman and Bishop Daily.

Franciscan University Students Join Bronx Helpers

On the Feast of All Saints, thirty-one college students came to the Monastery from the Franciscan University in Steubenville, Ohio, to participate in a Helpers Retreat Training Program. Early Saturday morning, the group joined the Bronx Helpers at a Vigil Mass organized by Father Juniper, CFR and the always faithful John Paduano, who counsels daily at Planned Parenthood in Brooklyn. The Bronx Helpers, many of the Sisters of Life, and the students went in prayerful procession to the Bronx abortion mill where the Helpers, under the excellent leadership of Mary Devine, experienced great success. On Friday morning and at noon on Saturday, the students prayed outside the ambulatory abortion clinic in Brooklyn and met the longtime great sidewalk counselors Mike Marino and Rose Diaz. There, they also joined in prayer the faithful Helpers weekday prayers, like John Foley, Mike Reddy, Theresa Gandolfo and others.

PRO-LIFE MISSION TRIP TO GHANA, TOGO & NIGERIA (AFRICA); ENGLAND & AUSTRIA

On Monday afternoon, Nov. 26th I set out, again accompanied by the very helpful and talented volunteer assistant, Elizabeth Hickson, on a Pro-Life Mission trip to Africa and Europe. The ever generous volunteer Helper, Mike Reddy, drove us to JFK Airport in New York City. At 5:30 PM on a Delta jet we left JFK and arrived at 8:30 AM., Tuesday morning in the City of Accra, the Capital of the Republic of Ghana in West Africa. Ghana has more than 20 million people and although many dialects exist, the official language is English, and the main religions are Muslim (30%) and Christian (25%). The City of Accra has almost 2 million inhabitants and its coastal location on the Atlantic Ocean was formerly known as the Gold Coast because of the precious metal that drew so many Europeans to its shores. The temperature in each of the African countries on this trip remained about 100 degrees since we were not far from the middle of the Earth, the Equator, dividing the Earth's surface into the northern and southern hemispheres.

We Prayed for the People of Ghana

An intelligent, prayerful, young priest, Father Michael Mensah, born in the City of Accra and currently the Chancellor of the Diocese and Secretary to the Metropolitan Archbishop of Accra, Charles Gabriel Palmer-Buckle, met us at the airport Father Michael gave us a mini-tour of Accra including government buildings and civil and supreme court buildings. I warned Father Michael that the threat to their culture would come more likely through court decisions than any vote of the people. In 1957, under the leadership of Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana gained its independence from Britain, becoming the first autonomous country in Africa with Kwame as the first president. At the place where Nkrumah and his wife Fathia are entombed, we prayed for them and that the people of Ghana would not become enslaved by the culture of death.

I Urged People to Reject Any False Values Coming From The West

While I was in Cape Town, South Africa, I led the Helpers Prayer Vigil outside a Marie Stopes abortion clinic. Although abortion is not yet legal in Ghana, nevertheless, the situation is critical since a Marie Stopes clinic has just opened in Accra, and Togo, the country immediately to the east of Ghana recently legalized abortion. Father Michael brought us to the Millenium House on the grounds of Archbishop Charles', office and workplace. I offered Mass and preached at the evening Mass in Christ the King parish. Following Mass, I spoke to the people about the threat of the culture of death in Ghana and how the Helpers in other countries try to maintain or reestablish a culture of life. On Wednesday, I celebrated and preached at the 6:15 AM and the 12 PM masses at Holy Spirit Cathedral Church. At both Masses, I urged the people to reject any false values from America and Western Europe undermining their love of Family, Life and Faith. I told them that presently, in America and Western Europe, millions of people are trying to restore these values into our Culture.

Archbishop Embraces Helpers Apostolate

After Mass, we met with the Archbishop in his office and later shared dinner with him in his residence. The Archbishop is an articulate, intelligent, zealous, humble priest hoping to implement the Helpers Apostolate through members of the International Organization, Couples for Christ, in his Diocese. He requested all materials to be sent to him and will work directly with the couples. He arranged for me to meet with the man in charge of the Couples for Christ, and I spent a few hours explaining the workings of the Helpers Apostolate. Later that day, after sharing a meal with the Archbishop in his residence, he presented me with a beautiful Mass stole commemorating the Golden Jubilee of the Holy Spirit Cathedral of Accra. With great generosity the Archbishop told his personal driver, with Father Michael, to take the Archbishop's personal car and drive Elizabeth and me early the next morning to the border of Togo, a neighboring country.

The Republic of Togo

The Republic of Togo is a long, narrow, poor, agricultural country in West Africa. Lome, its capital, is located on the Atlantic Ocean, along the coast formerly known as the Slave Coast because of the many slave traders that went there from the 17th to the 19th centuries. French is the official language for the five million people who are mainly Christian or Muslim. Leo Kodjo, the President of the Pro Life-Togo Association, met us at the Togo border. A half dozen very impressive young men, members of the Association, accompanied Leo. Our first stop in the City of Lome was to meet with the Ordinary of the Diocese, Bishop Denis Ammuzu-Dzakpah. After explaining the Apostolate of the Helpers of God's Precious Infants to the Bishop, we shared a bite to eat and then received his blessing on ourselves and the Apostolate. We later went to the Hôtel Le Prospère where we stayed and held a four-hour training session for the members of the Pro-Life Togo Association. Elikplim Dakey was my main translator of English into French.

The Culture of Death Begins in Togo

Tragedically, abortion became legal in Togo in January of 2007. The new abortion law allows abortion in the case of rape or incest, when the mother's life and health are in danger, or if the unborn baby will likely have serious birth defects. In America, we know from experience that the language contained in that law will quickly lead to abortion on demand followed by euthanasia. The law legalizing abortion has already destroyed and removed from the law in Togo the Judaic, Christian ethical principles, namely, that without exception every innocent human life has an absolute value as a precious gift of God, and so must never be deliberately destroyed, because others judge that the quality of that human life in its beginnings, is, or in the end, is no longer acceptable, dictating abortion or euthanasia.

When Doctors Become Abortionists

Furthermore anticipating that 90% of the doctors in Togo, as in America, will not do abortions, the authors cleverly wrote into law that abortions can be performed outside of the hospital, in other suitable settings, namely, free-standing abortion clinics, as we have in America.. This is where the doctor stops being a doctor, and becomes an abortionist, spending his whole day in killing the unborn children without any pressure from his medical peers, who will not come and work in abortion centers. Thus, if one in every ten doctors becomes a specialist in killing unborn children in abortion centers, the number sufficiently implements the law of death in Togo. I am convinced that the wording of the law passed in Togo was guided by people outside of Togo who have a clear knowledge of the American experience. It is important that the Church and people in Togo learn what the Church and the people in America are doing to reestablish a Culture of Life. On our part, it is urgent that as soon as possible we send them a French translation of materials needed to implement the Helpers of God's Precious Infants Apostolate in Togo.

The Challenge of Going from Lome to Abuja

The real challenge was getting from Lome in Togo to Abuja, Nigeria where Father Emmanuel of the Archdiocese of Jos was to meet us. Unable to get any flights from Lome to Abuja, we had to take a minibus from Lome to Lagos in Nigeria. The bus left Lome at 10:00 AM on Friday and the bus company assured us that we would be in Lagos by 2:00 PM that afternoon to catch one of the many flights from Lagos to Abuja, the Capital of Nigeria. Caveat emptor(buyer beware) proved true once more. I will not quickly forget the twelve hour bus ride from Lome to Lagos. At the end of the madness, I knew once again my time in Nigeria would be productive. Obviously by the time we arrived, the last plane had left for Abuja. Poor Father Emmanuel waited until the evening in Abuja. We finally contacted him and he referred us to his friend, Fr. Amos, the chaplain at the Nigerian Air Force Base, located next to the Lagos International Airport. Fr. Amos could not have been more kind and thoughtful in helping us to get sleeping quarters that evening at a residence run by religious sisters, and assisted us to purchase tickets for an early Saturday morning flight to Abuja. The next morning we called Fr. Emmanuel in Jos, informing him of the time of our arrival in Abuja. Only later, I fully appreciated the sacrifice of Father Emmanuel when I realized it was a three hour car ride each way from Jos to Abuja. Father Emmanuel met us at the Abuja Airport and we finally set out for the Jos Plateau, the highest point in Nigeria.

The Republic of Nigeria

Nigeria located in West Africa, near the Equator, is the most populous African country, with 134 million people. English is the official Language, and the main religions are Christianity and Islam. Although the country is rich in natural resources, human greed and corruption often prevent many people from sharing the benefits. We take for granted the availability of electricity and running water but in the areas in Africa that I visited, it was more like a luxury, limited to those with a generator. The majority of Nigerians currently hope for peace and prosperity with the recent election of a Muslim President, whom all feel is a good man who will try to help not only the 60 million Muslims but also the 60 million Catholics in Nigeria, approximately the same number of Catholics living in the United States. Experiencing the goodness, humility, patience and hospitality of the African people, I urged the priests to resist any beginnings of the culture of death in their countries which will destroy their greatest natural resource, which for me was clearly their people.

Meeting the Nigerian Helpers and the Archbishop

After arriving at Jos, we placed our luggage into the rooms located on the grounds where the Archbishop of Jos, Ignatius A. Kaigama has his residence. We then went to Fr. Emmanuel's parish. His rectory and church, I am sure, are similar to the home and buildings in Nazareth where Jesus grew up. Members of the Nigerian Helpers of God's Precious Infants, including the original 15 members, were waiting for us in Father Emmanuel's residence. After speaking with them for more than an hour and sharing food they presented me with handmade Mass vestments with a beautiful design on it of the Nigerian Helpers of Gods Precious Infants. We left to meet the Archbishop in his residence. After a very fruitful meeting with the Archbishop, he blessed and urged us to spread the Helpers Apostolate throughout all of Nigeria. Later that evening I had Mass with the Helpers and others at Father Emmanuel's parish church.

Mass Was an Occasion to Celebrate

On Sunday morning I spoke about the beauty of a Culture of Life to 600 young women, ages 13 to 17, who came from all over Nigeria to attend the outstanding Catholic Leadership School. The attention, respect and intelligence of that audience was a joy to behold. They later presented me with a wood carving in the shape of Africa depicting the average work and home life of the people in Africa. At noon, we celebrated the Sunday Mass at Father Emmanuel's parish. For the people, Mass was not an obligation to get over with, but a celebration and occasion to praise the Lord, that lasted two to three hours, without anyone leaving, including the people standing outside, who couldn't fit inside the packed Church. After Mass, I blessed their new bus, purchased through five years of parish fundraising, and used for spreading the Gospel. In an outside ceremony, a group of young children did a beautiful dance of welcome, followed by a group of young men who changed into ancient dress costumes and did a special dance of welcome in spite of the temperature in excess of 100 degrees. Later that afternoon, we went to the Martyrs of Uganda parish in Kuru, to support their fundraising bazaar and to meet a Nigerian priest whom I met here in Brooklyn. Finally on Sunday evening, I spoke to 300 young men studying theology at St. Augustine Regional Major Seminary. I challenged them not to be afraid to proclaim the Church's teaching on Life and to promote in word and deed the Culture of Life.

We Left Nigeria with Pleasant Memories

At 4:30 AM on Monday morning we set out from Jos to catch a 10:00 AM flight from Abuja to London, England. Due to heavy traffic near Abuja, we just made the flight, thanks to the excellent driving of Father Emmanuel. Josephine who is a stewardess, a Helper who works at the airport, and a Helper who is a customs agent, came all the way from Jos that morning, to make sure we would get through customs quickly. We left Nigeria reluctantly, with pleasant memories, and great hope for the Church and Life in Nigeria.

Our Brief Stay With the Helpers in England

On Monday Dec. 3rd at 3 PM, we arrived in London, England and took the underground to Southgate Station where Rose and Mike Doherty met us and brought us to St. Fidelis Friary run by the Friars of the Renewal. I stayed there that night while Elizabeth went home with Rose Doherty. I had the opportunity that evening to speak at length with Father Augustine CFR, the new Spiritual Director of the Helpers in England. The former Director, Father Fidelis CFR, currently studies Moral Theology in Rome. On Tuesday evening at the Friary, I spoke to a core group of Helpers who shared footage from a TV documentary on forty years of abortion in the U.K, shown on the country's largest TV station. The main discussion in the documentary, centered on when the unborn child being aborted feels pain. The consensus among the intelligentsia was to lower the age for killing the unborn child to 24 weeks to lessen the likelihood of pain. The amazing fact was that the documentary, showed the most graphic footage of live abortions one could imagine. Then they suddenly showed a Helpers Prayer Vigil in London with the commentary that some think the unborn should not be aborted at any age. Susan Okafor, who brought the Helpers to England was the Helper at the Vigil that the media asked her what did she think. On this issue, it was a moment of sanity in England. Susan calmly stated "we have all gone crazy—it is never right to kill an innocent unborn child at any age." All this was on national TV. Never underestimate the power of prayer and always be open to the God of Surprises.

Arriving in Vienna to Celebrate the Tenth Anniversary

On Wednesday at noon, Johannis and Manfred Muller drove us from the airport in Bratislava, Slovakia to Vienna, Austria where I gave nine talks and offer five Masses in four days. All the talks were taped by Austrian Catholic TV to broadcast in Europe. At the same time, often in the same room, the major Austrian TV network also covered the ten year celebration of the Vienna Life Center, which has helped 10,000 babies and mothers. Ultimately, the Austrian TV coverage of the Helpers praying and counseling outside the abortion mill and helping women in the Life Center was relatively positive. The documentary film Maria und ihre Kinder, (Maria and her Children) premiered in Austria on Dec. 9th. Following the movie on the experiences of the sidewalk counselor, Maria, I spoke on Humanae Vitae as a basis for a true Culture of Life. Finally a forty minute DVD presentation, created by the talented young man, Mateo, recounted the ten years of life saving activities by the Austrian Helpers, especially through their Life Centers.

Back in Brooklyn

A few days after returning from Africa and Europe, I joined Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio on Saturday Dec. 15 th at St. Michael's Church in Sunset Park, Brooklyn, where, after Mass, the Bishop led us in song and prayer outside the Ambulatory Abortion Center at 43rd Street and 3rd Ave. Not far from where we prayed, a group of loud, belligerent protesters holding derogatory, nasty signs used drums, bugles and shouting to try and distract the Helpers from praying and singing. They did not succeed. Many women came back out and kept their children that morning. On Sunday afternoon, Dec. 16th, at the Brooklyn Monastery of the Precious Blood, we had the Helpers Christmas Party. In spite of the bad weather and snow, more than fifty Helpers showed up for the party. Everyone enjoyed themselves.

My Talks at the World Prayer Conference for Life at Fatima

My gracious friends from the Helpers of God's Precious Infants, Vienna Austria, were kind enough to record several of the talks I delivered at the World Prayer Conference for Life, at Fatima, Portugal, October 2006. I've posted three of them here for your edification. Just click on any talk below:

Thursday, October 5, 2006 ["Humanae Vitae, Donum Vitae"](#)

Thursday, October 5, 2006 ["Evangelium Vitae"](#)

Friday, October 6, 2006 ["Golgotha Today - Standing
with Mary and John at the Foot of the
Cross"](#)

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VARIOUS RECENT PAST EVENTS AND HAPPENINGS

The Helpers in the UK, on Dec.8th, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, in reparation for forty years of legalized abortion organized a large peaceful, prayerful procession in Newcastle. Recently here in Brooklyn, with his large family, I attended the 90th birthday party of Augusto V. Tanghal. For almost twenty years, Gus has been a faithful prayer outside the abortion mills. In Australia , the State Government has ruled out any legislative changes to prevent the Helpers from being outside the Fertility Control Clinic in Melbourne. Tanya O'Brien, a long time leader of the Helpers in Melbourne, stated "even though we are always peaceful and prayerful, some people will still complain, since they don't like being reminded that babies are being killed inside the building." Due to the decent coverage on National Austrian TV about the Vienna Life Center and Helpers under the leadership of Dietmar Fischer, no unfair restrictions by the state are expected. The abortionist in Munich, Germany, who lobbied the court for unfair restriction on the Helpers' counseling and praying outside his abortion mill, lost his case at the highest level. What a blessing to the unborn and the Helpers in Germany and Wolfgang Hering, the President of the Helpers. This past year, on the Feast of Holy Innocents, Father Benedict Groeschel CFR offered the Mass at Holy Innocents Church in Manhattan for 400 people. At least a half a million tourists and workers witness their public procession for life from 7th Ave to 2nd Ave, along 42nd Street in Manhattan. On the same day in the City of Prague, in the Czech Republic, an International Memorial Prayer Vigil was held for all the unborn children killed by abortion during the past year in Europe. Three hundred white crosses are carried to the bridge over the river and 300 red roses are dropped solemnly into the river in a sort of burial rite for the unborn aborted babies. Last year the memorial rite was held in Budapest, Hungary under the leadership of Dr. Imre Teglas. Many Right to Life leaders from different nations attended the memorial rite.

UPCOMING EVENTS

On Sunday night, January 20th at 7:00 PM on EWTN, the day after the Helpers Prayer Vigil at St. Gerard Majella Church in Hollis, Queens, I will speak about the Helpers of God's Precious Infants Apostolate on the Father Benedict Groeschel Show. I believe the show will be repeated on Monday morning at 9 AM. You might want to watch it or encourage others who you think might be moved to become involved in the Helpers Apostolate to watch it. On February 6th, Ash Wednesday, I will be in São Paulo, Brazil, speaking at the first International Conference for Life, sponsored by the Bishops. On Feb. 23rd 2008, I will give workshops and lead a prayer vigil with the seminarians and the students at St. Thomas University in Minneapolis—St. Paul, Minnesota. I look forward to seeing Pope Benedict XVI here in New York City in April. I also look forward to seeing the Helpers in Australia and leading a Prayer Vigil during the time of the World Youth Day in Sydney in July.

Until We Meet in Prayer at Calvary,

Msgr. Philip J. Reilly