

Haiti in our Hands

Compassion and solidarity for the people of Haiti



Monthly Newsletter

February 2021

For I Was Hungry and You Gave Me Food

Many of us are familiar with the Matthew 25 verses which describe Jesus thanking his audience for giving him food, drink, shelter, and clothing, and visiting him when he was sick and imprisoned. The astonished listeners ask when they performed these acts of charity to him. Jesus replies, “Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me.”

The Haitian community we serve through your support are people who certainly have “the least” control over their natural resources, economic opportunities, political power, and access to health care as compared with most people in the industrialized nations of the world. How do we serve our brothers and sisters in our Twin Parish? During this international pandemic visiting and sending the sea container shipment are on hold. We continue to send funding to support the schools’ hot lunch program for students, supplement the teachers’ salaries, and pay staff salaries. Staff include kitchen managers, cooks, a housekeeper, a property guard, and a driver. A reliable salary allows them to provide food, drink, and shelter to their families. The lunch program greatly improves students’ health.



Lent starts February 17. This year, there will be no Wednesday Soup Supper between the Mass and Stations of the Cross, when we ask for a donation for our brothers and sisters in Haiti for the simple meal. Instead, we ask you plan your own plain meal, reflect on the daily lives of Haitians, and continue almsgiving to support our Twin Parish. Spending few dollars a week less on your Wednesday dinner will do much good for many children and families in Chauffard.

News from Chauffard:

“I will never stop thanking you for everything you do for us at Chauffard. God will give you back a hundredfold. Thank you for thinking and praying for us on January 12 (the anniversary of the 2010 earthquake), a date that speaks much to us in Haiti. A thousand thanks. Please send my thanks and greetings to all.”

Father Raymond, Parish Priest

Upcoming Events:

February 13-28, 2021: Collection of used book donations

February 24-March 31: Lenten “Soup Supper” donations

March 12-14, 2021: Book Sale

April 10-11, 2021: Bottle & Can Drive

For more information about any event, call Kate McMahon at 315-214-1569.

**Supporting the Church of the Immaculate Conception,
Chauffard, Haiti, Father Raymond, Parish Priest**

Current Conditions in Haiti via USAID



The school sinks in Chauffard utilize clean, gravity-fed water.

The Haitian population is 11.4 million and the number of confirmed cases so far is 11,035 with 243 deaths. That is a surprising low number in a nation where so many people are undernourished, live in crowded conditions without running water, and have no access to modern medical care. USAID's Haiti Fact Sheet from January 19, 2021 informs us that aid workers in Haiti "report that public awareness and understanding of the disease remains inadequate and COVID-19-related stigma--particularly in rural areas--continues to deter affected individuals from seeking treatment." That will make one wonder if the official reports of cases and deaths are correct. Father Raymond tells us that there are no cases of the coronavirus in Chauffard. He maintains that the community is well-informed through the nurses at the Chauffard clinic and from the radio.

The USAID's Haiti Fact Sheet states, "The Government of Haiti recorded an increase in COVID-19 cases in December; relief actors are prioritizing health and water, sanitation and hygiene interventions to curb the spread of the disease." The Fact Sheet tells how the

pandemic is challenging "Haiti's health care institutions--which faced shortages of equipment, medicine, and staff before the outbreak--and constrain access to infant and child health care services and routine immunization for polio and measles." It is referring to much larger clinics and hospitals than we support for the people of the Church of the Immaculate Conception. In Chauffard, the clinic has always had very limited supplies, equipment and staff. There is not yet any talk of a COVID-19 vaccine distribution in Haiti. As the pandemic first reached this island nation, the Parish Twinning Program promoted encouraging Twin Parishes to set up portable hand washing stations. Fortunately, the Chauffard school has a few permanent sinks for hand washing as part of the latrines. The clean water is gravity-fed from a covered rainwater catchment system.

The Fact Sheet describes the "acute food insecurity among vulnerable households countrywide." Acute food insecurity is when you cannot purchase enough food to properly feed your family. This is why families in Chauffard are so grateful for the school lunch program. There are other levels of food insecurity where you cannot buy your favorite foods or that you have to pay more than you would like for food. Prices for everything are still higher than usual in Haiti. There was a fuel shortage in late December. Political protests have increased. Our Twin Parish needs our prayers.

Thank you for your continued support.



Portable handwashing station in Haiti