

Haiti in our Hands

Compassion and solidarity for the people of Haiti



Monthly Newsletter

October 2021

Fall Fundraising

Autumn in Central New York brings apple picking, beautiful colors in the leaves, and the Book & Bake Sale! Come to the Church Hall October 8-10 for amazing bargains on DVDs, CDs, and hard and soft-cover books; all in good condition!

BOOK & BAKE SALE: Friday, October 8: 9am - 6pm
Saturday, October 9: 9am - 6pm
Sunday, October 10: 8am - 1 pm

At the same time, we are collecting your refundables for a **Bottle & Can Drive** in the Velasko Road parking lot. Those five-cent refunds added up to over \$2,400 at the July collection!

Supporting the school lunch program for the five schools at our Twin Parish has been our commitment for six years now, ever since the World Food Program stopped providing food assistance to schools not run by the Haitian government. Father Raymond asks for \$5,000 a month to purchase rice, beans, oil, dried fish and some other food. Feeding over 1,000 children a nutritious hot meal five days a week works out to a cost of 25 cents a meal. Since the beginning of our Twinning relationship, over 20 years ago now, we have had the goal of sending \$1,000 a month for salaries. This would pay the church staff (property guardian, cook/housekeeper for the Rectory), eight school lunch cooks, and 31 teachers. We do not meet this goal of \$6,000 each month.



News from Chauffard:

“At Chauffard we are all doing well despite the lamentable situation in our country. The insecurity is so strong, one wonders which saint to turn to. I know how much every September 11 takes hold of your thoughts. The day reminds you of so many things. I prayed a lot for the American people for what they represent for the world in general and for Haiti in particular. I will never stop saying have courage to you. God loves you. May he never cease to shower you with His blessing.”

Father Raymond, Parish Priest, written on 9/11

Upcoming Events:

October 8-10: Book & Bake Sale
in Church Hall
Bottle & Can Drive
in Velasko Road parking lot

December 11-12: Haiti Speaker weekend

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

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

A Reason to Stay

In America, the latest news we see about Haiti has been about the deportation of Haitian immigrants. Reuters reported on September 23 that Ambassador Daniel Foote, the American special envoy for Haiti, resigned. They wrote that in his resignation letter, Foote said, "I will not be associated with the United States' inhumane, counterproductive decision to deport thousands of Haitian refugees and illegal immigrants to Haiti, a country where American officials are confined to secure compounds because of the danger posed by armed gangs in control of daily life." How has it come to this? Why would Haitians burn neighborhoods and demand money to pass through barricades on the roads? Why are Haitian families risking their lives to leave?

There is no one cause. Haiti is considered the poorest country in the Western hemisphere. By all accounts, during this international pandemic, Haitians have had another challenging year. The continuing violence which originated from protests against the suspected financial wrongdoings of the president has caused us to cancel our annual November medical mission for the third year in a row. Streets are blocked off. Protests are going on across Port-au-Prince. Competing gangs fight for control of neighborhoods with no police intervention. Kidnappings continue targeting Haitians and foreigners alike.

The security and financial situation is not likely to improve for ordinary Haitians soon. In July, Haiti's president Jovenel Moise was assassinated in his home. While the mastermind of that plot is still being sought, a 7.2 magnitude earthquake rocked south-western Haiti causing devastation (fortunately not to our Twin Parish) on the 14th of August.

There is good news, however. This year the parishioners in Chauffard were able to celebrate mass in their beautiful, safe, newly constructed Church of the Immaculate Conception; rebuilt by your donations. The five schools in Chauffard have reopened for the year. Your dollars fund the school lunch program, giving over 1,000 children a healthy meal five days a week while they learn skills for an improved future. We also supplement the salaries for the 31 school teachers, allowing them to provide for their families and encouraging these intelligent, experienced professionals to remain in Haiti, teaching the next generation.

Construction will soon begin on the rebuilding of the chapel in the village of Procy with the \$30,500 Papal Foundation Grant from the Vatican. Father Raymond writes there have not been any cases of COVID-19 in Chauffard.

Thanks in large part to the generous matching donation of \$15,000 from a local business, we were able to purchase a new Toyota Landcruiser for the parish of the Immaculate Conception through the non-profit Begeca. The vehicle has been ordered from Japan and we expect to hear that it is on its way to Port-au-Prince in December or January. Your contributions allow Father Raymond to offer organization and stability to the community of Chauffard that much of Haiti lacks. Your support encourages Haitians to keep their families together, working together for a better future.



The new church in Chauffard was built with your donations.