

Haiti in our Hands

Compassion and solidarity for the people of Haiti



Monthly Newsletter

February 2020

Twenty Years Twinned!

It was in early 2000 when Father Pedzich and the members of our Parish Council, acting on a suggestion from Ligory Fernandes, decided to commit our parish to a twinning relationship with the Church of the Immaculate Conception in Chauffard, Haiti. The first information we received about this community from the Parish Twinning Program of the Americas included a letter from the priest; then it was Father Estiverne. He wrote to describe his parish and their needs, "The parish of Chauffard is one of the 50 parishes of the Archdiocese of Port-au-Prince. Because of its geographical location, it is considered a miserable place where only poor people live. Vast in area, it includes five communal sections which are very far apart from each other; seven chapels, three catechism posts--all under the responsibility of only one priest. This priest lives under conditions which are less than modest. This renders the pastoral duties very difficult, even painful."

Father Estiverne continued, "Chauffard has a cortege of misery trailing behind it, especially in: Education (42 teachers to pay and often youth cannot continue for lack of money), and Infrastructure (no passable roads to travel to the seven different chapels. Berly is 7 hours away on foot or horseback. Malanga is 5 hours of travel. Laval, 3 hours. Bois-d'Orme is 3 hours and 45 minutes). The connecting road from Kenscoff to Chauffard is very uneven and requires an all-terrain 4-wheel drive vehicle in good condition." *Photo of Father Estiverne saying mass in Chauffard*



News from Chauffard:

"I announce to you that there is calm in Port-au-Prince since more than two weeks now. The supplies for the school meals are purchased. Despite the difficult moments, I am always able to arrange things so that the children will have a little something to eat. The December exams went well. The schools have opened their doors since January 7th. All is continuing well. I have reorganized a dining area for the students and the kitchen. A thousand thanks again for all that you are for the community of Chauffard. Send my greetings to all the team. I pray always for each of them."

Father Raymond, parish priest

Upcoming Events:

Wednesdays March 4 - April 8:
Lenten Soup Suppers in Church Hall, 6 pm
Free Will Offerings go to our Twin Parish

Saturday, March 7: **Chicken & Biscuit Dinner** in Church Hall, 4-7 pm

March 21-April 5: **Collection for Sea Container Shipment**- toiletries and basic medical supplies

For more information about any event, call Kate McMahon at 315-492-2378.

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

One Story of Our Great Impact

In 2001, Father Estiverne, then parish priest in Chauffard, requested help in purchasing a vehicle for the parish. He wrote, "Our transportation vehicle is in terrible condition. Even though it was repaired. We are asking for a new vehicle to bring people to conferences, to transport medical supplies, and furniture for the schools and pharmacy. It is also used as an ambulance when sick people need to be transported to the hospital."

Our Haiti Committee started off with a few fundraisers. Our Chili Dinner became the Chicken & Biscuit Dinner. The Book & Bake Sale is now twice a year. We raised funds for years to buy a vehicle for Chauffard. In 2004, Father Estiverne wrote, "I realize that pick-ups are very expensive and I realize that it is not a rich parish that is supporting us here in Chauffard. I know that it is the good will of a lot of people that allow us to get where we are. . . I have such problems because of my truck. I am forever 'broke-down', forever in the garage, forever buying parts, and I feel I cannot take it any more. Chauffard is the poorest parish in the Archdiocese of Port-au-Prince and a vehicle is critical to my work."

That year, we learned of a German organization which would pay for half of a vehicle for humanitarian work and arrange the purchase and transportation. That would mean we had enough money! We applied to them and began the process. In April of 2005, Father Estiverne wrote, "A dream that we have had for almost four years now is about to become a reality. When you sent the email telling me the truck would be arriving here in Haiti in May, I immediately told everyone in the parish and we are all eagerly awaiting this great day when the truck arrives. I already thank everyone in St. Michael and St. Peter Parish - starting with Father Pedzich, right down to the last one in the parish. To all of you a very special thank you."

In August 2005, Father Estiverne wrote, "I am happy to tell you that since the 12th of August the beautiful new Toyota Land Cruiser is in my care and the service of the parish. It came at a perfect time- just as we needed to bring the supplies for the new school year. In previous years, this has been a big problem as often the books would get wet in the rain as people carried them on their heads to the parish. This year, thanks to the help of the people in your parish, we had no such problems. The generosity of parishioners who themselves do not have a lot of money enables a lot of development in underdeveloped countries such as Haiti."



The "road" to Chaffard is really just a track. It is very rocky and almost impassible when there is a heavy rain. This takes a toll on vehicles, but there is no other way to get to Port au Prince for food, medicines and other supplies.