

Haiti News

Sister Parishes—Arlington, Cavaillon, Gros Marin

St Charles Catholic Church
<http://www.stcharleschurch.org/ministry/haiti.htm>
July 2001

Helping the Children: Highest Priority

Sponsors for Elementary School Children

The education and welfare of children in the Cavaillon and Gros Marin regions of Haiti is the highest priority for the pastors of St. Charles' sister parishes in Haiti.

Last year, thanks to sponsors from St. Charles, 160 elementary school students were able to attend school even though their parents could not afford tuition, uniforms, and supplies. This year, Fr. Jocelyn Musalier of Cavaillon has asked us to sponsor and additional 50 students from Boileau in the Cavaillon parish. St. Anthony's Church in Falls Church sponsors students in Gros Marin, though there are more children in need of sponsorship.

A contribution of \$100 sponsors a child for an entire school year. New sponsors should fill out the sponsorship form to Helen Lane at the address on the form. Or, new or current sponsors renewing their commitment may leave the form and a check in the Haiti Committee mailbox in the Rectory Office.

Food for School Children

Education feeds the mind and the soul, but the body requires food to learn and thrive. Most of the schools in the Cavaillon and Gros Marin areas cannot provide a midday meal for the students, who may have had little or no food before they began their trek to school.

This year, one of St. Charles' sponsoring Godparents contributed \$3,000 in memory of his Godfather, Mario Cassasa to start a school lunch program at Berrette School. Both Fr. Jocelyn and Fr. Marquis Charles of Gros Marin told us that maintaining the Berrette program and expanding the school lunch program to the

schools in Boileau and Gros Marin is their most pressing need for the coming year.

Approximately \$500 a month will fund a lunch program in one school, so the cost for all three schools' lunch cost is \$1,500 a month. Neither our tithing program nor current Haiti Committee resources can provide for this need.

Building Community By Building Church

Building a church in Haiti doesn't mean calling the architects and finding a contractor. It means the parishioners making cinder blocks on site, and a tin roof, and protecting against termites. Even so, construction is expensive. The chapel in Flamond became so structurally unsound, it had to be torn down.

Total cost for the new building will be \$15,000. St. Charles parishioners have contributed \$3,000 and members of the community have contributed about \$2,000, so they need another \$10,000 to complete the project.

To Contribute Financially....

If you would like to make a financial contribution, you can write a check to St. Charles Church and, on the memo line, designate the Haiti Committee. You may take or send it to the Rectory, or put it in an envelope labeled "Haiti" and put it in the collection plate. If you want it to go for a specific purpose, please designate that, also.

Please consider donating part of your tax rebate check to our Sister Parishes' needs.

Fr. Jocelyn & Fr. Marquis Priests Serving God & Their Brothers and Sisters

Fr. Jocelyn Musalier, pastor of the Cavaillon parish, and Fr. Marquis Charles, pastor of the Gros Marin parish have been neighbors most of their lives. They are both from the city of Port-a-Piment. As children, they and their families friends, and now they are pastors of adjoining parishes.

Both of the Haitian pastors said their purpose is to serve God, and to help their brothers and sisters. Being a priest is the best way to do that, they said.

Fr. Marquis' parents liked church and took him to mass regularly. He first thought about being a priest in his first year of elementary school. In high school, a seminarian friend explained why he had chosen to become a priest, and that influenced Fr. Marquis as well.

Fr. Jocelyn found his vocation when he was in high school. He met a priest whom he admired and who became a role model.

When they visit St. Charles, their commitment shines through the language barrier. Those fortunate enough to visit Cavaillon and Gros Marin have experienced their energy, warmth and hospitality. They accomplish so much with so little. We are proud to call them our friends as well as our brothers.

A Copier for Gros Marin

It's going to be a lot easier to get instructional materials for the school and liturgical material for worship in Gros Marin with the heavy-duty photocopier bought with funds donated by the St. Charles Haiti Ministry. Fr. Marquis had identified the photocopier as a priority need for several years. Missals, hymnals, and instructional materials are scarce and prohibitively expensive, so a reliable machine to make copies will be invaluable

About the Haiti Ministry

Sisterhood with Cavaillon and Gros Marin are an important part of St. Charles' ministry and worship. Ten percent of the St. Charles collection the first Sunday of each month goes to our sister parishes, primarily to support ongoing expenses. These contributions create strong parishes and strong communities.

The Haiti Committee is a group of individuals – from St. Charles as well as other area churches – who provide financial and technical assistance for special projects important to our sister parishes. Our activities are driven by the priorities and needs expressed by the pastors and communities in our sister parishes. Members choose how active to be and where to focus their energies and talents. And, we would like for you to join us.

If you would like to find out more about the Haiti Committee, or information about any of the projects described in this newsletter, please call one of the following individuals:

Brian Francis (703) 812-8656

Linda Hill (703) 521-7623

Josephine Lee (703) 522-5320

A Dream Realized

Five years after St. Charles and the community committee in Flamond began working together to build a new clinic, members of the St. Charles Haiti Committee attended the clinic's dedication. Construction was complete last summer, and it's been in operation, but they waited for the St. Charles delegation to arrive before the gala dedication. The facility has a large cistern—a necessity where water is scarce—and living quarters for two nurses. It's the only medical facility for miles around.

However, the clinic still needs wrought iron for the windows to make it secure against theft. It also needs equipment and desks for the nurses