
HAITI NEWS

SISTER PARISHES - ARLINGTON, CAVAILLON, GROS MARIN

St. Charles Catholic Church

The Rev. Gerard Creedon, Pastor

May 1999

Cavaillon & Gros Marin - 1999

As they do each year, several St. Charles Haiti Committee members visited our sister parishes in Southern Haiti. The needs in Cavaillon and Gros Marin are many, but there also are signs of good things happening. Some of these good things come from the commitment and financial support of the people of St. Charles and its Haiti Committee. More spring from the determination and ingenuity of the people themselves.

The accomplishments of the Haiti Committee and its supporters make a real difference in the lives of a wonderful, faith-filled people:

- **Building for Health:** \$7,000 raised by the Haiti Committee will allow the community of Flamond to resume construction of a new clinic. The new building is necessary because the current one is in serious disrepair. The school, which was moved from that building to make way for the current clinic is still meeting in the church building. Previous funding provided materials for the walls and a large cistern to provide potable water. The new contribution will go for materials to add the floors, doors, windows, and roof.
- **A Dream Fulfilled:** Three new grades attend school in Cavaillon's secondary school. The long-awaited second story has been completed, so students can finish their secondary education in Cavaillon. Education Subcommittee Chair Josephine Lee remembers well when the school's

About the Haiti Committee

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.

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. We focus on four major areas: economic development, health, education, and church.

We raise awareness in the parish about the needs in Cavaillon and Gros Marin. We raise money to fund special projects. We gather information so that we can provide technical assistance to the sister parishes to help them reach their goals. 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, please call one of the following individuals:

Brian Francis (703) 812-88656

Linda Hill (703) 521-7623

Josephine Lee (703) 522-5320

or find us on the Web at **www.stcharleschurch.org** under "Ministries"

Haiti Ministry 1999

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- location was a rough, empty field. The St. Charles Haiti ministry spearheaded the funding drive for the original school and the addition. Today, hundreds of students seek a better life through education.
- **The Faces of Hope:** In 1998, St. Charles' Haiti ministry took on a new project. Thanks to this ministry, 33 elementary school students can attend school. The \$100-per-student contribution pays a child's school fees and buys uniforms, books, and even shoes. (See story, right.)
- **The Road to Education:** The Village of Oiseau has held a special place in the heart of all who have met its people, seen their determination to help themselves, and felt their warmth. The village is accessible only by foot or donkey, up a steep and rocky path.

One of the most heartwarming moments of this year's trip was our visit there. The community leaders told how the lack of a road meant that they could not get a teacher to come to their school. They were working to build a road, but lacked the tools and equipment to complete the task. As it happened, the visiting committee members had with them a \$2,000 donation for that very purpose. The school will be saved, the sick will be able to reach the health clinic in Flamond, and commerce will be more feasible. used by the embargo.

- **Ongoing Needs:** The Haiti Ministry continued three annual projects. The bulk of our luggage was medicines and medical supplies in our luggage for the three clinics St. Charles assists and school supplies. We also will fund teacher training.

Hope for the Future

Barrette School is a small elementary school in a small community in the Parish of Cavaillon. It's a typical school. The rooms are full of children sitting shoulder to shoulder on benches. The only light comes through the windows. Two classes meet in the church because the school isn't large enough.

The children stand straight and quiet in immaculate uniforms. Many of the faces show the effects of malnutrition. Some are much older than their classmates – apparently they weren't able to attend when they were younger. It costs about \$100 to outfit a student for school and pay the tuition that is the only source of revenue to operate the school and pay teachers. And 33 of the students at Barrette are able to attend only because of the St. Charles school sponsorship program.

We met these students in January when the St. Charles Haiti Committee team visited. All had written letters to their sponsors. Sponsors are individual, families, St. Charles neighborhoods, and other groups of caring people. Sponsors have found that this personal form of giving is rewarding for them and their children.

For next year, we would like to increase the number of sponsored students to 50.

For more information about sponsorship, please call Christina Huth at 703-465-9861.

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