

# Zanmi Ansanm

Friends  
Together



Spring 2004

News and  
Information  
about the  
Episcopal Diocese  
of Milwaukee



## Haiti Project

### Inside:

<i>New Coordinator</i> .....	2
<i>Contacts Needed</i> .....	2
<i>Currently in Haiti</i> .....	3
<i>Container Arrives</i> .....	3
<i>Personal Reflections</i> .....	4
<i>Gift of Water</i> .....	6
<i>Book Review</i> .....	6
<i>St. Croix Hospital</i> .....	6
<i>National News</i> .....	7
<i>Letter from Paul Farmer</i> ...	8
<i>Faces of Haiti</i> .....	10
<i>New Sponsors</i> .....	11
<i>How You Can Help</i> .....	11
<i>Upcoming Events</i> .....	12

## “Our Love to Haiti” Lenten Calendar

During Lent, Christians are called to prepare with reflection, sacrifice and spiritual growth for the celebration of our Lord at Easter. This year the Haiti Project mailed to its supporters a Lenten calendar, called *Our Love to Haiti*, as a suggestion for daily prayer and Lenten discipline. With the recent turmoil in Haiti, the timing of awareness and prayer for our Haitian brothers and sisters couldn't be more pertinent. Throughout the forty days coins are being collected each day in thanksgiving for the many comforts and conveniences we take for granted: electricity, running water, education, sanitation, health care, and plenty of food to eat.

Checks for the amount of money collected during Lent can be made out to the **Haiti Project**. Your donation is tax deductible. This money will go towards the ongoing support of St. Marc's Church, School and Clinic. Please make a note in the memo of your check that the money was from the **Lenten calendar** fundraiser. If you wish, you may use the envelope included in this newsletter and send your check to the Diocesan office, or mail it to Pat Werk, 226 N. Main Street, Deerfield, WI 53531.

## Our Friends in Jeannette are Safe

During this time of unrest in Haiti we have been very concerned about the people in Jeannette. Mary Alice Eschweiler was finally able to reach Father Pierre Auguste by cell phone on March 20, 2004. Father Auguste reported that he had been forced to stay home in Port-au-Prince and was unable to travel to Jeannette because of the danger on the roads, particularly near Petit Goave and Grand Goave. Recently, he has been able to get back to Jeannette again. The good news is that our friends in Jeannette are safe. School, which has been closed since December 19, along with other schools throughout Haiti, will open again March 22.



*Children hope school will start again soon.*

Additional good news, with everything that has happened in Haiti, is that there has been no harm to Holy Trinity Cathedral and School, St. Pierre College, Museum d'Art, St. Croix Hospital and St. Vincent's School, all supported by the Episcopal Church of Haiti. Father attributes this to the fact that the Episcopal Church has always remained politically neutral in Haiti, simply doing God's work. Please continue to pray for the people of Haiti, the Haiti Episcopal Diocese and St. Marc's Church, Jeannette.

# What's New for the Milwaukee Diocese

New information and updates on how our local Haiti Project is making a difference in Haiti.

## Welcoming our New Project Coordinator, Pat Werk

As a 21 year old traveling to Haiti for the first time, I met a Haitian man whose insight impacted my life. As I arrived in Haiti he said to me, "You are either going to love Haiti, or you will hate it because of the poverty you will see." I fell in love with Haiti. It changed my life, my values and the lifestyle choices I make.

Before returning to Haiti 23 years later, I raised a family in a town the size of Jeannette.

In many ways the Haiti Project embodies the same philosophies that I have been practicing in the Deerfield community where we have lived, worked and volunteered for the past 19 years. It's an example of a grassroots commu-



Pat (far right) learning to wash clothes by hand.

nity where a few people work together to do great things and make a difference.

I was amazed that I felt so connected to Haiti when I returned. I still love Haiti and its people. I am inspired by their faith in God and determination to improve their quality of life through education and better health care. In September 2003, after prayerful consideration, I began as a volunteer coordinator, then accepted the position in January. In my role as coordina-

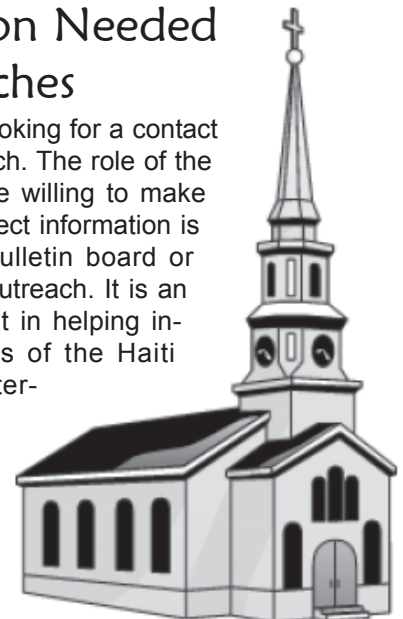
tor I hope to build upon the work done by many in the Diocese over the past 18 years and expand opportunities for partnership between our Diocese and Haiti.

***"You are either going to love Haiti, or you will hate it because of the poverty you will see."***

Margaret Mead summarized it best, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

## Contact Person Needed at Your Churches

The Haiti Project is looking for a contact person at your church. The role of the contact person is to be willing to make sure that the Haiti Project information is put up on a church bulletin board or placed on a table for outreach. It is an easy job, but important in helping increase the awareness of the Haiti Project. If you are interested in being the contact person for your parish, please contact Pat Werk at 608-764-8446 or [patwerk@verizon.net](mailto:patwerk@verizon.net).



### Zanmi Ansanm / Friends Together

is a newsletter of the Episcopal Diocese of Milwaukee-Haiti Project. *Zanmi Ansanm* is Creole for "Friends Together."

The Episcopal Diocese of Milwaukee-Haiti Project is a partnership of mission and development shared by the people of St. Marc's, Jeannette, Haiti and the people of the Episcopal Diocese of Milwaukee. Skills, time, money and God's love is shared together as we seek to respond to Christ's call and commission.

Newsletter Editor/Haiti Project Coordinator: Pat Werk

Board Members:

Ann Brophy (co-chair), Mary Alice Eschweiler (co-chair), Carl Eschweiler (treasurer), John Ashman, Rev. Martha Berger, Dr. John Brusky, Patti Brusky, Barb Chesney, Ted Chesney, Nancy Frana, Denis Higgs, Sparky Watts, Susan Webster, Rev. Melissa Wilcox and The Rt. Rev. Steven Miller.

Episcopal Diocese of Milwaukee  
804 E. Juneau Avenue  
Milwaukee, WI 53202



# What's Happening in Haiti and How You Can Help

by Mary Alice Eschweiler, March 22, 2004

It has been difficult to write about the political crisis in Haiti, as the situation changes from day to day. However, as of this writing, President Aristide has been exiled. Latortue, a Haitian business man, who has lived in Boca Raton, FL for the last ten years, has been appointed Prime Minister. Democracy in Haiti is not working on any level. The Lavalas Party (Aristide's party), which was so strongly supported by the Haitian peasants, has been ignored by the new appointed officials. Haiti has virtually disappeared from the US media. Even private communications have gone silent. If there isn't violence, is there nothing to say?

Gasoline and food prices have soared and electricity in the cities is more scarce than ever. "All institutions have been destroyed," said Dr. Jack Lafontant, from Leogane, referring to banks, gas stations, grocery stores, and hospitals. Sadly, as of this date, our communications are minimal. We are unable to reach our friends by phone. E-mails go unanswered. Life in Haiti is left to our imaginations.

What is needed? JOBS are the resounding reply. Take this as one person's request or the request of an entire nation. One thing that the Haiti Project does is employ 40-45 Haitians. They are eager to work and earn money. The political scene of the past months has meant that missionaries are not going to Haiti. Missionaries bring not only a critical supply of medical goods, but also money to pay for room, board and souvenirs. Guest houses which depended on this unusual "tourist" trade are suffering.

The Haiti Project has had to cancel three of its mission trips. Not only is it potentially unsafe for us, hosting us puts them in jeopardy and puts undue burden on their already difficult lives. We hope to return to Haiti to help our friends in the near future. This isn't the first time that we've been unable to go; it won't be the last. We continue our prayers for the Church there.

## Ways YOU can Help:

- † Pray for a resolution to the political situation in Haiti, with all voices being heard!
- † Gather supplies for shipment from Oconomowoc to be sent late spring: medical equipment (wheelchairs, canes, crutches, bandages, surgical supplies, medicines, vitamins — please, no expired medicines); clothing and shoes in GOOD condition; generators and simple agricultural tools. Please contact Pat Werk, Mary Alice Eschweiler, or John and Patti Brusky for a more complete list and details about dropping off your donation.
- † Collect funds to purchase supplies and transportation: wholesale purchase of medical supplies, building materials (needed for repair of cisterns and roofs), vitamins, school supplies, food, and generators.

† Send your tax-deductible donation to these organizations:

**The Haiti Project**, 804 E. Juneau Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53202 (aid goes to program in Jeannette, rural Haiti) A special relief fund has been set up for St. Croix Hospital. If you would like to earmark your donation for St. Croix Hospital, please write "relief fund" or "St. Croix" in the *memo* section of your check.

**Episcopal Relief and Development, Haiti** 815 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. New York, NY 10017 (Please specify Hospital St. Croix or St. Vincent's Children's Hospital as they are in most need.)

**Children's Medical Missions of Haiti**, 3319 Hixson Pike, Chattanooga, TN 37415 (Works in conjunction with St. Croix and St. Vincent's as well as providing nutritional support to children in true crisis and food rations to those hardest hit by the unrest.)

## New Container Shipment Arrives in Haiti

On December 6, a group of volunteers sorted, packed and loaded a forty-foot container going to Haiti on a cargo ship. The container arrived in record time and the supplies were distributed in late January. Medical supplies and equipment were delivered to St. Croix (Holy Cross) Hospital in Leogane and the rest was delivered to St. Marc's, Jeannette. There was a wide assortment of items sent. Some of the more noteworthy items were a hospital bed, ambulance gurney, wheelbarrow, honey extractor, walkers, crutches, wheelchairs, dental chairs, operating room supplies, garbage cans, computers, school desks, school supplies, filing cabinets, treadle sewing machines, fabric, dressforms, soccer balls, clothing and shoes. In two hours time the container was full and we ended with a prayer and a blessing to the container and driver.

We would like to thank the following volunteers for their help in loading the container: Elliott Barron, Bill and Martha Berger, Jim Brown and Ann Brophy, Carl and Mary Alice Eschweiler, Melissa Greipp, Eric Gustafson, Mark Handlos, Matt Keresman, Carol McConnell, Heather Murphy, Alison Olson, Suzanne Peters, Katie Simpson, Sparky Watts, Susan Webster, and Pat Werk.



# Personal Reflections on Recent Mission Trips

A group from the Diocese went to Haiti in January. Here are two travelers' impressions of their time spent in Haiti.

## Love Seems to be Winning

by Elizabeth Bardwell

The last diocesan mission trip to Jeannette left Haiti just days before the armed rebels took over the opposition to President Aristide. The purpose of the two men and four women on the trip had been to repair leaking cisterns, replace rusted gutters on the church, build cutting tables for new sewing classes, and to serve more or less as pack animals, each checking duffel bags with our flight allowance of 140 pounds of medicines, personal care items, seeds, school supplies, sewing materials and a piece of hard candy for each of the 667 school pupils we were to photograph for their sponsors and for prospective sponsors of more children. The sponsorship program pays about forty-five percent of the \$100,000 budget the diocese spends on the mission.

All goals were accomplished save for the photographs. They could not be taken because all the schools in Haiti were closed. The school director at Jeannette had been warned that the school would be burned if classes were held.

Before undertaking the seventy-mile, six-hour trip to Jeannette over the potholed highway and before we flew home, we spent nights in Port au Prince at Wall International Guest House, where we talked with other aid workers. Haiti, the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, has thousands of them providing medical clinics, schools, orphanages, reforestation, potable water and more.

In 1983 Pope John Paul visited the country and said, "Things here have got to change." His words contributed to the eventual overthrow of the dictator, but things have not gotten much better for most Haitians. Over several decades, the United States poured billions of dollars into Haiti with little accountability or result. The inventory of grievances we heard against the Aristide government included inflation, high unemployment, injustice, corruption, rampant crime, lack of infrastructure, persecution of journalists and political activists.

The big question is what *can* improve matters in Haiti. One co-op organizer we talked to at Wall House claimed aid was poison for the people because it created dependency. The founder of our mission had been wary of unearned aid from outside the community. He is Pere Octave Lafontant, brother of Pere Fritz Lafontant who helped the



*The travelers to Haiti in January 2004. From left to right: Denis Higgs, Lisa Saunders, Patrick Croy, Mary Alice Eschweiler, Pat Werk, and Liza Bardwell.*

famed Dr. Paul Farmer create his clinic in Cange. Octave's son Jack is the Director of St. Croix Hospital in Leogane. They are a distinguished family and pillars of the Diocese of Haiti, the largest Episcopal diocese.

***The reddish hair, chalky skin and distended bellies of chronic hunger have been eliminated since my last visit.***

When the Jeannette people came to Pere Lafontant eighteen years ago and asked for a school, he told them to build it themselves. They said they did not have anything to build it with. He told them every Haitian has a rock and they should start collecting them. While they collected rocks, Pere Lafontant persuaded the bishop of Milwaukee to take on the project. In early years Episcopalians from Wisconsin enthusiastically slept on the ground and spent their days making cement blocks, putting up the buildings, and making the furniture.

In the light of the perceived dependency problem, I made a point of trying to assess the effect of our diocese's aid to Jeannette in the eight years since my first visit. Of positive changes, perhaps the most striking was that the young adults were taller and sturdier than their parents. (The reddish hair, chalky skin and distended bellies of chronic hunger have been eliminated since my last visit through school lunches. The children still get a daily multivitamin pill, but the lunches have been discontinued. They may be resumed in periods of scarcity before the harvest.) The clinic now

— continued on page 5

has two nurses and two healthcare workers who go door to door. For a year the clinic will also have a doctor, who is performing public service to repay the government for her medical education.

St. Marc's School is tops in the district in national exams, and twenty-two graduates are now in secondary school, and a few are in college. Many of the teachers and support workers at the school are its graduates. They have been taught French, English, Spanish, environmental science, biology, physics and social science. Eight-eight youth and adults are enrolled in the three-year sewing program for which start-up funds came from the Madison Girl Scouts. Others are learning how to use the one computer in the community. Four more computers were on their way by ship, along with other heavy equipment.

There are 207 more children in the school. There also seems to be more goats, pigs, donkeys and petite horses. The people's tiny homes have no electricity, and the water they carry from cisterns is not potable. Before the mission came, there were few if any latrines. The farmers have no cars or trucks, but surprisingly, I saw two boys on bicycles.

I heard none of the voodoo drums that sounded through the night eight years ago. There had been fourteen voodoo priests in the area when Pere Lafontant became the rector. He taught that voodoo is based on fear and Christianity is based on love. Love seems to be winning.

## A Letter to Home

*This letter, dated February 28, was written to family and friends that supported Lisa Saunders during her trip to Haiti in January 2004.*

Dear Family and Friends,

As I write this I feel filled, to the top of my head, with gratitude. I am grateful for your support before, during and after my trip to Haiti. I am grateful for schools being in session in my neighborhood. I am grateful for the safety I feel in my home and city. Most of all, I feel grateful for my relationship to God.

I pray to God, daily, for all of the people in Haiti. I feel such a load of anger, sadness and disgust in my heart for the violence in Haiti right now. People are being advised to stay in their huts/homes, shops are boarded up, people are starving, police are fleeing, cars are burning. People are, I'm sure, quite frightened. The amount of energy I have that could be spent in anger, sadness and disgust I try to turn into prayer. Many people are asking, "How can I help?" To this, my friends in Haiti say "Pray for us."

My favorite memory from this past journey to Haiti is of a conversation I had with a teacher. He and I were sitting on the steps of the church, on a Tuesday, listening to the radio. I, of course, didn't know what was being announced,

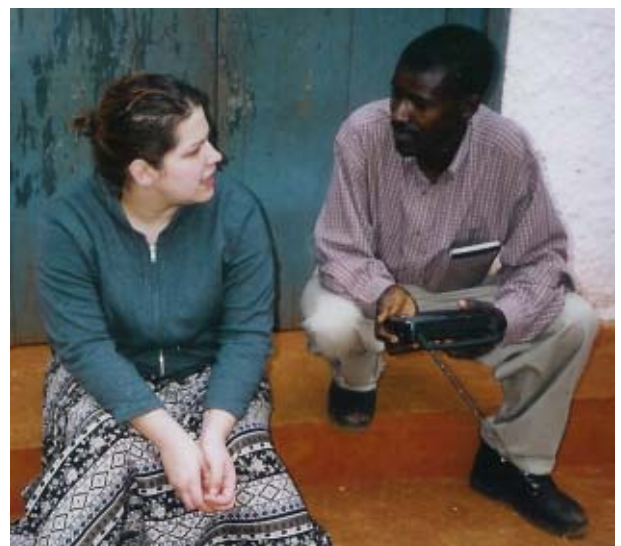
so the teacher translated. After a few minutes of Creole, he turned to me and said, "It is a beautiful day in Haiti." He watched me as I looked at the clouds over the mountains and zipped my sweatshirt up. Who, I wondered, decided this was such a beautiful day? This is when the teacher turned to me and said, "He means that it is quiet- no manifestations (planned demonstrations) will happen today." This experience may have forever changed what I will call a beautiful day.

I realize I've been home for a month now, but it is hard to know what to say about the "work" we did. I feel like my energy was spent learning from the Haitians. I learned many things from them as I helped clean the clinic, danced with the children, played Lego's with the teachers, walked in the village with my friends, and interviewed the village administrator.

***"It is a beautiful day in Haiti."***

I think we were all a bit bummed when they told us, upon our arrival, that the school wouldn't be open while we were in Jeannette. What? Almost all of our plans needed the students to be in school while we were there. This is how we found the Lego's, and had conversations with people who would normally be too busy to have long conversations. This enabled us to help the doctor get the clinic in order before the inspector came to see it later that week. I ask that if you feel so inclined, you will join me in praying that soon Haiti will be able to experience another beautiful day.

Thank you for your loving support,  
Lisa Saunders



*Lisa, sitting on the stairs of the church, conversing with a teacher from St. Marc's School while they listen to the radio.*

# Gift of Water

by Nancy Frana

One goal of the Haiti Project is to have better cistern water collection and purification of that water through the Gift of Water program. The Gift of Water is a user friendly water filtration system that uses interlocking five-gallon buckets which filter and remove bacteria and contaminants. Pure drinking water is essential in providing good health for the people of Jeannette.

The Gift of Water representative Pastor Tilus' plans to travel to Jeannette with Pere Auguste to hold a community meeting were postponed due to safety concerns and road blocks during this time of crisis. We have learned to be patient over time because these things are not in our control. Unfortunately, the political situation only makes the people we are trying so desperately to help, wait longer. Nevertheless, clean water for Jeannette remains a priority to the Haiti Project.

There are many wonderful people here trying to help us realize this goal for Jeannette. Mark Frana and his work group at SBC in Milwaukee, headed up by Nan Swain, raised close to \$2000 in combined fundraising efforts! They held two "Soup" lunches; one also included a silent auction of Haitian art. The Professional Women of SBC, sold breakfast items once a week during the month of January. A big and grateful "thank you" to them all!

## Book Review:

*Something to Teach Me, a Journal of an American in the Mountains of Haiti*

Written by Matt Cyr

Reviewed by Nancy Frana

This fascinating book gives a good overview of Haitian culture. It is a quick read and offers an interesting perspective coming from a young college graduate, living in a remote village in Haiti while teaching English for a year. Cyr journals his experiences and gives a close and personal view of life with a Haitian family. He shares the discoveries he makes about himself, and the Haitian people.

The book can be ordered directly from Matt, or from the publisher. He is donating his profits to the Gift of Water Project and KOREKF, a reforestation project in Haiti.

Matt Cyr

3301 Spanish Moss Terrace #709

Lauderhill, FL 33319

\$22.00 includes tax and shipping

Matt's e-mail: [paintedhaitian@hotmail.com](mailto:paintedhaitian@hotmail.com)

The publisher: Educa Vision Inc.

7550 NW 47th Avenue

Coconut Creek, FL 33073

[www.educavision.com](http://www.educavision.com)

ISBN: 1-58432-138-5



Local women carrying water collected in a cistern.

## Haiti Relief For St. Croix Hospital

As most of you know, the February mission had to cancel their trip to Haiti due to civil unrest. When it is safe to travel in Haiti, the Haiti Project of our diocese will resume sending groups to Jeannette as we have since 1986.

These times of conflict are most difficult for a country that already faces severe poverty. It is hard to know how to help. At this time our brothers and sisters in Jeannette are not experiencing the suffering that others are, probably because they are subsistence farmers living in a remote mountain locality. For this we are thankful. The intensifying crisis, though, is having a negative impact on the already troubled health care services of Haiti: 40% of the population has no real access to basic health care, more than half of the population has no access to drugs, there are fewer than 2,000 doctors in a country of 7 million people.

After discussion of information received from humanitarian organizations working in Haiti, the Haiti Project Board decided to focus on collecting money for St. Croix Hospital in Leogane. St. Croix Hospital is a joint venture of the Episcopal and Presbyterian churches. The hospital administrator, Dr. Jack Lafontant, is a long time friend to our Project. The hospital has always provided care to the people of Jeannette when needed. Dr. John Brusky and Patti have for years organized surgical teams to work at St. Croix. The hospital is currently in desperate need of funds to stay open, and purchase medicines and supplies in order to care for a tremendous number of Haitians.

If you are interested in making a financial contribution to St. Croix Hospital during this time of crisis, checks can be made out to the **Episcopal Diocese of Milwaukee-Haiti Project (Episcopal DOM-HP), Relief Fund.** and sent to the Diocese office using the envelope in this newsletter.



# Haiti National News

News about the critical situation throughout the country.

## Episcopal Haitians Report on Conditions In Their Communities

*Printed with the permission of Nan M. Cobbey associate editor of Episcopal Life, the national newspaper of the Episcopal Church. March 18, 2004*

The Episcopal Church of Haiti — more than 100,000 strong, the largest diocese in ECUSA — has never needed its brothers and sisters more than it does today. The political turmoil disrupting the impoverished Caribbean nation since December has drastically reduced the society's ability to function. The Episcopal Church and its members are suffering more than ever before and are counting on their partnerships with the Episcopal Church in the United States to come to their aid.

Twenty priests and leaders from around the diocese gathered in Port-au-Prince this week to tell Episcopal Life what they are experiencing in their communities. Some told of being accosted by gangs, of being robbed, of violence, shootings and mayhem in their towns and villages, of threats against school children, of parents so fearful they keep their children home from school and have been doing so since December.

They told of public hospitals closed, of medicines unavailable or sold at exorbitant prices, of food shortages, of transport and travel made impossible by road blocks and gun-wielding thugs intent on disruption and destruction in their frustration either for or against the now-deposed president. "Help us," was their plea, "Help us long-term." They praised the Episcopal Church and their companions in dioceses across the country for their generosity and support. They thanked the church for sending someone to listen and to carry back their stories.

Several priests, one of them the Rev. Elie-Jean Charles, chaplain at St. Vincent's School for the Handicapped and communications officer for the diocese, were blunt: "Send money." Others told of their anguish at being unable to meet the needs of parishioners who have no resources at all. The church, they said, is the first place people will turn in their desperation. "I have nothing left to give," said one young priest, clearly hurting. Many asked for prayers, for accompaniment, for long-term commitment helping Haiti rebuild.

### Food prices climb

Food prices have risen drastically in recent weeks. Escalating gasoline prices and gas shortages add to the difficulty in transporting food. Savings and loan institutions that had promised high interest rates to attract families' savings have gone bust, closing their doors just as Haitians desperately need their meager savings. Many families had invested all that their relatives had sent from the United States, according to Madame Nicole Magloire, director of St. Vincent's School.

At Holy Cross Hospital in Leogane, the director, Dr. Jack Guy Lafontant, must shorten stays so he can accommodate the tremendous number that appear at his doors. Government-run hospitals in the capital have closed or are severely overburdened. The result is that the poor have no options. Private hospitals will not accept them. The church-run hospital in Leogane, a joint venture of the Episcopal and Presbyterian churches, has as its mission to serve the poor. Lafontant is trying desperately to do that but he is running out of not just medicine but fuel to keep the generators running.

***The result is that the poor have no options.***

To help, contact the Diocese of Haiti at 011 509-257-1624; 011 509-256-4120; epihaiti@hotmail.com. The bishop (address him as Monsignor Zache Duracin) and other members of the staff speak English. Or earmark contributions "Haitian Relief" and send to Episcopal Relief and Development, 815 Second Avenue, New York, NY 10017, 800-334-7626 (ext. 5129), or visit <http://www.er-d.org/> where parish bulletin inserts on the Haitian crisis are also available.



Photo by Susan Webster

*Struggling to survive poverty throughout Haiti.*



## A Letter from Paul Farmer

*In the Fall 2003 newsletter we recommended a wonderful new book, Mountains Beyond Mountains, written by Pulitzer Prize winner Tracey Kidder. It is the inspirational story of Dr. Paul Farmer's fight to eradicate drug-resistant TB and HIV in Cange, Haiti where he has established a world-famous clinic for the poor. Below is an open letter from Dr. Farmer to US Secretary of State Colin Powell on the terrible health conditions in Haiti made worse by recent events:*

**D**ear Secretary Powell:

In recent weeks, a long-simmering conflict in Haiti has erupted to trouble an already troubled world. As an American doctor working in Haiti, I am writing to air my concerns about the conditions under which health care delivery must now take place.

For weeks, the country's only large public teaching hospital has been paralyzed by violence and dissent. For years, economic pressure largely, though not wholly, resulting from an international aid embargo, has left almost nothing to invest in the care of the destitute sick. For a sense of how meager the health investments have been, consider the experience of an American doctor who commutes between a Harvard teaching hospital and a squatter settlement in rural Haiti. In 2003 the budget of the entire Republic of Haiti, population 8 million, was less than \$300 million. The 2003 budget of a single Harvard teaching hospital — and there are two dozen Harvard teaching hospitals — was pegged at \$1.3 billion.

A longstanding dearth of funds for health care and other services coupled with a rising tide of violence and disarray have led to a terrible humanitarian crisis in Haiti, a crisis with deep roots. The past two weeks have seen an almost complete shutdown of services in much of Port-au-Prince. A report from the Pan American Health Organization, worth citing at length, offers small reason for optimism:

The intensifying socio-political crisis in Haiti is having a negative impact on the health of the Haitian population. Haiti has the highest infant and maternal mortality, the worst malnutrition and the worst AIDS situation in the Americas. The general mortality rate was 1057 per 100,000 population during the 1995-2000 period, also the highest in the Americas.

A quarter of the children suffer from chronic malnutrition, 3 to 6% of acute malnutrition. About 15% of newborns have a low birth weight. Acute respiratory infections and diarrheas cause half of the deaths in children under 5 years of age. There are complications in a quarter of the deliveries. The coverage of services is very low: 40% of the popula-



tion has no real access to basic health care, 76% of deliveries are made by non-qualified personnel, more than half of the population has no access to drugs, and only half of the children are vaccinated.

The report, filed a few days ago, goes on to signal "disregard for the health institutions' neutrality and immunity. Several hospitals were the target of violence. Patients were assaulted in some institutions and the staff providing care is worried about exercising their duties safely. In some health institutions, the staff does not report for work on the day of demonstrations. Some of the patients in need of emergency care do not go to hospitals anymore for fear of violence. The Port-au-Prince University Hospital, one of the main hospitals in the country, has been almost at a standstill for weeks, for lack of personnel."

The report note that "insecurity is highest in Artibonite and Central" departments. Our own medical and public-health efforts are based in the Central Department, where I have worked and lived for over 20 years. Just over a week ago, two of our medical vehicles were commandeered by the heavily armed men who today call themselves Haiti's "military leaders."

Medical education is also at a standstill. The Central Department boasts no homegrown doctors; our own medical staff is from Port-au-Prince or Cuba. There are fewer than 2000 doctors in the entire country and more than 90% of them are based in the capital city of Port-au-Prince. Even there, the urban poor have little access to modern health care. Haiti produces doctors, but its history of repeated coups and brutal dictatorships makes it next to impossible for the country to keep them. Historians report that "In the decade following the [1957] ascent of Dr. Francois Duvalier to power, 264 physicians graduated from the state medical school, and all but 3 left the country."

Few would disagree, then, that the training of doctors and the delivery of services are urgent priorities in the Western world's

— continued on page 9



most impoverished nation. If we can agree on these two points, it's of concern that two important new health care institutions are today under siege or worse.

The University of Tabarre recently inaugurated Haiti's newest medical school. Unlike other faculties in Haiti, this one recruited medical students from poor families residing in each of Haiti's nine departments. Talented young people from rural Haiti have previously found it nearly impossible to make their way to medical school, but this institution seeks out young men and women from poor families, trainees who declare a commitment to returning to communities throughout Haiti's villages and towns and slums. Both creating much-needed opportunities and answering a desperate need, this new facility was dedicated in December 2003. Taiwan's ambassador to Haiti then spoke of Taiwanese providing the funding for the "hardware" and the Cuban faculty as providing the "software."

The teaching hospital of the University of Tabarre, shared with Haiti's state university and its leading private medical schools, opened on February 6 in the Delmas area of Port-au-Prince. Less than 24 hours after the ribbon was cut, babies were being delivered in the safety of a modern medical facility — a rarity in Haiti, where one in every 16 women die in childbirth.

But good news rarely lasts long in Haiti: a few days ago Haiti's newest medical school was turned into a military base for U.S. and other troops, but not until after it was pillaged and stripped of its teaching materials and books. What has become of its faculty, in large part Cuban public health specialists but also counting Haitian, U.S., and European teachers?

More to the point, what will become of its 247 medical students? What will happen to the dean of that school, Yves Polynice, a Haitian surgeon trained in Germany and now forced to flee Haiti at a time when trained medical educators, to say nothing of surgeons, are in such short supply?

In summary, what will become of the only medical school in Haiti whose top priority is developing a cadre of physicians in the service of Haiti's poor and vulnerable?

Over the past week, medical staff working at Delmas, Tabarre and elsewhere have been threatened, as have Ministry of Health personnel. "Political reasons" are cited as the motive for threats to their lives and the possible de-



struction of their newly-founded institutions: for in the hemisphere's most polarized country, both the medical school and the teaching hospital are projects of the Aristide Foundation for Democracy.

When yesterday violence erupted in Port-au-Prince, there was almost nowhere to take the wounded.

Whether the presence of foreign troops will achieve a return to order in Haiti is not yet known. But at the very least, the international forces under U.S. direction should make these facilities safe for patients and staff. The "rebels" who present themselves as the revived Haitian Army include men who intimidate doctors and nurses, deny medical care to the wounded, pillage facilities, steal scarce supplies and equipment, and are eager, for political reasons, to wipe out any and all legacies of the Aristide Foundation and the Lavalas Party. The desperateness of Haiti's situation transcends politics. Hospitals should remain open to all those who need care, and no training facilities should be closed. In the turmoil of rival factions and muddled loyalties that is Haiti now, the need for medical services provides an indisputable area of moral clarity.

— Paul Farmer, M.D., Ph.D.  
Medical Director Clinique Bon Sauveur and Professor Harvard Medical School



Photos on pages 8-9 by Nancy Frana

# The Many Faces of Haiti

Photos by Nancy Frana and Pat Werk



**Lord,  
Your servant doesn't  
know left from right.  
Even now  
I don't know  
which one of your  
hands I am in.  
Whether I am in the  
left or the right,  
it doesn't matter.  
I am in you hands.  
That's enough.**

**Haitian prayer, from  
*God is No Stranger*  
Baptist Haiti Mission,  
Rockford, MI 2000**



# New Sponsors Join the Haiti Project

We are delighted to list the names of the following individuals and groups that have over the past year become sponsors of children attending St. Marc's School, or have new children they are sponsoring.

- |                                 |                                      |                               |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Mr. & Mrs. Ted Chesney          | Mr. & Mrs. Robert Corish             | Mr. & Mrs. Clark Cupery       |
| Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Doepke        | Ms. Mary Gage                        | Ms. Barbara Hughes            |
| Jerusalem Presbyterian Church   | Mr. & Mrs. Clifford Johnson          | Ms. Helen Kirch               |
| Mr. James Knight                | Ms. Monica Koca                      | Mr. Michael Lattos            |
| Mr. Onesimo Moreno              | Ms. Sarah Morgan                     | Mr. & Mrs. Kevin O'Hara       |
| Ms. Katherine Packard           | Mrs. Carla Pinahs with Gabe & Carley | Mr. & Mrs. Douglas Rahn, Jr.  |
| Mr. & Mrs. William Roy II       | Mathew & Kristin Swedlund            | St. Andrew's Episcopal Church |
| St. Paul's Episcopal Church ECW | Mr. Tim VonRueden                    | Sunday school classe          |
| Ms. Lynn Wyman                  |                                      |                               |

We apologize for any names we may have overlooked in this issue. If you are a new sponsor and not listed, please let us know and we will make sure to include your name in the next newsletter.

## How you can help the Haiti Project?

- ✓ **Become a sponsor of a student at St. Marc's School for \$180 per year.**
- ✓ **Give a sponsorship as a gift in someone's name.**
- ✓ **Participate in hands-on mission trips to Jeannette.**
- ✓ **Assist in publicity by being a contact person at your church.**
- ✓ **Help coordinate a fundraising event for the Haiti Project.**
- ✓ **Collect supplies to be distributed to St. Croix Hospital and St. Marc's.**
- ✓ **Share your blessings and make a financial contribution.**
- ✓ **Pray for Haiti and the people living in Jeannette.**



Dr. Joanne Vincent is giving St. Marc's Clinic, Jeannette nine months of public service.



Clip this and send it back to the Haiti Project:

I would like to sponsor a child at St. Marc's School for \$180 annually (\$15.00 per month).  
 Enclosed is my check for \$\_\_\_\_\_.

I wish to support a \_\_\_\_\_ Boy  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Girl  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Either Boy or Girl

I would like to give this sponsorship as a gift to \_\_\_\_\_.

I would like to make a special donation to the Haiti Project.  
 Enclosed is my check for \$\_\_\_\_\_.

I am interested in learning more about mission trips to Haiti.

I am interested in being a contact person for the Haiti Project at my church.

I am interested in coordinating a fundraiser for the Haiti Project.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Parish: \_\_\_\_\_

Checks should be made out to the **Haiti Project** and mailed to the:  
 Episcopal Diocese of Milwaukee-Haiti Project  
 804 E. Juneau Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53202

Correspondence and questions may be directed to:  
 Pat Werk, Haiti Project Coordinator  
 226 N. Main Street, Deerfield, WI 53531  
 608-764-8446 patwerk@verizon.net

# Upcoming Events

Show your support for the Haiti Project and Haiti in general by participating in these upcoming events.

## Strawberry Fest in Dousman

Mark your calendar for Sunday, June 27, 1-5 p.m. for St. Mary's annual Strawberry Fest. Hosted by St. Mary's and the Haiti Project, this event, with the eclectic mix of delicious treats and Haitian crafts, is one of our biggest fundraisers. Good things to eat include homemade strawberry pie, schaumtorte, Haitian rum cake, chocolate covered strawberries, shakes and sundaes. And don't miss out on the opportunity to buy Haitian goods, ranging from vanilla to fer de coupe or cut iron. St. Mary's is located on Hwy. 18 and 67, three miles south of I-94. We guarantee you'll have a great time!



## Haiti Solidarity Week

May 15-23, 2004 has been declared Haiti Solidarity Week. If you, your church or organization would like to organize an event to bring awareness to Haiti, contact Haiti Reborn/Quixote Center, P.O. Box 5206, Hyattsville, MD 20782, (301) 699-3443 x 195, [www.quixote.org/haiti](http://www.quixote.org/haiti) or [Haiti@haitireborn.org](mailto:Haiti@haitireborn.org). They will send you a packet filled with a glut of information and fundraising ideas.



Happy Easter

For more information about the Haiti Project  
Contact Pat Werk, Haiti Project Coordinator  
226 N. Main Street  
Deerfield, WI 53531  
608-764-8446  
[patwerk@verizon.net](mailto:patwerk@verizon.net)



Address service request to:  
Pat Werk  
226 N. Main St.  
Deerfield, WI 53531

Episcopal Diocese  
of Milwaukee  
**Haiti Project**  
c/o Grace Episcopal Church  
116 W. Washington Ave.  
Madison, WI 53703



nonprofit  
organization  
US Postage  
**PAID**  
Madison, WI  
permit no. 651