



**St. Francis-Haiti
Outreach Ministry**

**118 N. New Street
Staunton, VA 24401**

NEWSLETTER

**December 2020
Volume 14 No. 5**



“We are called to discover Christ in the poor, to give them our voice in their cause, but also to be their friends, to listen to them, to understand them, and to gather the mysterious wisdom that God wants to communicate to us through them.”
--Pope Francis, *Evangelii gaudium*, 198.

News from Pointe-a-Raquette

Fr. Augustin reports that while Haiti has been hit hard by the coronavirus, and many have lost jobs, homes, and even lives, because of donors like you, St. Louis Parish has been equipped to serve the community with food rations and an outpouring of love and sense of belonging when people have needed it most. Emergency help that was sent by St. Francis was a lifeline for many. Many families expressed their defeat, feeling forgotten and helpless. Knowing that we remember them gives them hope. People are striving to identify their resources and God-given talents to help them not only survive in a time of a global pandemic, but thrive spiritually as they deeply connect to community. Concern remains going forward as the Haitian families face food insecurity. We will continue to work with Father for the good of the community and will keep you updated. The parish community remains vibrant in faith and worship. They are celebrating a grace-filled Advent Season and pray for all of us every day.

Marie and Angie had to cancel their April trip due to the pandemic but are hoping to travel to visit the people in Fall 2021. Pray that this is possible!



Food rations being distributed

News from Bob’s Clinic

We thank all who contributed to the Bob’s Clinic Challenge! We were able to raise more than \$20,000 which will help to sustain the clinic’s good work by providing salaries for the doctor and nurses and support staff. The clinic has extended its outreach programs and has worked hard to keep Covid-19 at bay in the community! We hope that the vaccine will soon be at the clinic too! The clinic is a beacon of light in the parish!

News from St. Louis Parish School

We have exciting news that 100% of the 9th grade class passed the national examinations!! The school year for 2019-20 ended on November 6 and the first day of school for the 2020-21 year was on November 16th! We have a growing attendance and dedicated teachers. Fr. Augustin and the parents built a temporary area for the added classes this year. Even with the 3 months of school closure, due to the dedication of the teachers, the students had their work delivered so disruption was as minimal as possible. Thank you for your support and prayers for them! Even with the increased costs of food, we have been able to continue to feed the students each day. The Outreach Ministry has started a School Building Fund to work with Father Augustin’s dream to build a new school. If you would be interested in a donation to this fund, please contact us!



9th grade students

Thank you from Father Augustin and the Haiti Outreach Ministry

Father Augustin and the Ministry have been so touched and humbled by your gracious generosity and love for the people of St. Louis Parish. Being generous is a leap of faith. You are taking chances when you give a way something of value to yourself. However, in life, we need courageous, generous people to step up and use their generosity as a positive force. Thank you. This unusual year of 2020 will stay with us in many beautiful ways. Fr. Augustin recently wrote to us: *I took the opportunity to celebrate my birthday with the friends of Maison St Antoine (the homeless shelter of the Parish). People were so happy. And Cebien (one of the residents at the shelter) shouted at me with joy in the depths of his being. He said that I am his son: "Se bondye ki banm pitit gason sa a." I again felt more intensely God's call to follow Him in the little ones and the poor!*

May we all find and follow God in the little ones and the poor.

Any questions? Please contact us at stfrancishaitioutreachministry@gmail.com or call Marie Thomas (540-255-3166) or Angie McFarling (540-569-6041). Thank you always for your love and support!

Men anpil chay pa lou. Many hands make the load lighter. Bondye beni ou. God bless you.



Please join us in our continuing ministry to the people of St. Louis Parish in Haiti.

As the Christmas Season of giving approaches, consider these ways you can help during this extraordinary time of pandemic.

- 1. PRAY:** Join Marie in praying for Haiti during a Holy Hour in the Church (until further notice) on any Monday from 2-3 pm. We are praying for stability and hope for families across the country as their government faces many challenges.
- 2. LIGHT THE LIFE OF A CHILD:** Please consider sponsoring a child in honor of a loved one as **a CHRISTMAS GIFT that will give twice!** The school would not exist without your sponsorships. Please know how much your generosity is appreciated! **A sponsor form can be found on the Church website at:**
http://stfrancisparish.org/haiti_sponsorship_form.pdf
- 3. INVEST IN THE COMMUNITY:** Help to build a strong, resilient community with an investment in honor of a loved one this Christmas through the Honor with Books PLUS program. **An investment form can be found on the Church website at:**
http://stfrancisparish.org/haiti_honor_with_books_form.pdf
- 4. BUILD UP BOB's CLINIC:** Help to equip the clinic to keep families strong and healthy in the face of increasingly unpredictable events such as the pandemic. The clinic model works. Help bring it to more people as you honor a loved one. **A donation form can be found on the Church website at:** http://stfrancisparish.org/haiti_bobs_clinic_form.pdf
- 5. STAY IN THE KNOW:** Join our Ministry Team! We hope to resume meetings in person soon! In "normal" times, we celebrate Mass together on the first Tuesday of each month at 5:30, then have a Haitian meal of Rice and Beans followed by our meeting. Stay informed and active!! **For more information about our programs, please contact Marie Thomas, 540-255-3166 or Angie McFarling, 540-569-6041 or email us at stfrancishaitioutreachministry@gmail.com to let us know you want to be involved! There is much to do!!**

**Thank you for standing with us in prayer and support
for our friends and partners in Haiti.**