



St. Francis- Haiti Outreach
P.O. Box 2563
Staunton, VA 24402-2563
NEWSLETTER
May/June 2012
Volume 6 No.1



This month's pictures show Fr. Chadique celebrating Mass at St. Louis Parish and just another lazy day for the goats on LaGonave.

News from La Gonave

It has been a busy nine months for Fr. Chadique as he settles in to his role as pastor of our twin parish of St. Louis in Pointe-a-Raquette. Many structural repairs have been made to the rectory and the school, and Father continues to establish small schools in the rural chapels. These schools are not recognized by the Ministry of Education because the teachers are not certified, but the children there are learning to read and write. For most children in farming areas, this is much more education than they would normally be able to achieve. As time goes on, perhaps the rural schools will be able to be staffed with certified teachers.

At Our Lady of Pointe-a-Raquette Catholic School, it has been a busy week. The last day of school was Tuesday, June 19th, and the kindergarten graduation was held on Friday, June 22nd. Thirty children received their kindergarten diplomas and will start first grade in the fall. As we have reported before, this is the first year that we also will have a 6th grade graduating class. The four children in 6th grade will take their national qualifying examinations on July 3-4. They will need to pass the national examinations in order to graduate from primary school and be allowed to progress to secondary school. As you know, when St. Francis of Assisi Parish worked with Fr. Roosevelt to establish Our Lady of Pointe-a-Raquette Catholic School, it was intended only to teach children in grades kindergarten through 6th grade. However, Fr. Chadique is committed to providing education at least through grade 9, so we will have a 7th grade class next year. Please remember our 6th graders in your prayers as they take their national examinations.

Not all the news from LaGonave is good news. Although Father has been trying diligently, he has been unable to hire a permanent physician to be the Medical Director at Bob's Clinic. We have been very blessed through many years of the clinic's operation with wonderful Haitian physicians, but recently it has been very difficult to convince anyone to come from the mainland to LaGonave. Father has spoken with Dr. Eric Ferdinand of the Ministry of Health to try to resolve the situation, but he has not yet been successful. In the meantime, "Dr." Brunel, an experienced mid-level healthcare provider, continues to hold down the fort. He is able to provide basic care for wounds and other emergencies, but he can't provide the level of care of a full-time physician.

Having a physician in place makes such a difference in the lives of the people. Shortly before Dr. Paul left the island, he was involved in the case of a man from Lotorre Boukan, Mr. Presius, who had a

very large facial tumor which was not malignant but was very disfiguring. Through the financial support of a dedicated person here in Virginia, Dr. Paul was able to have him seen at Albert Schweitzer Hospital in St. Marc, and the tumor was removed. This changed his life. Please pray to the Holy Spirit to look kindly upon our efforts to find a physician to serve the people in Pointe-a-Raquette.

News from Fr. Roosevelt

Many people have asked about Fr. Roosevelt who was transferred to a parish on the mainland. Although he was originally told he would be transferred to St. Therese in Lilavoix, as of January, 2012, Father became the pastor of St. Jude's Parish in Mon Lopital (mountain hospital), a town in the mountains about 1/2 hour from Port-au-Prince. When Fr. Roosevelt was told he was being transferred, he had great concern for several children, some of whom were orphans as well as others who were living in dangerous situations. He was concerned about their welfare once he left Pointe-a-Raquette, so he decided that these children would need to come with him to the mainland and he would establish an orphanage. Through contributions from friends in Michigan, he was able to rent a house in Lilavoix and get the children established there with caretakers. They were enrolled in St. Therese School. Then he was told by his bishop that he would actually be going to Mon Lopital. Father decided that the children would remain in Lilavoix and he would see them often. They are all doing very well in school there and are very happy to be living in a safe environment.

At St. Jude's, Fr. Roosevelt has a rectory, but the church was completely destroyed in the earthquake and has not yet been rebuilt. Father says Mass outside under a tent. Although the town is called Mon Lopital, the actual hospital is located down the mountainside closer to Port-au-Prince. There is a small clinic in Mon Lopital, but it is staffed only 2 days a week by a nurse. The people there are poor, and the men make their living by extracting sand and gravel from the mountain. A pick-up truck load of gravel, which can take 3-4 men all day to fill, brings in \$11.00 US. St. Jude's has two twin parishes in the United States, one in Michigan and another in Wisconsin, who help with projects there.

Our friends at Blue Ridge Community College continue to work with Fr. Roosevelt at his new parish. Right now, they are in the process of setting up a store to provide basic commodities, such as rice, beans, and oil, so the women don't need to walk down the mountain into Port-au-Prince to shop for their families. Several pigs have also been supplied to families in Mon Lopital with the understanding that the offspring will be given to other families.

We still speak with Fr. Roosevelt frequently. He sends his best wishes to all of his friends at St. Francis and an open invitation to visit him in Haiti. Father wants you to know that he prays for us at St. Francis each day.

As always, thank you so much for all you do to support the programs at our twin parish of St. Louis. You truly are making a difference in so many lives, and Fr. Chadique and the people of Pointe-a-Raquette appreciate your support more than can be expressed.

For more information about St. Francis' programs in Pointe-a-Raquette, contact Dr. Linda Kofeldt at 434-825-3841 or lkofeldt@comcast.net

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