

Haiti in our Hands

Compassion and solidarity for the people of Haiti



Monthly Newsletter

December 2023

Christmas Wish List



Here in Syracuse, a child's Christmas wish list may include a toy and a cozy blanket. Teens could ask for another year on a music subscription and a new pair of shoes. Adults may gift one another a night out to a favorite restaurant & warm coats.

In Chauffard, Father Raymond is hoping for:

- Food for the school lunch program (pictured on the left);
- Equipment to set up the new bakery;
- A generator to power the refrigerator for the clinic medicines;
- Inverter batteries to convert the solar power to electricity for the Rectory & school offices.

This is a big wish list. Father Raymond wrote: "Despite all these shortcomings, we are very happy to still have life. We remain hopeful that one day the situation will improve. I never stop thanking you for all your support, help and prayers. May the Lord continue to bless you and all the members of your family."

Can you give a gift to the people of Chauffard this holiday season and help make these wishes come true?

News from Chauffard:

"For us at Chauffard everything is going well by the grace of God. We continue our mission despite the seriousness of the situation. Thank God we are still protected. For school, things are off to a good start. With the situation in Port-au-Prince, many new students came to us. We welcome them wholeheartedly. Thank you again, we pray for you who always think of us. May God keep you safe!"

Father Raymond, October 29, 2023

Upcoming Events:

Thank you: to our talented seamstresses Theresa and Pam for their *very* successful holiday craft sales!

December 15, 11 am - 6 pm:
Doug's to Go, at Velasko Road parking lot

January 6 & 7:
Bottle & Can Drive
at Velasko Road parking lot

For more information, call
Kate McMahan at 315-214-1569.

**Supporting the Church of the Immaculate Conception,
Chauffard, Haiti, Father Raymond, Parish Priest**

Stop the Flow of Blood

In September, the ten Catholic Bishops of Haiti, met at a conference in Port-au-Prince. They wrote & signed a “Message of hope to the people of God, to men and women of goodwill!” What follows is an edited version:

We the Bishops of the Catholic Church in Haiti, resound “the cry of an entire people in the face of abandonment”, and live with bitterness and pain **the suffering of our people caused by the blind violence of heavily armed bandits, the cynicism and indifference of political leaders, and the hesitations of the international community.** The cry of our People resonates in our ears and our hearts. These people only ask to live in dignity and peace.

Indeed, for around four years, our country has been experiencing one of the longest and deadliest socio-political and security crises in its entire history. The whole people, the whole country, are affected to the core. Truly history is showing signs of decline in Haiti. The State has lost control of the national territory. Organized crime has spread to all our Provinces and almost all the major cities in the country. **The metropolitan region of Port-au-Prince is almost entirely controlled by armed bandits, organized into gangs.**

The population is taken hostage by the merciless violence of gangs and their allies. A low-intensity war against the peaceful and unarmed population is raging here and there in the country. But every war leaves the world worse than the state in which it found it. War is always a failure of politics and humanity. Violence begets violence, hate begets more hate, and death more death.

What should we do? It seems that we have already exhausted all ordinary and normal ways. What must we do as Churches and people in such a crisis to change the situation and prevent the people from being pushed even farther into discouragement? What must we do so that our country regains peace and the people, serenity?

Faced with the barbarism taking hold in the country, the solution is not passivity. We believe that it is possible to transform these dehumanizing conflicts into links of a new process. Of course, this requires courage, which the forebearers demonstrated when it was necessary to achieve independence.

In these dark hours of our history as a nation, we ask all the people of God who are in Haiti, to remain actively alert. Let our witness be of a Church which serves, which leaves its home to accompany life, to support hope, and to be a sign of unity, to build bridges, tear down walls, and sow reconciliation. **We invite you to organize a real chain of prayers,** for the deliverance, the liberation of our dear country, and

our beloved people from the influence and violence of the gangs. We recommend especially the novena of prayer to Saint Michael the Archangel.

With great hope, we also continue to support every effort towards a peaceful resolution of this multidimensional crisis. We encourage all initiatives taken to stop the flow of blood and to protect the vulnerable population, totally abandoned and left to its own fate. We reaffirm loud and clear to the world that his genocide must stop. **We ask those currently in power to take concrete and strong actions for true historical reconciliation here and today in Haiti.** May the Lord pour out in abundance his rains of blessings on his people!



The Chauffard school is a respite of calm and order for students.