



MAISON FORTUNÉ ORPHANAGE NEWS

An occasional bulletin published by the Maison Fortuné Orphanage Foundation, Inc. to report progress of the children's orphanage in Hinche, Haiti. It is also available on the internet at www.mfofoundation.org and at www.richmonddiocese.org/haiti

December 2009

A WORD FROM BROTHER HARRY ECCLES

Just a few days to Thanksgiving Day, but Brother Mike McCarthy and I will not be together that day—he'll be at the Sant Zaveryen in Port-au-Prince. Regardless of the day, we will celebrate. We have much to be thankful for! I'm grateful for Br. Mike's safe and spirited return from the States. I live better when my principal caregiver is close! Really, I'm grateful too for coming out of a month's wrestling with some kind of flu. Unpleasant but not disabling. Certainly I'm grateful to our friends in the States who make our ministry here at Maison Fortuné possible.

Many things, great and small, all tumbling from the hands of an infinitely generous God, who uses the likes of us to spread that generosity. Mèsi, Bondye!



Br. Harry with orphanage school principal Pettris Joseph and Activities Director Frenel Jean-Dieudonné

Many of our neighbors here struggle to keep their children in primary and secondary school, and many simply cannot. The girls and boys here at Maison Fortuné are indeed blessed, and I'm blessed too to be among them. At 4:00 a.m. some of them are reciting their lessons aloud, while others are preparing the breakfast for the St. Martin de Porres high school students who must be at school by 7:00. The sounds of happy children continue throughout the day, and I try to spend time each evening in the library, especially for those who want help with English. Brother Mike is into every activity at MF, and recently he's been extra busy with children needing medical attention.

I hope you agree with the theme of thanksgiving and joy. It's true that there are problems and disappointments, but the balance sheet calls for thanks and thanks and thanks to God who chooses unlikely tools to do beautiful things. God is among us, yes, and we also must prepare the way of the Lord. Let us do that together, regardless of distances.

KEEPING THE KIDS HEALTHY

As our readers may be aware, the boards of directors of both the Haitian Health Care Foundation of the Diocese of Richmond and the Maison Fortuné Orphanage Foundation are working together to meet the health care needs of our 150 children.

As Maison Fortuné grows into a major child welfare institution and school, more health care needs are surfacing. In addition to the usual cuts and scrapes which our first-aiders can care for, more serious illnesses have arisen among the children, including flu, HIV (contracted in the womb), tuberculosis, and conditions requiring surgery. In addition, of course, there is a need for eye, ear, and dental care for the children who come to the orphanage from very poor situations—many of them have never been to a doctor.

While we have been blessed with occasional visits from American and Haitian health care providers who generously donate their time to the children, we are seeing a need for the regular presence of a nurse in the orphanage clinic, and we will be exploring the possibility of hiring one. We are exploring as well the possibility of contracting with a Haitian pediatrician who can make regular visits.

A BUSY COUPLE OF WEEKS!

Orphanage director Lefort Jean-Louis was in the Hampton Roads area of Virginia last month to thank those who support the orphanage and also to help raise funds for its operations.

He spoke at all the liturgies on three weekends at Prince of Peace Catholic Church, and at the churches of St. Stephen Martyr and St. Thérèse—where special collections were taken up. All three are in Chesapeake, Virginia.

There were lots of other events to keep him busy as well. St. Mark Catholic Church in Virginia Beach held a well-attended Silent Auction benefitting Maison Fortuné, and the Board of Directors of the Maison Fortuné Orphanage Foundation hosted both social events and planning meetings.



Lefort Jean-Louis at a reception for members of the Church of St. Therese, Chesapeake, hosted by Karen and Joe DiRenzo



Jean-Louis with members of the Foundation's Board of Directors and their families at the home of Patty and Chip Wirth

There were school visits as well: Bishop Sullivan Catholic High School, Peninsula Catholic School, and, of course, St. Patrick School in Norfolk, celebrating a milestone in their Million Pennies Campaign.

If you would like to schedule a fund-raising visit to your parish or organization by Lefort Jean-Louis or a member of the Foundation's Board of Directors during 2010, this can be arranged through the Secretary, Br. Cosmas Rubencamp, at crubencamp@comcast.net or by telephone at 804-358-6210.



Jean-Louis with Sharon Neuhaus at St. Patrick School, Norfolk, Virginia. The school's Million Pennies Campaign was featured in this newsletter last month. At the liturgy celebrating nine months of the Campaign, Sharon announced that they had surpassed their goal of collecting 500,000 pennies by the time of Jean-Louis's visit! By the end of the week they had close to 600,000. When filled, this box will weigh three tons!

PROGRESS ON PLANS FOR NEW BUILDING

For some time now we have dreamed about meeting two needs: replacing our dining building and providing a chapel/assembly space.

The current dining hall and kitchen can seat only about 75 children, and we now have about 150 residents. We also are providing a hot lunch to over 100 additional children on school days. Prayer and liturgical services have to be done outdoors, bringing school benches and chairs from the dining room for the children to sit on.

Now we have a plan to meet both needs with a single two-story building, with the kitchen and dining room on the first floor and the chapel above. The existing building will be turned into storage space for the kitchen and for clothing and other supplies used by the children.

A Haitian architect has drawn up plans and a construction budget. The estimated cost of the building is \$94,000. We have on hand \$4,430, most of it raised by a gentleman in Pennsylvania, Mr. Thomas Furlong. Just \$89,570 to go! We plan to apply to a Foundation for a grant to help with the cost, but we will need to have on hand a sizeable matching fund for the grant. Any help you can give will be welcome: donations, soliciting gifts from individuals or organization which have the capability of making donations of \$1,000 or more, and so forth.

SPONSORSHIP - A GREAT WAY TO HELP

Remember the sponsorship program?

It is a way to make a contribution each month towards the operating costs of the orphanage in the name of a specific child. It helps with food, clothing, education and supplies like books, computers, etc. Participating in this manner gives us a steady stream of income to support and raise the children. We can plan ahead and try to avoid emergency appeals.

What are the sponsorship levels?

Gold Sponsor: \$100 to \$150 per month

Silver Sponsor: \$ 50 to \$ 99 per month

Bronze Sponsor: \$ 25 to \$ 49 per month

Note that you can contribute on a monthly, quarterly or annual basis.

How can I begin sponsoring a child at the orphanage?

If you need more information before making a decision, please contact the Maison Fortuné Sponsorship Coordinator, Terry Allen at terry78allen@gmail.com. If you are ready to begin sponsorship, chose your level of contribution and the frequency. Please send your first check to:

Maison Fortuné Orphanage Foundation, Inc.
c/o The Treasurer
P O Box 3092
Chesapeake, VA 23327-3092

Please note on your check that it is for your beginning sponsorship or better yet, email Terry Allen to let her know that you have started. This will enable us to set you up and make sure you get future communications.

What happens next?

We will let you know the name of the child you are sponsoring. We do not send out invoices in our attempt to keep costs down. If you would like a reminder, let us know by email [above] and we will send you a reminder at the beginning of each month/quarter/year, etc.

READ-A-THON PROJECT

Last summer, Brittany Cochran, now a senior in the International Baccalaureate program at Princess Anne High School, Virginia Beach, and a member of the Church of St. Mark, raised \$150 for the library at Maison Fortuné.

As a service project, she conducted a Read-a-Thon, whereby students got sponsors for the books they would read during the summer, keeping up their skills while working on summer assignments. Way to go, Brittany!

LAST CALL [for 2009]!

With the tax year coming to an end, please consider using the enclosed envelope for a major gift to the operat-

ing budget of the orphanage or to its endowment fund. Our Treasurer will get you the receipt the IRS requires to document your contribution of \$250 or more. Along with that will come the gratitude of the boys and girls of Maison Fortuné and those who care for them.

Perhaps you might think about using your contribution as an **Alternative Christmas Gift** to someone who doesn't really need your gift but who would be honored to know that you were providing for an orphan child in Haiti in their name.

COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN OPTION

For those considering a donation to a worthy charitable organization through the **Combined Federal Campaign**, please consider Maison Fortuné Orphanage Foundation as the recipient.

The Maison Fortuné Orphanage Foundation is an approved charity of the U.S. Government's Combined Federal Campaign (CFC), and is listed under the CFC's *National and International Independent Agencies* at number 12234.

All federal civil servants, military and postal donors can designate Maison Fortuné to be their supported charity during this year's appeal. If you are a potential CFC donor, please consider designating the orphanage as a recipient of all or part of your contribution.

The children at the orphanage will be the direct beneficiaries of your kindness because *less than 3%* of all funds raised are spent on administration and fund raising.

Last year [our first year to be listed] we received over **\$33,000.00** through this campaign!

The Campaign ends on December 15, 2009.

OUR CHANGE OF ADDRESS

You will note that our reply envelope for your contribution is addressed to us at **Commonwealth Catholic Charities** on Willow Lawn Drive in Richmond instead of the 7800 Carousel Lane address of the Diocesan Pastoral Center.

The operations of the diocesan Office of Justice and Peace and its Haiti Ministry are now headquartered at Commonwealth Catholic Charities where your donations will be processed. The Haiti Ministry will continue in the same manner it has in the past without disruption.

If you have any questions about the transition to Commonwealth Catholic Charities please call or email Patrice Schwermer at 804 545 5974 or patrice.schwermer@cccova.org.

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INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP CONTRIBUTORS: July 2009—June 2010

Listed below are the individuals & groups that contributed since July 1, 2009 to the day-to-day operating budget (food, clothing, salaries, furniture, etc.) or to the capital budget (for building construction), or the Endowment Fund. We are very grateful; the orphanage could not survive without them. Note: this list is incomplete, pending receipt of a list from CCC of the donors who contributed through them.

Anonymous Donors
Cynthia Anstrom
Colleen Aucoin
Pearl Baird
Charles Baker & Regina Dufresne
Roy & Jerrie Beal
Bon Secours Health System, Inc.
Cassie Booth
Anthony Breen
Bernard Brennan
Ann-Marie Carothers
Mark & Sharon Carscallen
Frank & Linda Carter
Peter & Kim Catoe
Laura Charette
Elisa Charters
Dolores Christian
Brittany Cochran
John & Ann-Marie Cochran
Mary Ann Collins
Troy & Karen Constance
Richard & Gwen Costello
Bob & Sandra Coyle
Rev. George Cowan
Lisa Czora
Ron & Shirley De Bacco
Frank & Carla Delgado
Dr. Thomas Diehl
John & Marilyn Dohanich
John & Pamela Dragon
Milton & Agnes Ebbert
Pauline Eccles
ECR Software Co.
Marcos & Isis Espinosa
Bruce & Susan Everett
Rev. Neil Fackler
Mary Fitzsimons
Fred & Carol Flach
Sharon Forni
Karen Gdula
Martha Goedert
Rev. James Griffin
Joseph Grim
Drew & Doris Grivna
Timothy & Christina Hayes
Haiti-Not-Hilfe
Haitian Health Care Foundation, Inc.
Travis & Vicki Hale
Hands Across the Sea, Inc.
John & Susan Harnett
Patrick & Kollette Hillard
Michael & Jessie Johnson
Betty Jones
Jon & Ginny Kehoe
Margaret Koep
Leonard & Frances Komoroski
Rev. William E. LaFratta
Nancy Layne
Ted Lepski, Greenville Transport
Earl & Carol Lienemann
David & Lisa Linnell
Chris & Stephanie Lowman
Br. Daniel Lynch CFX
Br. John Mahoney CFX
JoAnn McCaffrey
Greg & Michelle McCracken
Michael & Shelby McGeehin
Thomas & Maureen McGeehin
George & Louise McInnis
Lois McNally
Joseph & Joanne Meagher
The Merck Company
Donald & Margaret Moore
Art & Kerry Mowbray
Kevin & Mary Murphy
Prince of Peace Catholic Church, Chesapeake Va.
Br. Cosmas Rubencamp CFX
John & Susan Sangenario
Maribel Santiago
Perry & Kathy Sassic
Susan & Kevin Schrack
Lorraine Sharpe
Lynn Simmeth
Yvonne Smith-Philips
St. Mark Catholic Church, Virginia Beach
St. Stephen Martyr Catholic Church, Chesapeake Va.
St. Therese Catholic Church, Chesapeake Va.
St. Vincent de Paul Society, Monaca Pa.
St. Vincent de Paul Society, Beaver Co. Council
Bishop Walter F. Sullivan
David and Diane Swift
Beth & Paul Szczbor
Ralph & Erlinda Taguba
Valiant Tan
Fred & Marguerite Thomas
John & Ellen Thompson
Cameron & Jane Thornton
Joseph & Susan Tofalo
Thomas & Elena Trotter
Loren & Marcia Tschohl
Rita Unis
Mark Urben
Bradley & Cheryl Van Buren
Vanguard Charitable Endowment Program
David White
Melanie & Matthew Wilhelm
Celia Woodham
Xaverian Brothers USA

I am enclosing a check for \$ _____. I would like to designate it for (please check one):

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Orphanage operating budget | <input type="checkbox"/> Chapel/Dining Building | <input type="checkbox"/> Wellness Program |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Orphanage Endowment Fund | <input type="checkbox"/> Library Project | <input type="checkbox"/> Solarization project |

Name

Address

City State Zip

Please make checks payable to **Commonwealth Catholic Charities** and mail with this form to:
P. O. Box 6565, 1512 Willow Lawn Drive, Richmond VA 23230-0565

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