



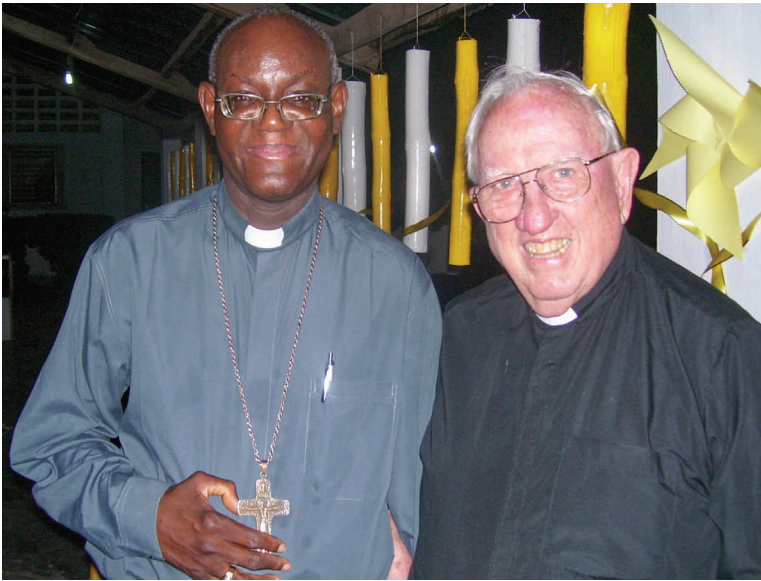
SHALOM HAITIAN EDUCATION FUND NEWS

An occasional bulletin to provide information on our partnership with the Office of Education of the Diocese of Hinche, Haiti. It is also available on our websites: www.haitianeducationfund.com and www.richmonddiocese.org/haiti.

November 2009

NEW BISHOP INSTALLED IN HINCHE

Bishop Emeritus Walter Sullivan, Br. Cosmas Rubencamp CFX (HEF Secretary) and Fr. James Griffin (pastor of the Church of St. Mark, Virginia Beach) represented the Diocese of Richmond at the October 11 installation of Bishop Simon-Pierre Saint-Hillien CSC in Hinche.



Bishop Saint-Hillien with Bishop Sullivan

Archbishop Bernadito Auza, the papal nuncio to Haiti, presided at the installation. His brother lives in Virginia Beach and is a member of the Church of St. Mark, where the Archbishop concelebrated Mass on his last visit to his brother. Also presiding was the former bishop, now Archbishop of Cap-Haïtien, Louis Kebreau, an old friend.

During the week they were in Haiti they also were welcomed to dinner at the home of Education Director Richard Joseph and his wife Roseline. They stayed at Maison Fortune Orphanage in Hinche.

Bishop Saint-Hillien is the current president of the Haitian Bishops' Conference's Education Commission, and promises to be actively supportive of our Haitian Education Fund's collaboration with the Hinche diocesan Office of Education .

GOING GREEN IN THE DIOCESE OF HINCHE

From Richard Joseph, Director of Education for the Diocese of Hinche, we have this report.

On Tuesday, October 6, Fr. Jethro Noël, the Principal of Saint Martin de Porres secondary school in Hinche, presided over a "a green day" at the school—the primary school associated with St. Martin also participated.

You may remember that two years ago the diocesan office of education (BDE) advocated a policy of being responsible for and protective of the environment for all Catholic schools. Thus, from time to time a green day is held to motivate the children to address this serious problem and to help them learn how to protect our environment, particularly by reforestation and preventing tree removal.

On this occasion the children wore green t-shirts and black pants. Fr Jethro talked to them about the problems encountered by the environment and told them that if nothing is done, the situation will be most difficult for all the people who live off the land.



Green Day at St. Martin de Porres

The children each contribute 15 gourdes (about 30¢). The back of their shirts reads: "Let's Protect our Environment: Green School."

Recently, three of our children (Sévere Rootcheld, Rose Michele and La Montagne) were elected Deputies in a program of the Haitian Parliament called "Parliament Youth". Sévere was the last Chairman of the Ecology Club at St. Martin, where he worked very hard to encourage his classmates and the other students in the school to keep the yard and the classrooms in good health. He was elected Vice-Chairman of this parliamentary committee and recommended that the deputies vote a law about protecting the environment.

We are encouraging all the principals, teachers, parents, children and all the organizations working in education to adopt practices to implement the policy for the well-being of the Haitian ecology.

SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS MEET

Richard Joseph also provided this report.

Recently we had a great meeting in Maissade with all principals of the Catholic high schools of the diocese. Those in attendance included: Fathers Jéthro Noël, Lévêque Bien-Aimé, Bernadin Desras, Wilfranc Servil, Kesner Joseph, and Alphonse Tanelus; Sr Mamoune; Me John Wesley Augustin (from Saint-André School), Me Ramain Exil (from Saltadère), Pierrot Lafleur and some pastoral members from Lascahobas and me. We missed only Fr. Guy Casseus (from Los Palis) and Fr. Bertrand (from Cerca La Source), who went to Jeremie for the installation of the new Bishop there, Mgr. Joseph Decoste Gontrand.

We talked about:

- o How to improve all the schools in the diocese in planning activities about the environment (such as conferences, Green Days, video presentations)
- o School gardens
- o The book "Timoun se Moun" (I will be receiving from the national Bishops' Committee on Education a gift of 2000 books, which I will share with the schools)
- o A report on the annual Easter Sharing
- o Teacher training weekends, etc.

The principals shared all activities relating to the opening of school last month, and they encouraged our office (the BDE) to work closely with them.

One significant project: at Saltadère, they started a school garden, with a technician working with them to teach the children how to grow vegetables. They work in groups.

MORE ON PARISH VISITS

Members of the Board of Directors of the Haitian Education Fund have been meeting with the Haiti committees of parishes who are twinned with parishes in Haiti which have school. The latest of these meetings took place at St. Bede Parish, Williamsburg, Va. Paul Dauphinais, chair of the committee, sent us this summary of their meeting with HEF directors, John Beall, Kathy Gross, and Paul Fuhs.

The purpose of the meeting was to learn more about the capabilities and needs of the Diocese of Hinche's *Bureau Diocesain d'Education* (BDE, in English, "Diocesan Office of Education"), in the areas of education oversight, teacher training and education management.

The participants in our meeting agreed that supporting effective education programs in Haiti is a challenge. St. Bede feels a need for stronger institutional support from the Diocese of Hinche to assess the needs and shortcomings of its twin parish primary school in Thomonde.

Participants learned that HEF in Richmond works closely with the BDE in Hinche to produce regular reports which, with a little enhancement, may be quite beneficial to St. Bede's efforts. However, the BDE lacks the financial resources to do more.

The BDE's main activities are: 1) school audits; 2) teacher training; and 3) education promoting sustainable development.

School audits

The BDE supervisors try to visit all 88 elementary schools at least once a year. They are unable to do so for various reasons (primarily lack of transportation— e.g., constant need of repair or replacement of motorbikes, or time to cover the territory).

When the supervisors do manage to visit they seem to do a good job. Using a detailed checklist, they check out the school and the teachers and talk with the director. A typical BDE report provides some insight into the quality of an individual teachers' preparation, delivery, etc., according to national

norms. The reports are eventually made available to the HEF in Richmond which painstakingly enters the data into spreadsheet databases for review and analysis. There is a time lag between the time the data are collected and processed in the HEF database. However, since the main value of the data for us in Virginia is to analyze trends over time, data processing delays are not critical. The reports provide a measure of program accountability.

An interesting feature of the audits is that the supervisor observes a teacher in class for an entire class period and makes objective and subjective observations about the teacher, his or her preparation, delivery, conformity with norms, adherence to syllabus, student participation, availability of text books, etc.

After the class the supervisor/auditor discusses the results of the audit with the teacher and both of them sign the report form. The supervisor also attempts to give positive feedback and mentoring advice to the teacher. The audit results are then discussed with the school principal who also signs off on the report.

Another important function of the audit is to inventory the entire school's enrollment by class and gender and note the educational qualification of the teacher at each grade level. This data is also provided to HEF and provides a more or less reliable view, over time, of the school's general enrollment.

The BDE also collects data about the students who take the exam for the CEP (*Certificat d'Etudes Primaires* or Primary School Diploma [grades 1 through 6]). In Haiti the CEP is an important educational indicator. Anyone who does not pass this exam is not allowed to go on to further schooling (e.g., middle school, high school or beyond). Statistics are not known but a sizeable percentage of Haitian students either do not pass the CEP or do not even take it because they have dropped out of school before grade 6.

Passing the CEP in Haiti is not easy. The test is objectively administered by the state using an exam that is strictly guarded and monitored. Students do not take the exam at the school where they studied but at another third party school overseen by teachers other than their own. The exam is a standard national written test over a two-day period. The BDE obtains aggregate data of the results of these tests which also serve as an indicator of school performance.

In recognition of the fear that these tests inspire in students with its accompanying performance anxiety, the BDE introduced pre-test exams similar to those made by the state. It administers these practice tests some weeks or months before the official exam. The HEF tracks aggregate test result data, including performance statistics of students who succeed or fail after retrying.

Teacher Training

The BDE is struggling to improve the quality of teaching in schools but has not yet been able to implement a truly effective program.

Many of the teachers in the 88 diocesan schools covered by the BDE do not have the level of training needed to do an adequate job. Before a person can be certified as a teaching professional in Haiti she or he needs to go beyond the CEP, successfully attend 3 years of "Normal" school and pass the CAP (*Certificat d'Aptitude Professionel* or teacher's certificate). It is quite common to find teachers in Haiti who have not obtained the CAP or even completed all three years of Normal school. Many schools even have some teachers who have not passed the CEP (although they may have attended primary school for 6 years). Some of the teachers in the schools we support do not have the "CAP" but have completed Normal school (sort of like going through law school but not passing the bar).

Another factor that probably affects the quality of teaching is the dissatisfaction of teachers with the small salaries they receive.

About two years ago, a decision was made to offer day-long teacher orientation and development via day-long seminars at Papaye. By all accounts, the seminar held in August this year before the start of the school year was well attended and worth the effort. However, the cost of the seminar (about \$2,700) is too high to offer more frequently than once a year.

In recognition of the formation deficiencies of many teachers, the BDE undertook a prototype project to provide remedial subject matter training of some teachers over a three year period. Teachers were sent to the Normal school in Papaye to improve their subject matter knowledge. Salary augmentations, at least for those who passed their subject matter tests, were offered as inducements. The program was not full time. It provided participants a total of seven weeks instruction per year

for three years, mostly on weekends and one full week in the summer. The mixed results achieved by this program led to a decision not to renew it upon its conclusion.

Program administrators believe that a key shortcoming of the remedial program was that the trainers were Normal school professors who are used to teaching a regular full time curriculum to train new teachers over a three year period. Unfortunately, the professors were not adequately prepared to provide partial, targeted, remedial subject matter training to people with special needs and limited time in class. Most trainees did receive some benefit from the training, but the improvements noted in their final exams were not high enough to merit continuing the program.

Education that promotes sustainable development

In many ways education in Haiti remains oriented towards a classical European model emphasizing general education that can potentially lead to college. However, increasingly, Haitians and others sensitive to development in the Third World seek to consider other critical factors. Despite the rapid growth of cities and their accompanying dysfunctions, Haiti is still a rural land. Despite the ecological disaster of deforestation and infrastructure abuse, Haiti remains a tropical country where people could still feed themselves if they were able to put in place the right kinds of sustainable practices—including an increased consciousness of the importance of safeguarding the environment and proper management of scarce resources (water retention, bio-intensive farming, etc.).

Conclusions

Participants discussed suggestions to improve the education reports already being produced as a prototype to encourage other twin sponsors to increase their contributions to the BDE. One concept involves commissioning targeted quarterly reports for a fee from the BDE that might provide some school assessment information not currently produced.

If such a prototype effort proves helpful, other sponsors may be encouraged to follow suit, increasing the income stream of the BDE budget.

Meeting participants also discussed the need for teacher training and the potential for practical education projects that emphasize bio-intensive farming and protection of the environment.

The next step will be to pursue further discussions with the Diocese of Richmond's partners in the Diocese of Hinche.

SAVE THE DATE!

Our annual HEF Benefit Dinner is scheduled for Friday evening, **February 19**, at the Salisbury Country Club, Midlothian, Va.

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 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@cccovva.org.

Checks are payable to *Commonwealth Catholic Charities*; please put "HEF" on the memo line of the check to insure that it gets to the right fund.

SHALOM/HAITIAN EDUCATION FUND CONTRIBUTORS

July 2009-June 2010

DIRECTOR LEVEL (\$5000 or more)

SUPERINTENDENT LEVEL (\$1500-\$4999)

PRINCIPAL LEVEL (\$1000-\$1499)

Paul & Kathleen Fuhs

Alfred & Kathleen Gross

MENTOR LEVEL (\$500-\$999)

John & Martha Beall

John Goodwin

Leadmind Pond Productions, Inc.

Stewart Reid

DONOR LEVEL (up to \$500)

Patricia Ann Allen

Don Ayers

Michael Bednar

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Frank & Carol Doyle

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Drs. Scott & Michelle Eichelberger

Rev. Mr. Thomas Elliott

Bob & Karin Ewan

Sally Foecking

Charles Geschickter

John & Elizabeth Goodwin

June Gray

Mary Jane Harty

Marion James

Eugene & Catherine McGahren

Adrian & Connie Macias

Valerie McAvoy

Rev. Msgr. Chester Michael

Richard Neves

Sylvia Notel

Marie Claudette Paul-Senat

Carmen & Carol Romeo

David Seckora

Stephen & Tracy Skrabal

Bill & Jannette Slowinski

Dorothy Summers

Moira Martha Tingle

I am enclosing a check for \$ _____ (payable to: Commonwealth Catholic Charities).

I would like to designate it for (please check one):

- Support for the Hince Office of Education
- Shalom [Endowment] Fund
- Greatest need
- Motorcycle fund

Name

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City

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