

IMMERSION RETREATS IN HAITI
Sponsored by the Diocese of Richmond
2008/2009

Each year, two immersion/retreat trips to Haiti are planned and designed to give the participants a firsthand experience of conditions in impoverished countries. Participants are introduced to the history, culture, economic, political and spiritual aspects of Haiti and are given an opportunity to begin to establish relationships with Haitian people. These experiences are called retreats because they are done in the context of prayer and reflection. Retreats are taken in Haiti because, as the economically poorest and most densely populated country in our hemisphere, it is the officially designated outreach area of the Diocese of Richmond. The trip will include meetings with people who live and work in Haiti and can share their knowledge and perspectives; visits to parishes and projects who are twinned with parishes in the Diocese of Richmond; and if available an overnight home stay with a Haitian family.

DATES: July 25 - Aug. 1, 2009

COST: \$1,400.00 (including all travel, food, and lodging, the pre-retreat orientation and the debriefing session). A \$100.00 refundable deposit must accompany the application (check made payable to the Diocese of Richmond); the balance must be paid one month prior to departure.

The airline tickets are non-refundable, so if the applicant cancels after the ticket is issued, the applicant will be responsible for the cost of the ticket.

REQUIREMENTS: Applicants must:

- 1) participate in the Orientation Retreat which is an overnight retreat at a retreat center and in the Debriefing Session. Orientation retreat dates will be announced.
- 2) hold a current U.S. passport.

APPLICATIONS: return with a \$100.00 deposit check
Patrice Schwermer
Office of Justice and Peace
7800 Carousel Lane
Richmond, VA 23294

**Applications and deposits must be received by:
June 1, 2009**

Applications must have one letter of recommendation (from a teacher, employer, priest, or other minister) sent directly to us endorsing your participating in this retreat.

For further information, call 804 - 622 - 5129. E-mail: pschwermer@richmonddiocese.org

OUTREACH RETREAT TO HAITI: FUNDRAISING IDEAS

- 1) Approach your home parish or campus ministry. Support may be available from a special fund for activities such as this. The parish may also be willing to consider sponsoring a fund-raiser for your trip. You may wish to appear before the parish council to speak about your retreat plans.
- 2) Consider organizing a fund-raiser of your own. Traditional activities such as bake sale, a car wash, etc., have been used. Also think about being more creative: a benefit basketball game, a Walk-a-thon, or any other event. Be careful to specify that funds raised will go to sponsor your trip specifically. You may wish to designate that any additional funds will go to the people of Haiti.
- 3) Think about sending out an appeal letter. One former participant sent a letter to relatives, friends, coworkers, etc., and raised substantially more than the cost of the trip, allowing for a large donation to the Haitian people. In the letter, discuss why you are going on the retreat, what you hope to learn, and what you would like to do with the experience. You may tell people you will keep a journal and share it or a written reflection with them upon your return. Or you may host a dinner upon return to share your experience with donors.
- 4) Throw yourself a birthday party. Ask for donations toward your trip in lieu of gifts.
- 5) Invite yourself to meet with local civic/community groups such as the Knights of Columbus, Jaycees, Kiwanis, Elks, etc. Many of these groups have money available to support projects such as this. Offer to speak at one of their meetings upon your return.
- 5) Be creative and come up with your own unique ideas!
- 6) Remember it is important to express your gratitude to any person or group who supports you. Upon your return, consider writing a letter summarizing and reflecting on your experiences and sending it to all who helped make your trip possible.

APPLICATION: HAITI IMMERSION RETREATS

Name: _____

Current address: _____

Telephone: (h) _____ (w) _____

E-Mail: _____ Fax: _____

Home address (if different from above): _____

Religious affiliation: _____ Sex: _____ Year of birth: _____

Occupation: _____ Year in school (if student) _____

Parish: _____

Are you active in any church group, social action group, or any other movement? _____

If so, what? _____

In case of emergency while you are in Haiti, whom should we contact?

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: (h) (____) _____ (w) (____) _____ Relationship: _____

Do you have any medical problems (e.g., diabetes, handicaps, obesity, heart ailments, allergies, etc.) which we should be alerted to? _____

If so, what? _____

Do you take Medication? _____ If so what? _____

Do you require a special diet? _____ If so, what kind? _____

Name and telephone number of your physician: _____

Retreat you are applying for (indicate dates of trip) _____

Are you able to participate in the required orientation session? _____ Debriefing session? _____

If you would prefer to travel from (and return to) an airport other than Richmond, indicate your preference: _____

On the reverse side, or a separate piece of paper, please write a couple of paragraphs expressing your reason for wanting to participate in this outreach-retreat experience, what you hope to gain from it, and any other comments you might want to make.