

February 2010

In light of the recent earthquake in Haiti, Dynetics employees Nicholas Price and Gabe Freiburger submit this request to the Dynetics Donations Committee. Both are members of the Holy Spirit Haiti Mission team and have made a combined total of four trips to Haiti over the past four years.

Introduction

The Holy Spirit Haiti Mission (HSHM) [501(c)(3) non-profit] is an ecumenical organization based in Huntsville that has been helping Haitian communities since 2003. In the process, HSHM has developed very strong relationships with several trustworthy and respected Haitian community leaders. This puts HSHM in a special position to offer earthquake relief funds directly to specific reconstruction projects with complete accountability.

Background

HSHM has supported the following projects in recent years:

- Installation of 10 water purification systems throughout Haiti
- Education of young children about hygiene and the benefits of clean drinking water
- Education of the orphans at “Maison Notre Dame de la Charite” orphanage
- Support for the Little Brothers of St. Therese school of roughly 300 students in Palmiste au Vin



Gabe Freiburger working on a tank for purified water (March 2008)



Nicholas Price with two orphan girls at Maison Notre Dame de la Charite (November 2007)

Haitian Community Leaders

Brother Olizard Pranius is a member of a religious order in Haiti known as the Petit Freres de St. Therese (Little Brothers of St. Therese (LBST)). LBST has been an essential part of the mission of HSHM as they are an integral part of the communities that we serve. Brother Olizard is currently the prior of the Palmiste au Vin (PAV) monastery near Leogane and founded the school that LBST operates there. He has proven on numerous occasions to be very wise and an incredibly adept leader and project manager.

Eliane St. Jacques manages the Maison Notre Dame de la Charite orphanage in Leogane, while working full-time as a nurse. The orphanage has 32 girls, ranging in age from 5 to 18. Her heart is as big as Haiti as she cares for these orphaned girls who would otherwise be living on the street.



*Petra Price, Brother Olizard, Nicholas Price
(November 2007)*



*Eliane with members of HSHM
(November 2007)*

Earthquake

The January 12th earthquake and subsequent aftershocks have directly affected the communities in which HSHM has worked over the past seven years. Fortunately, all of the Haitians that we know well, including all of the orphans, survived the events. Bob McCoy (HSHM team leader) spent the week of January 25 in Haiti assessing the damage, and Brother Olizard has been continuously sending updates to the HSHM team.

In the hardest hit areas, very few structures survived the earthquake. Those that are still standing are not safe to occupy. Most Haitians affected are now sleeping outdoors in makeshift tents. These will work fine for now as the weather is always warm in Haiti. However, the rainy season starts in April, and these crude tents will quickly become insufficient. In the PAV area served by HSHM, about 300 families are now without adequate shelter. There has been some good news: the village marketplaces are operating, and all of HSHM's water purification systems either survived or can be salvaged.

Reconstruction Plan

The primary goal of the HSHM reconstruction plan is to provide shelter for those in the PAV area community displaced by the quake. While most existing structures in Haiti were built with concrete (due to availability), it has been observed that the wooden structures withstood the earthquake better than the concrete ones. In addition, one has a greater chance of survival in a wooden structure if it falls than a concrete one. Finally, a wooden structure can be built in a very short time by just a few people. For these reasons, HSHM aims to build 300 wooden homes for families within a 10-mile radius of PAV based off the design of this home:



This is a simple 2-room plywood structure measuring 12 feet by 24 feet. This home survived not only the earthquake, but also the four hurricanes of 2008. Each home is estimated to cost \$2300. The construction of 300 of these homes will cost an estimated \$690,000.

Other goals are to build 10 wooden classrooms for the school (estimated \$40,000) and dwellings for the orphans at Maison Notre Dame de la Charite (estimated \$25,000). Supplies will be purchased in-country (which will help the Haitian economy), and all labor will be provided by the Haitian community. Brother Olizard and other members of the LBST will manage the construction, and the project will be overseen by the HSHM.

Bottom Line

A donation of \$2300 is requested to cover the cost of a single wooden dwelling. This will provide shelter for one family impacted by the earthquake. There are many great organizations doing important work in Haiti, but this is a unique giving opportunity for the following reasons:

- This is a specific project to help a very specific community.
- There is no overhead – all funds go directly to the project.
- There is full accountability.
- As homes are built, pictures of the homes and families will be taken and sent back to the sponsors.

Please help HSHM reach its goal of providing safe, long-term housing for the people of Palmiste au Vin.