

December 2008

## *Merry Christmas and Seasons Greetings!*

*I can't believe it's already nearing Christmas again and I seriously don't know where the time has gone!*

It's been such an extremely busy year for me and at times it's been hard to keep up the pace but God has really helped to give me strength through it all. My greatest challenge I think has been trying to keep up with sending information to supporters and knowing what to write because so much happens on a daily basis in Haiti, that I just can't keep up with all the stories and details of trying to give the whole picture. I always feel I want every supporter to know everything that's taking place in Haiti through our ministries and programs and in the lives of the individuals there, but with everything we're doing in the different villages, it's next to an impossible task.

I have just returned from Haiti again and before I left we had bought a small townhouse (because 2 of our children are married so we are downsizing to something much smaller) and our moving date was supposed to be December 1<sup>st</sup> but as soon as I landed in Toronto, Byron told me that we were moving right away as our closing date had been moved up. So, needless to say, I was not at all prepared and nothing was packed. Fortunately though, we were just moving down the road so it has gone well but I was pretty tired following a busy trip to Haiti and now I am trying to catch up in the office here.

The trip was wonderful again in so many ways and so much was accomplished but as always, I come home very emotional because of the overwhelming needs I see in Haiti that seem endless.

It's very important for me to look at all the accomplishments daily and not at the desperate need I see in front of me.....in Haiti, that's the only way to stay encouraged. In your heart you just want to help everyone but on an island with over 8 million people, you just can't, so you help all you can and focus on doing your very best and leave the rest with God!!

Once again I want to say, I appreciate ALL you have done to help this year!! As ALWAYS, you have been a tremendous encouragement and blessing to us and all of the programs we are doing in Haiti. Every time you send a donation, when I am writing a thank-you, I always feel I just don't have the right words to express my heart and so again.....please just know that we

are SO grateful to you for all you've done.....there is no way on earth to repay you with the thanks we feel!! You have helped us change so many lives that again.....its an almost impossible task to even give you all the details! So, I hope the examples I share with you at least give you a small idea of where your help goes!!

This year, God has again helped us accomplish so much in Haiti. The new orphanage building is completed for the children and this is now their "permanent home!" They will never be kicked out at a certain age or asked to leave. They are there until a day comes when we've helped them to become self-supportive and live on their own, but until that day arrives, this is their home!!

This week we are drilling a new well there because the water source we had was government water and following the hurricanes it was all contaminated and they turned the water off so we are drilling our own well which will be far better for the children. Last week we also purchased a new generator so they could have power when the electricity is not on.



Some of the children with the new generator



New dining room and kitchen at orphanage



Boys dorm at new orphanage



Girls dorm at new orphanage

This year we also opened 2 new churches and made them out of woven coconut leaves. One of the roofs was torn off during the hurricanes and when it rains in Haiti, the mud floors are a mess. We did repairs and we have cemented both floors so now the people can walk on the floors much better and the little wooden benches are steadier too. Our churches always start

with a temporary coconut structure as a test to see how the church will do before we build permanent churches in our villages.



New Coconut Church in Ti-Brache



New Coconut Church in Marianni

In all of our churches, we provide a snack each Sunday morning to everyone who comes so that they do not have to try to worship God with empty stomachs. It's not a big snack but it is something and, for everyone it makes Sunday an even more special day to look forward to. All 5 of our churches are filled to capacity and we have tried everything to fit the people. We tried running 2 morning services but everyone still wanted to come to both services so that didn't work. We have tried to run extra children's programs but they keep filling up. In the Neply church for example, we built another addition just to use as a children's church. It holds 100 children but now we've outgrown that again.



Childrens church addition we built



We have already outgrown the addition

Our Pastors in Haiti are doing a terrific job and each week we have reports of more people accepting Christ. So, even though we don't want to, we are having to turn people away and send them to other churches but periodically we run outdoor services and conferences to include more people that would like to attend our churches and be part of our programs also. As I mentioned in a recent letter, we built a Homeless Shelter this year as well and that has helped us reach out to many people in the Neply area. The clinic has also expanded its programs and we now have 200 children on the vaccination programs monthly. Our post-natal moms love bringing their new infants to the clinic because as much as we can we bless them with new clothing and layettes for their tiny babies.



Babies on our post-natal program



Waiting to be vaccinated

We have many programs through our clinic and one is our seniors program where the elderly receive monthly medical check-ups and food supplies. In Haiti, there are many organizations that reach out to children, but very few who care for the elderly. Many elderly people are cared for by their grown children, however there are others who have no one and we find them sleeping on dirt floors, suffering from pain, hungry and weak and they have no water to drink or bathe themselves. Our clinic does help many but there is a need for more care so we have had a vision to build a nursing home.

The vision is to have this nursing home a place where people who have suffered all their life can come and be cared for by our nurses. We want them to have a nice place to sleep, security of knowing they have food and water, be bathed and have their last days in life be their "best days! We want to call the nursing home....."The House of Joy!" This project is very costly and it's actually a little scary and I was afraid to even think it could be possible. But a man came and challenged my Faith and he said....."why are you waiting to start this project?" He said, "If I give you a small donation can you at least start or do you need all the money up front?" I thought about it and said....."Well, I guess we could at least start because that's how every project we've done in the past 13 years has been done." We start with tiny little steps by Faith and eventually God helps us get it finished. So, this man gave a donation and we have started building the security wall which will enclose the property. The way we have the building project planned out, we have organized work teams. Our goal is to give 1000 Haitian people from our villages at least some type of employment from this project plus when they are scheduled to work they will receive a nutritious meal each day as well. This project is being talked about by so many Haitian people and they are more excited about it than any other project we've done because we plan to provide so many jobs. I ask you to pray that God will bless this vision which will help a lot of Haitian people if we can find a way to do it! Our short term mission teams don't ever do the work. The teams that come to Haiti are there to gain awareness of what we do, so they can return to Canada and be a voice to find help to enable the people of Haiti to reach their own people. So, when we do building projects in Haiti, we are not just putting up a building, but we are giving the Haiti people employment which changes their lives and future.



Workers are making blocks by hand to start building the security wall

This year we were able to distribute a lot of dry food staples to people through our church programs, schools, clinic and during village ministry. Following the 3 hurricanes that hit Haiti, we not only helped our own villages but we reached out to people as far away as Cabaret giving them food and clothing. In the month of October alone we distributed a total of 19,500 lbs of dry rice. With Haiti being so poor, food is their primary need but even though we distribute food, we never create a welfare system or have the people learn to depend on us completely. We always want to help and encourage them to find ways to be self-supportive. This takes time and our goat projects are one way of helping them to do so. In February, I have 2 veterinarians going to Haiti with me to vaccinate and deworm all of our goats. The vets will also be teaching our villages "goat husbandry!"



Pastor Jean Marie and Pastor Max bagging rice



Family receiving a goat

I wish I could keep you up-dated on everyone we are helping but because that's next to impossible, I try to give people examples of some that I have talked about in the past. In November 2006 I had come home from a trip and wrote a story about an elderly lady named Madame Bolo. We found her living alone in a stick shack, she was completely blind, slept on a mud floor, was hungry and in pain, weak and tired and needed help. Since that time we have been trying to change her life. We were able to locate her one and only daughter who was also living away in total poverty and trying to survive. The two of them now live together in a new 2 room cement home and we have helped them through our food program, they have nice new beds, and we are helping with goats. They are doing so well now and Madame Bolo is bathed and looked after each day by her daughter.



Madame Bolo November 2006



Madame Bolo November 2008

We are continuing to help people with shelter when we can. When we can't build a home, for many we rent them a place which for them is impossible but for us is very affordable. We can rent someone one or two rooms for anywhere from \$150.00 to \$600.00 US for the year. The most recent home we built was for a family who came from a very poor area of the mountains. They had no place to live and they had accepted Christ in our Ti-Brache church during a special service. We needed someone to be the security guard for the church so we built the family a house on the church property and the father is our guard and caretaker for the church. So, now they have a house and earn a small income plus they are part of the food programs and goat projects until they can become more self-supportive.



Children from Mountain Family



Home we built for family who came from the mountains

This year we have done more work to the Trade School. This project is being worked on as we have funds with hopes to complete it and open it in September 2010. The Project will teach and train 1000 students each year. In Haiti there is a great number of unskilled labourers but a shortage of those with skills.



Front of Trade School



Side View of Trade School

We have also done more work to the Place L'or School this year. We finally have the right director for this school and we have been able to pay our teachers the proper wage for Haiti. This school has improved so much that now the parents are saying you will never find a school as nice as this one in the Leogane area and they are very pleased with all the changes we've made to the school.



Cement work being done to yard



Classroom walls are floated and painted



Bags of dry rice for children to carry home



Pastor Jean Marie in Front of school security wall

There is so much more I could write about as well, from emergency surgeries to hiring families to care for orphans who we can't bring to our own orphanage. For example, baby Johnny Boy needed special one on one care so we felt he was better off with a family than in the orphanage and there are several other children too that we have placed with families. This not only helps the

child but it blesses the family -so we are always trying to accomplish more than one thing in all we do in Haiti. All of the food (dry rice and other staples) is purchased in Haiti which blesses the vendor who is trying to make a small business and it also blesses the people who we distribute the food to as well.

The needs as I said are absolutely "endless" when working in a country as poor as Haiti. But with Gods help and people like you, its also very exciting to see the changes that happen before our eyes. The changes happen because of prayer, people like you who make huge sacrifices and lots of hard work and the end results when you see people go from "hopeless" to finding "hope" makes it all worthwhile!!

We can't thank-you enough and we sincerely love and appreciate you and your family!!

We pray you have a blessed Christmas and that 2009 is a wonderful year for you!!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!!

Love and prayers,

Joy Jones (Madame Jwa)

Executive Program Coordinator

905-984-4230