



HAITI TWINNING MINISTRY (HTM) NEWSLETTER
 16TH YEAR IN TWINNING WITH SAINT GABRIEL PARISH
 MARCH 2024 Edition 61- 5th year!



Vision: We, the parishioners of the Sacred Heart have been called to enter in a twinning relationship with our brothers and sisters at Saint Gabriel, Haiti. Together, we follow the principles of Catholic Social Teaching to foster faith-filled relationships, self-sustainability, and an end to dependency. **Mission:** End dependency while following the principles of Catholic Social Teaching.



Learning Haitian Creole, 1 Sentence at a Time.
 Mwen swete ou ak fanmi ou yon bòn Pak. | I wish you and your family a Happy Easter.



GREETINGS FROM FR. FITHO | *Dear Fr. Paul, Sacred Heart parishioners, and community friends,*

I join my parishioners in wishing you a blessed and happy Easter. This month has been a busy one for both the school and the church. On March 1st, we celebrated the 11th year of the inauguration of the school with Mass attended by all students and teachers. We are glad you joined us for a Novena in preparation of Saint Gabriel Feast Day, March 23rd this year. Parishioners filled the church at each Mass. We agreed to keep all festivities within the church compound and not have activities in the town to keep everyone safe. We also thank you for having done a Stations of the Cross in solidarity with Haiti. The students took their 3rd quarter exams before their Easter break. Please continue praying for our safety. Father Fitho, Pastor at Saint Gabriel, Lascahobas, Haiti



GREETINGS FROM MR. FRITZ ANDRE | We are always happy with your prayers. It is an indescribable joy for us to share our joys and our worries with you. Despite our uncertainties, our faith is firm in the Lord, and we are sure of a better tomorrow for Haiti. The struggles will turn into fights for a renovated and peaceful Haiti; where exchanges of fire will turn into smiles of friendship and stray bullets into handshakes. We believe it, in the name of Jesus. The patron saint of Saint Gabriel Lascahobas was simple this year, but of extraordinary natural beauty. The clergy and parishioners are delighted. We are very tired, but we can celebrate Palm Sunday tomorrow to enter Holy Week and achieve a wonderful Easter Sunday. We finished the exams for the third test on Wednesday 20 and the reopening is set for Tuesday, April 2 following Easter. We love you very much. Union of prayer! Mr. Fritz André, Saint Gabriel Middle, and Highschool Principle

HAITI HOUR PRAYER | A LETTER TO A GANG MEMBER: SON



WHY? In this time of despair for our family in Haiti, let us enter in prayer *with them*, together in the unity of the Holy Spirit. Joined as a community of faith, we take on their struggles and concerns as they have taught us how. To get on our knees and thank the Lord for all His creations in good and bad times. Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82495779709>

Luke 15:1-7 The Parable of the Lost Sheep |**15** Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. ² But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

³ Then Jesus told them this parable: ⁴ “Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn’t he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? ⁵ And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders ⁶ and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.’ ⁷ I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.



This parable reminds us of the young people in Port-au-Prince who have been recruited into the gangs and fallen under their influence. We must realize that for their families and friends they are the lost sheep that Jesus seeks to save. As one in unity with those parents, siblings and friends who want so badly for their loved one to be rescued from the clutches of evil and returned to their loving community, we pray as we would for our own child.

We also see in the scripture that Jesus doesn’t simply extricate the lost one from the evil forces, but he RETURNS THE LOST SHEEP TO THE FOLD—calling the community to embrace him/her with acceptance, love, support, and protection when he is safely home again. So, we pray, too, for the families and faith community in that way.

It seems that an effective prayer can be in the form of a letter to such a child. I offer my version below as an example.

Son, It has been 14 years since the earthquake destroyed our home and neighborhood in Port-au-Prince. That day, your brothers and sisters lost all that was familiar and dear to them, including our church and your school. As if that was not enough, we also lost you Jean- Sébastian. For weeks we looked for you under the rubble. First, in the neighborhood, then all over Port-au-Prince. The weeks became months and then a year. At that point, we thought you had died. That day was one of the saddest days in my life.

Last year, a neighbor told us he had seen you in some clips on the Internet. You were holding a gun in one hand and a homemade bomb in the other. I was shocked to picture you this way.

When you graduated from the 8th grade, the year before the earthquake, the whole family rejoiced, and prayed for you as you prepared to go to high school. Your dad would have been equally proud if he had not died of a bad case of diabetes. You were our first child to graduate. I have so many good memories of you from the day you were born to the very day I lost you, Tuesday, January 12th, 2010.

Please know that your siblings, aunts, uncles, and cousins survived the earthquake and we all have started a new life in Mirebalais. We hear news of gang members roaming through the streets day and night creating much havoc in the capital. Thinking about you among them prevents me from sleeping at night.

I beg you to remember that your family loves you and is waiting for you to come back to us. We are praying each day for your safe return. God is a merciful God. He loves each of us as His children. He loves you Jean- Sébastian. He wishes you well. May He protect you as you turn your back from distraction and face the light of your freedom. You are in our prayers always. We are glad you are alive. Keep safe and come home.

SAVE THE DATE INDOOR SALES | FEED 1 CHILD, 1 SALE AT A TIME



Our next outdoor sales will be **Sat., May 4th, 2024** | 10:00 am-3:00 pm. Fred Huette Center, 1000 Botetourt Gardens, Norfolk, VA 23507. Also, **Sat. May 11th, 2024** | 10:00 am-2:00 pm. Ghent Antiques, 1414 Colley Ave. Norfolk, VA 23517. **Needed:** volunteers to help pack items at the end of the sales.

Monthly Meetings—We share a light meal at 6:00 pm in the Commons, followed by a meeting. All are welcome to hear stories of close relationships, and faith in action to a better life. -April 16, 6:30 - 7:30 pm.



TEACHER ENDOWMENT FUND FOR ST. GABRIEL SCHOOL | The Haiti Ministry continues its 5-year plan to help St. Gabriel School to become increasingly self-sustaining despite challenging times. We are getting to the end of the 3rd year. This is done by funding some of the operation costs: lunch, teachers' salaries, medical needs, scholarships, some self-sustaining projects such as a stationery shop; and making the school appeal to paying parents. We are also planning for the long-term financial support of the school. Two endowments have been started by two generous families, **the Scholarship Fund, and the Teacher Fund**. The goal is to be able to send our twin parish 20 scholarships annually (\$275 each), and at least one full teacher salary for the year (\$1,300).



TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ST GABRIEL TEACHER ENDOWMENT #174 (Please print this section and keep for reference when you wish to make a donation, in honor of, in memory of etc)

MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO:

CATHOLIC COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF THE RICHMOND DIOCESE

WRITE ON THE MEMO LINE:

TEACHERS' SALARIES ST. GABRIEL, LASCAHOBAS, HAITI #174

SEND TO:

MS. MAGGIE KEENAN | CATHOLIC COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
7800 CAROUSEL LN. | RICHMOND, VA 23294

FOR ADDITIONAL INFO. CALL MAGGIE KEENAN, DIRECTOR OF PLANNED GIVING (804) 359-5661



Thanks for your continued prayers for Haiti and for your support of the students. While their challenges are numerous, the school community is making progress.

WE REMEMBER OUR FRIENDS IN THE HAITI MINISTRY





Ellen Renn, Feb. 16, 62-Sept. 10, 2017
Neil Walsh, Aug. 25, 1946-Mar.10, 2020
Nicolas Valcour, Sept. 9, 1960-Feb. 20, 2022
Dr. P. Farmer, Oct. 26, 1959-Feb. 21, 2022

Memorial donations can be made to the Teacher Edowment Fund here above.

Patricia Britz, Chair patprovence1@yahoo.com Cell: (757) 621-1860
Brendan Pigott, Assistant Chair <http://www.sacredheartnorfolk.org/ministries/justice-and-peace/haiti-ministry/>


Pictures taken by Fr. Adelin Joseph | 11th Anniversary Innoguration of St. Gabriel School Pre-K-13th Grade



 You're invited 

17TH ANNIVERSARY IN TWINNING ST. GABRIEL PARISH, HAITI!
PRESENTATION ON EDUCATION, FELLOWSHIP, MUSIC, SIMPLE DINNER, RAFFLE

Sunday, May 5th, 2024 | 4:00 pm-5:30 pm
Hosted by Haiti Twinning Ministry



Sacred Heart Church | 520 Graydon Ave. Norfolk, VA 23507
RSVP: by May 1st to Patricia patprovence1@yahoo.com (757)621-1860

<http://www.sacredheartnorfolk.org/ministries/justice-and-peace/haiti-ministry/> 