

EVANGELIZATION REPORT HAITI

May 1 to May 10, 2017

Team members:

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Overview: Disasters seem to bring out the best and worst in people. It is our heartbreak that Haiti seems to be the poster child for the worst. Once again as we flew into this disaster struck country we still see the blue tarps, no power, no sewers, and twisted roads filled with potholes. It would seem that after the millions of dollars poured into Haiti that the poor people would see a better quality of life. Unfortunately many NGOs and government agencies seem to only use disasters to snap photos of crying children with flies on their face and destroyed buildings to promote their own agendas.

We do not mean that there are not other people helping. On every trip we see groups of loving, caring individuals with their bright T-shirts identifying their church group making their way to help the poor in many ways. The week before Matthew hit HMI had wired Fr. Jomanas \$18,000 to build 2 new houses and to buy food for the school children and provide wages to the teachers. Immediately after the hurricane HMI began to provide food and shelter for the people and when the road between Port-Au-Prince and Jeremie was cleared HMI quickly converted these funds to disaster relief as trucks of food and supplies quickly found their way to the homeless and hungry.

The eye of Hurricane passed over Jeremie with winds of 140 mph. The devastation was horrible. Over 1000 people were killed and bodies were quickly thrown into mass graves as they started to decompose and Cholera began to break out. In the community of Numero Deux, about 20 minutes from Jeremie, where we stay and work those same winds killed almost all the domestic animals that had no shelter. The winds destroyed most homes and yet of the 84 homes HMI had built up to that time only 3 were hurt beyond repair, although most lost roofs and their supporting beams. **In this community not one person died!** Due to the 53 wells of clean water drilled by HMI there was no Cholera!

The people ran to the nearest sturdy cement houses built by HMI and to the school and bakery HMI had constructed and stood together tightly packed as their world was destroyed outside of the safety of the buildings, but they lived even though they were soaking wet. In trying to understand why nobody died I look at the fact that every house had a solemn ceremony consecrating them to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary by either



Deacon Lloyd or Fr. Jomanas and pictures of the Sacred Heart and Immaculate Heart were hung on the walls inside along with the formal prayer of consecration. I personally think the Queen sent angels to protect them!

The poultry farm HMI had sponsored had all the buildings destroyed. They had just received 500 baby chicks and had 500 adult chickens as well. All 1000 chickens were either killed or the few survivors were given away afterward so the people could have fresh meat. The quaint little church where we had held many evangelization programs, Our Lady of Assumption, was totally destroyed except for the statue of Our Lady situated to the side and above the altar. Another miracle of Momma Maria like others we have seen in Samoa and PNG after hurricanes. Palm trees were blown over and strewn across roads and on to homes and the roads were washed out by torrential rains that accompanied Matthew. Even after several months the destruction is still very evident.

After Matthew passed HMI immediately sent out urgent appeals to their donors and raised over \$90,000 which was sent to purchase food and shelter for the now homeless as well as chain saws to clear roads and property. Orders were placed for roofing materials, but orders were slow being filled because of the great demand. Fortunately all the 84 HMI houses had been totally repaired by the time we arrived and new ones were built. HMI heard the situation at the prison in Jeremie where we minister each year was bad as they had been hard hit.

The roof of the prison was gone. We heard that 30 prisoners died but Fr. Jomanas said that he could not verify the report of deaths in the Jeremie prison. The conditions had become particularly desperate after the hurricane which damaged the living quarters of the guards as well as some of the prison. HMI raised \$10K to repair the prison and install a security barrier that allowed the prisoners to be able to be released from their overcrowded cells more often during the day. Each rather small cell had 30-36 prisoners in each one. They had to sleep in shifts. Now they can at least be let out to stretch and exercise from time to time!

As we went to the restored houses with Deacon Lloyd, Faie, and the team we watched as the people ran to the Deacon, thanking him and crying for joy. They know they are probably alive because of him and the generosity of the donors of HMI. Deacon Lloyd thanked me several times for the humanitarian aid RM had sent and it was a blessing for us to see what God can do with people who trust Him and dare to hope for more. This trip was a real faith builder.

Report: None of us had been to Haiti since hurricane Matthew in early October except for Brian



AFTER HURRICANE MATTHEW

Schmidt, one of the team members. Deacon Lloyd and Faie Duplantis are able to come to Haiti only once a year personally, although they now have several teams that come independently representing HMI. All of these teams have highly skilled and highly organized people to take care of the team and the many various problems that arise. That's the one thing you can count on in Haiti is that there's nothing you can count on. Things are always in flux.

Father Jomanas had been in constant contact before the hurricane and Deacon Duplantis had just sent him \$18,000 to build more houses. So they took that cash and bought necessary supplies to be able to live until they could get food and supplies again from Port-au-Prince. The primary center for the HMI mission is Jeremie Haiti. We fly to Port-au-Prince and then fly right out of that city to Jeremie, landing on a small gravel runway with cows and people on the side. This year the flights were smooth and once again the water we flew over was gorgeous!

Another large team of 14 people led by Dr. David and Laura Fakier were waiting on us and met us at the airport. HMI purposely overlapped our trips by one day so that we can all come together and celebrate the 100th house that was built by HMI and the birthday of Rebecca Claire Fakier, who they call the Patron Saint of HMI. Bec is the daughter of David and Laura and went home to heaven in 2003. Her story can be read at <http://www.haitimissioninc.com/REBECCA-CLAIRE>. We went to the wonderful compound Fr. Jomanas has built over the years and after putting our bags in our rooms we had a lovely lunch. As usual the food throughout the trip was wonderful and it is a blessing to have AC from 8pm to 6am each night!

We all rested for a couple of hours and then started the evening with a Mass celebrated by Bishop Alix Verrier, Bishop Emeritus of the Diocese of Cayes Haiti and 3 other priests. It was outdoors as the church had been destroyed by Matthew and the sunset over the ocean was



gorgeous. After Mass Father Jomanas was given a beautiful Icon of Jesus and Mary, hand-painted by one of the team members, a professional artist. All the Haitian workers of Haiti Missions were brought up after Mass to be recognized and thanked for their heroic work after Matthew and reaching the milestone of 100 houses. Afterwards a meal and a soft drink were handed out to all the Haitians in Styrofoam plastic containers which they took home and shared with their families. They were thrilled. We got to have a meal with the Bishop later.

We met this wonderful team in Miami and we all hit it off right away. We all had to overnight in Miami in order to catch the early morning flight to PAP the next day. It's always great to see Haiti through the eyes of the young who are seeing it for the first time. The two young adults for this trip were Jeremy Brunet who has just been accepted into medical school, and Madison who

works with her father Brian in his winery in Canada. They are 24 and 19. They loved it. Bethel [Barrilleaux](#) was a real treat, a true Louisiana woman. After every hurricane or big storm in South Louisiana she gets in her pirogue and paddles down the bayou to go check on her “mama”. Kristen Wheeler is a professional photographer and artist and we had a blast taking thousands of photos and painting and drawing in our downtime.

Almost every house that was constructed by HMI survived the storm and protected the people from the 140 mile per hour flying debris. Yes the tin roof and timbers were torn off most, but everyone who was in these hurricane resistant houses survived. Other areas were not so fortunate. We read on the internet that the number was over 1000 people who died in Matthew’s wake. Deacon Lloyd and Faie had every house consecrated, along with the people to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Father Jomanas said with great exasperation in his voice, “Hurricane Matthew changed everything and with another deep sigh, “Everything.”

The next morning we went to Numero Deux to be with the school kids being fed and helped feed them spaghetti and sauce. I was fascinating to see that none began eating until all were served. They can teach us manners! The roof was gone from one classroom and the steel girders were twisted like pretzels and blue tarps covered many of the kids, but school went on. We stopped at one house and the woman Bibiane Felissaint came out so excited and happy to see all of us. She had been going to a Seventh-day Adventist church and she said nobody there cared how she was living or where she was living and now she is overjoyed and just amazed at God’s providence. She became Catholic on her own. She was not asked. Father said he never asked her to change, but he knew of the terrible conditions she was living in. He said don’t come to our church because of the house. We will give you the house at an appropriate time. Father would give her vegetables when they had extra. And she would eat some and then go and sell some to be able to give food for her children. Real Christianity draws people to Him!



We got into our four-wheel drive vehicles and traveled to the other side of the mountain to look at a water catchment and on the way back we stopped on the side of the road to give out some treats like peanuts and Slim Jims, and a man was standing with a baby about three months old. The deacon greets them in Creole after rolling down the open window and then he asks “can I hold the baby”? The man readily agrees and hands the baby to the deacon inside the car. I happened

to be sitting at a corner of the back seat and the deacon hands me this precious baby and of course all of the women wanted to hold the beautiful child so then I got out and handed him to the young people that were riding in the four-wheeler behind us. We all just loved on the child. It was so much fun. The father was obviously pleased. So the deacon gave them some money and he was even more pleased.

The Deacon and Faie Duplantis had a vinyl poster made about 3' x 4'. And they took it to every house that they could get to, and had the owners of these new houses sign. It will be taken back to America and used in fundraising at the annual golf tournament. There is a blind boy named Jonas that is very special to Deacon Lloyd and Faie. They have been coming here for about 17 years and so they have known this young man most of his life. The story goes like this even though it has never actually been verified, but when Jonas was just a child he fell off of the porch and a stick was embedded in his eye. Someone took it out and they wanted to clean it so they put bleach in both of his eyes which resulted in total blindness.

The deacon has flown Jonas to America, but the doctor said there is no chance of him ever seeing again. Jonas has a gift of singing worship music. So he always sings to the deacon and to whatever group is with him. So the deacon wanted Jonas to sign this poster. As they were sitting on a stone bench the deacon hands Jonas the sharpie, but Jonas has never used any writing instrument. He had no idea how to hold it. And of course he had no idea what his signature was. So the deacon held his hand to sign the name of Jonas.

Some of our members began to cry realizing that he has no access to any written or audio materials, but was happy and joyful and so blessed that the deacon had come. On the way back we stopped at a couple more of the houses and got signatures. Then we stopped at Mr. Mathurin's house. He is a blind man who was living in a cardboard and rusty tin shack when Deacon Lloyd found him and now is living in a HMI house. He now has a family that takes care of him because the house shelters all of them and his future is in a good situation.

Each year the Deacon and Faie bring large green duffel bags filled with playing cards, clothing, shoes, and tons of other supplies like peanuts and Slim Jims. On a couple of days we spent most of the time sorting through these bags and getting ready for a large food distribution. Each day we got all of the supplies out of the green duffel bags that were brought from Louisiana, and sorted and separated them and put them in logical areas; one for shoes, toys, soccer balls, toiletries, hats, and of course we also had our groceries and money.

Another day we drove thru Jeremy up into the mountains for about 2 1/2 hours to inspect a well that is being drilled by HMI at a place called Fond Rouge. We were totally amazed that a huge drilling rig was able to drive on this one car road, which was four-wheel-drive accessibility in most places. So as the water well was being drilled the deacon was informed by some of his teams how hard it was to get this drilling rig up the mountain. He made the decision that they should drill at least another well while they had the equipment up there.

One of the places where they drilled was a sort of meeting place for some of the people because there are no real towns. It was at a crossroads and these people are so thrilled with this water well. It is hard for our western minds to imagine they have to walk for two and a half hours or more to get water for drinking cooking and cleaning. The next well they are going to drill is down the road a ways and drilling will begin next week by a church called our Lady of Mount Carmel.



BAKING BREAD FOR THE SCHOOL

the flying debris even though the roofs of some of them came off. After the hurricane Haitians realized that all of their animals had been killed, all the pigs and chickens and goats. So they had to quickly cook all of the dead animals and eat them.

One of the days we went to the prison. The prison was thrilled that we were there because after the hurricane the damage was so bad and Haiti Missions was the only group that gave them any funds to rebuild and restore the prison. The roof was taken off which meant that in the cells where 36 men are kept they were drenched with rain and covered by debris. I have never actually walked in one, but I have heard that there is not room to lay down for everyone. The morale was getting terrible with the prisoners blaming the prison guards, the prison guards blaming the government and nobody was doing anything.

So with money donated by some generous donors in Louisiana they were able to restore the roof of the prison and the guards' quarters. One of the things that were built is a yard within the compound so that these men will not be locked up 24/7. It's unconscionable. Several years ago we were with Deacon Lloyd to minister to the prisoners and he saw the desperate need of a well. He is a man of action and one was drilled right outside the prison walls to provide water for these prisoners who only had water to bathe once a week.

Lloyd then had the privilege of sharing the Word with the prisoners. Once again our translator Monday was at his side. Monday shared with us later that he had built a large house a couple of years ago and everyone ridiculed him for having a 5 bedroom house. During the hurricane 400 people crowded into his home and all survived the hurricane. He then fed them with his savings for 22 days until most could return home or to what was left of it. Lloyd then gave his personal testimony to the man behind the bars. He shared that prison can be a blessing because it gives a person the time to think and decide if the life they had been living was really freedom or a deep slavery to drugs, alcohol, and violence.

He said that God did not send them there to punish them. He loves them and wants eternal life for them, but they had to choose. Suddenly the noise had stopped and every bar covered window and door were crowded by men who knew they had made mistakes and now wanted a better life. Lloyd shared how Jesus had done a miracle for him and if they wanted a miracle for themselves they needed to put their lives in the hands of Jesus. Lloyd then led them in a prayer of accepting

Jesus. Monday translated and it seemed everyone in every cell repeated it. There was hope and peace and quite a few tears in the eyes I looked into afterwards.

This year for the first time, and I think it was because HMI were the ones that brought all the money to this prison, we asked if we could lay hands on the prisoners and pray for them after they were allowed to come out in single file to get a Styrofoam box of chicken and rice and a snack and a soda. So Lloyd and I and Deacon Lloyd got to pray a quick prayer for each one. You could see on the faces which ones loved it and which ones endured it. Only one asked for us not to pray for him. So we did not.

Rather than go to individual parishes as we normally do Lloyd and I were invited to speak at the 25th annual Catholic Charismatic Renewal Conference of Jeremie, Haiti. The conference was held on the grounds of Our Lady of Lourdes and a large stage raised about 10 feet above the crowd was constructed.



Our excellent interpreter Monday was once again at our side. We were asked to speak at sessions on all three days of the conference. The first night we got to speak after the opening Mass with Bishop Romulus. There was a conflict of scheduling so the team was not with us the first night.

Lloyd spoke on the

THE DEACON WITH JONAH

significance of the 50 years of the Charismatic

Renewal coinciding with the 100th Anniversary of Our Lady's appearance at Fatima. He talked about the great power available to those who chose to work with the Lord to make disciples and talked on the many new gifts the Holy Spirit wanted to pour on the Church in Jeremie. He especially stressed holiness. He then invited the large crowd to the front of our stage. Many hundreds came forward in great expectation. He led them in a prayer of commitment to Jesus and then led them in prayer asking for a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit. After this I led them in asking the Lord for the gift of tongues and Lloyd followed up with prayer asking for gifts of healing, faith, prosperity, prophesy, preaching and teaching, and many others. As we asked for each gift Lloyd had the people ask for the gift in tongues. It was a blessed and lively night! Afterwards it seemed like nobody wanted to leave.

The next night the whole team was with us at the Mass and we had the pleasure of speaking with the reigning Bishop of Jeremie, Bishop Joseph Gontran Decoste. I spoke on the 5 Keys to Freedom, especially what I call the Master Key, which is forgiveness. We did the skit where I carry Lloyd on my back and the people loved it! I led the people in a prayer of forgiveness and

then Lloyd did a time of renunciation. We renounced satan, sickness, the spirit of disaster, and many others. The people really entered in. After our talk Deacon Lloyd and Fr. Jomanas were invited to walk through the crowd with Holy Water and bless all the people. Boy was that powerful. The noises coming from the crowd as people were showered with Holy Water and were released from all types of problems was somewhat chilling. Father and the Deacon each had 5 gallon buckets full of water, one carried by Jeremy and the other by a couple of strong young seminarians. The crowd was so huge that they ran out of water before they ran out of people, but the people that didn't get the Blessed water were still so excited and blessed.

The next day was Sunday and we were invited to speak before Mass. Lloyd talked about the purpose of the Renewal and the importance of both proclamation and demonstration. He told them the kingdom of God does not consist of words but of power. He talked about the endorsement of all the recent popes for the Renewal and the recent document from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and that we now had our marching orders. He then led them in a healing service. He told them to place their own hands where they wanted God to heal and that they had the power to be healed by virtue of their Baptism and he told them that the service would be complete when they received our Eucharist Lord in faith at Communion. He then had them repeat a litany of prayers asking for healing of hearts, eyes, ears, headaches, stomach problems, back and shoulder problems and many more. Deacon Lloyd, who was with the Bishop at the back of the crowd said the Bishop repeated every prayer. It was a blessed time!



CLOSING CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

There were a couple of people on our team that seemed to have radar for the poor like Mother Teresa. As they were driving in one car and we in another they saw a woman in the bushes. We had passed by her many times without seeing her. They could see that this was where she was living as she had a few bags scattered around her. They talked to Fr. Jomanas and he said that she was crazy or disturbed, but these team members would not take that for an answer. These team members were touched by this homeless woman that nobody seemed to care about. Unfortunately there are no hospitals or psychiatric wards for such people.

As we were driving back from the prison and were approaching the area where this woman was staying they quickly asked all of us to get together the food we might have in our backpacks. We had a handful of items and they stopped and handed them to her. She looked at them with expectant eyes and you could see there was a connection. The next time they stopped they had some clothes and a hat.

With some inquiry our tender hearted friends had found out that this woman lost her only daughter in the earthquake in Port-au-Prince and she could live there no longer. It brought back too many of the painful memories. So somehow she walked or however got to Jeremy and had no place to live. We had to leave the next day so we do not know what will happen to her but I'm proud to be part of the team that helped one life from aching. From the poem by Emily Dixon, ***"If I can stop one heart from breaking, I shall not live in vain; if I can ease one life the aching, or cool one pain, or help one fainting robin into his nest again, I shall not live in vain."***

Fr. Jomanas' compound was badly damaged by the hurricane and he is in the process of rebuilding and building new buildings. The small chapel on the second floor facing the ocean where we normally have Adoration was damaged the most because of the windows facing the sea. Hopefully it will be ready for us next year. This trip was a huge blessing and I am truly grateful for the opportunity to both serve Jesus in the poor and to bring the Good News to prisoners and declare God's Year of Favor. Thanks for the honor.