

Redeemer's Haiti Ministry



The Church of the Redeemer started a Twinning relationship with AFAL, “The Association of Female Activist in Lascahobas” in 1996. AFAL is a peasant women’s organization with over 900 members. These women formed this organization to better the lives of their children and themselves. They started a school for their children, reading classes for themselves, a vocational school for girls to learn how to cook and sew, and a micro bank for members to borrow money at a low interest rate. Redeemer’s Haiti Ministry sponsors trips to Lascahobas at least once a year.

- The Haiti Ministry works to raise money and to keep the parishioners aware of the needs of AFAL and our continuing relationship with its people.
 - Fund Raisers:
 - Yard Sale in September
 - Student/Teacher Sponsorship at the end of May
 - “No Room at the Inn” - Display of multicultural Nativity sets and silent auction
 - Sale of items purchased in Haiti
 - Misc. other events
 - Keeping aware by:
 - Haiti Wall
 - Children's Liturgy of the Word
 - Articles in the Good News
 - Being Visible, especially during Haiti Solidarity Week each February.
- Meetings: 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM.
- Trips: Yearly trips are made. If you work at least one fund raiser, you only pay about \$700 for your trip.

DEFINITIONS:

- **Fonkoze** - Haiti’s Alternative Bank, it is the largest micro-finance institution offering a full range of financial services to Haiti. We wire money into AFAL’s account at Fonkoze and they have access to the money the next day.
- **Bernadette** - President of AFAL
- **St. Gabriel's** - Catholic Church where we stay while visiting Lascahobas
- **Pere Bernard** - Priest at St. Gabriel’s
- **Lambi Fund** - A Grassroots organization that assist with community projects. It is through Lambi that we became twined with AFAL.
- **Thimote** - Driver and Interpreter while in Haiti
- **Mathew 25** - Guest House in Port-au-Prince
- **Lunch Program** - Feeding the 600 students lunch at the school each day
- **Sea Container** - Container shipped to Haiti each Spring with items we collect/purchase for AFAL
- **Mother Theresa’s** - Orphanage in Port-au-Prince we visit

Church of The Redeemer's Haiti Mission Statement

Called to “act justly, love tenderly” (Micah 6:8) we, the Church of the Redeemer, are committed to a partnership with our sisters and brothers of Lascahobas, Haiti. We are enriched and transformed by their hope, faith, hospitality, and deep sense of community. In partnership with the women’s business group, AFAL (Association of Female Activist in Lascahobas), their school, and the people of Haiti, we walk hand in hand humbly in the presence of God.



*Co-ed Community School Run
by AFAL with the support of the
Members of the Church of The
Redeemer*

Haiti Facts

LOCATION: Haiti is located 700 miles southeast of Miami, just 100 minutes air travel time, occupying the western third of the island of Hispaniola, which it shares with the Dominican Republic. Haiti is only 60 miles from Cuba. We are twined with AFAL in Lascachobas.



SIZE: 10,714 square miles, or 1/4 the size of Virginia (about the size of Maryland).

GOVERNMENT: Independent Republic since 1804. The first democratic elections were held in December 1990 when Jean Bertrand Aristide was elected President. A nonviolent transfer of power from President Aristide to newly elected President Rene Preval took place on February 7, 1996. Aristide was re-elected President on November 26, 2000. The Parliament of 83 Delegates and 27 Senators were elected in May 2000 (with term extending to February 7, 2006). Turnout of eligible voters in all elections exceeded 60%. President Aristide was forcibly removed from Haiti on February 29, 2004, by agreement of the U.S., France, and Canada after a bloody invasion by former military and FRAPH members. They were backed by the political opposition party Democratic Convergence/Group 184, which was supported by the U.S.

New Presidential elections were held in March 2006, Rene Preval was elected President again. Currently new elections are scheduled for March 20, 2011.

Haiti Facts - Continued

RELIGION: 80% Roman Catholic; 10% various Protestant mainline churches. Evangelical Christians are increasingly becoming evident. Voodoo remains a part of Haitian culture stemming from African roots and the government officially recognizes the Voodooist Federation.

LANGUAGE: Creole and French are official but everyone speaks Creole. All of Haitian law is in French. Some grassroots groups and the clergy are learning English.

EDUCATION: Free public education is sporadic and non-existent in many rural areas. Only 5-10% of rural children ever complete elementary school. 80% of the population is illiterate; however, President Aristide was able to set up one literacy school in each of the 565 districts in Haiti.

LIVING CONDITIONS: Only 15% of the rural population has access to safe water. Most families do not have electricity or running water. Sanitary facilities as we know them, sewage disposal, flush toilets, etc., are almost nonexistent. 2.4 million people live in urban slums. In 1999 the UN designated Haiti the 3rd hungriest nation in the world behind Somalia and Afghanistan.

LIFE EXPECTANCY: 54 years. For some labor activities such as pulling *bouretes*, 45 years.

ECONOMY: Average per capita income is less than \$400, closer to \$150 in the rural areas. Less than 1% of the population controls the majority of the wealth. Fewer than 200 families control the entire economy.

TRADE: Much of the food for survival, such as rice, is imported at low prices because of subsidies to US farmers by the U.S. government; which has a disastrous effect on the Haitian farmer. Exports have been limited because of high US tariffs (10 – 12%). However, trade under President Aristide's democratic government was increasing with Cuba, Venezuela, Taiwan, Japan, and the Caribbean nations.