

Haiti Outreach Mission Update 2006

You may be wondering what was accomplished on the trip to Haiti, other than the triumphant arrival of the statue of Saint Blase intact to the Saint Blase Orphanage. Much of this information has been reported previously in front-page articles in the Michigan Catholic and the Detroit Free Press. The Haiti Outreach Mission (HOM) consists of seven Churches located in Metro Detroit. There were 26 individuals who made the most recent trip. Below is list of the projects undertaken during our week stay:

- 1250 patients were examined and /or treated at HOM's St. Pierre Clinic by the three physicians traveling with us, and the two Haitian physicians. The Haitian physicians are funded year round by Holy Cross Episcopal Church in Novi, one of the 7 member churches of HOM.
- The Clinic was rewired and ceiling fans were installed, plumbing system upgraded and a new high-powered generator was purchased. The generator was purchased to provide a guaranteed source of electricity, when power is shutdown in Mirebalais, which happens frequently. Currently, some medical procedures can't be preformed because of the potential for shutdown during the procedure.
- A dental team was formed and provided fluoride treatments at four schools. Also, toothpaste, brushes and instruction how to brush properly were given to over 1500 students at the schools. The children also received parasite medication.
- All four schools had pencil sharpeners installed in all classrooms. Note: Some of you may have seen the video from last year's trip showing the young girl sharpening her pencil with a razor blade. Maintenance and repair was performed at the schools as needed.
- Computer labs were set up at the St. Pierre and St. Louis schools. Each school now has 4 Internet capable computers and a printer.
- John Messina brought Frisbees for the kids at the orphanage and we had a blast teaching them how to use them.

The St. Blase HOM committee would like to thank all our parishioners who supported our trip with over- the-counter medicines, toothbrushes, toothpaste and other supplies that were so valuable. Thanks also to Denise Porcasi and all her helpers who sorted and packaged all the supplies. Also, thanks to Ron McKay and Sam Porcasi for helping with the delivery of the supplies and St. Blase to Metro.

Note: While in Haiti St. Blase Parish was presented with a Haitian Sculpture depicting Haitians on their way to market. This was presented to St. Blase at a closing night variety show put on by the St. Pierre Youth Group in Mirebalais. This sculpture and an award presented to St. Blase by the Detroit Area Haiti Outreach Committee can be seen hanging outside the parish office along with a picture of the St. Blase Orphanage.