

Haiti Photos and Stories

1. We met the Risen Jesus in Haiti, and it was a humbling and joyous experience. It may sound strange to find joy in the midst of poverty and suffering. But the joy is not in the suffering....it is in the promise of God's blessings. There is joy in Haiti.



2. You may ask, "Why did you ever go to a God-forsaken place like Haiti?" The quick answer is, "to visit our sister parish Notre Dame de Fatima." We went and now we better appreciate what "dirt poor" means....dusty and dirty poor. We discovered that our trip to Haiti was a Lenten retreat of sacrifice, and, a profound experience of God's love and mercy. We met angels in Haiti...We saw where you go to learn to be a saint...Our faith was tested...We praised God with the vibrant, loving and hardworking people of Notre Dame de Fatima...



3. Shortly after the earthquake we visited Haiti. I asked, "Do they know they are poor?" "Yes," I was told, "because they can't feed their families." Inflation is high and food prices are higher.



4. We met angels in Haiti that took care of us every step of the way...Bernard, a true Haitian renaissance man, Father Meres, our interpreters Bastia & Berry, our cooks, Memem and Nanush, to name a few. These angels kept us safe in a place where I don't know how people survive. Common place things for us in the United States, like drinking water or taking a taxi ride, in Haiti are missteps that can have dire consequences.



5. When we arrived in Bassin-Zim, Mass had already started. We heard a glorious sound of singing from the open-air sanctuary. Suddenly, we were in front of over 600 people. They were raising the roof with a truly joyful noise. What a grand and glorious introduction to the people of Notre Dame de Fatima.



6. As we were waiting to meet the Parish Council, we jumped in to help the mason and his crew to move rocks from the front of the church about 100 yards to the back of the property to build the foundation of the hut for the generator. Soon more people began helping and then there were over 20 of us hauling rocks...just talking and laughing and working... there is a real sense of community at Notre Dame de Fatima.



7. I have many more stories I want to tell you, but for today I have just one more. Someone recently told me that it is easy to love, but much more difficult to be loved. It is a control thing I think. It is easy for us to say to the people of Haiti, "I Love You" and send them a nice check. It wasn't so easy, I found, to be in Haiti in the least likely place, and hear God's voice very clearly saying that he loves us all. Dear God, I thought, I know you love me, but do you love these people of Haiti? We were walking down the dusty main road in Bassin-Zim when I heard voices crying out from a yard close by, "I Love You, I Love You, I Love You." I couldn't believe my ears. This is a place where people don't speak English. "I Love You," Father Rafi and I called back, "I Love You." Nine smiling children appeared at the fence...a typical Haitian fence of cactus woven with barbed wire...I want to show you their picture. "I Love You," we heard again, so I responded, "I Love You Too." The reply came, "I Love You More."

