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Diocese of Norwich Outreach to Haiti
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new Twinning Director, Fr. Frank Rouleau, the program is strengthening its connections between Haiti and the United States.

The connections with the churches, and more importantly with the Haitian priests, prove to be very effective. This is due to the influence, respect, and authority that Haitian priests have in their communities, some of which spread for miles across mountains.

In Haiti, priests are not only the religious leaders, but usually, if they are in rural parishes, they become the unofficial community authorities at large. Their roles reach far beyond that of Sunday Mass and Holy Sacraments. Their responsibilities include trying to address the educational, medical, and food and shelter needs of community members, as well as settling disputes among neighbors and offering emotional support to struggling families.

The role of Haitian parish priests has become even more critical during a time when many families have fled the city of Port-au-Prince since the January 2010 earthquake to find shelter and safety, and have settled in villages where they need help in unfamiliar places. This trend has created yet another opportunity for American parishes to truly make a difference in the lives of their Haitian twins.

MARK THE CALENDAR



For the Love of a Child

Saturday Evening, April 21st, 2012
The 5th annual gala celebration
At Clinton Country Club,
Clinton, CT

This fund-raiser brings vital support to needy children in Port-au-Prince who depend on services and programs provided by Outreach to Haiti.

Enjoy a champagne welcome and multi-course, Caribbean-style meal. A silent auction of Haitian art and a live auction of wonderful vacation opportunities will be among the evening's features.

For an invitation, or to learn more about the event, please contact us at our Outreach to Haiti office in Norwich, CT. Call: 860.848.2237 ext. 206; or email us at: info@outreachtohaiti.org

espwa ... hope from Diocese of Norwich

OUTREACH TO HAITI



The new Sister Ann Weller Clinic, built through a partnership between Outreach to Haiti and Catholic Relief Services, opened its doors in late August. It is the only medical clinic of its kind for miles.

For Nurses, Doctors and Patients of Christ Roi

New Clinic Offers Space, Privacy and Protection for Community

By Anna DeBiasi • Development Director

For 20 months after the earthquake struck Haiti last year, the doctors and nurses of Outreach to Haiti's Sister Ann Weller Clinic were struggling to treat patients from under a large tent meant to have lasted only a year. They practiced medicine under the canvas enclosure that had developed rips and holes by summer. While the clinical team did their best to provide medical treatment to the Christ Roi neighborhood in Port-au-Prince, it was difficult to provide the sanitation and space to effectively treat large numbers of patients in a tent with poor ventilation and little privacy. Despite its inadequacies, the temporary structure answered a critical health need in the neighborhood after Outreach's mission house and ground-floor medical clinic were destroyed in the January 2010 disaster.



OUTREACH
TO HAITI

But as the seams began to tear and the fabric disintegrate under heavy rains and heat of the Haitian sun, the medical team wondered how they were going to continue serving the community.

At the same time, Outreach had been working with Catholic Relief Services (CRS) for months to build temporary "Ti Shelters" (small shelters) in the Christ Roi community. While CRS was working within the neighborhood, they

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Despite Upheavals and Hardships in Haiti

Scholarship Students Gain Knowledge, Skills and Hope

By Kyn Tolson • Programs Administrator

Seven-year-old Angy Auguste holds one wish firmly in her heart and mind: To stay in school and finish the third grade next June.

Angy is one of 300 students who receive tuition payments from donors in the Norwich Diocese and elsewhere in the United States through a program run by Diocese of Norwich Outreach to Haiti.

The program admits needy children whose parents cannot afford tuitions—annual fees that amount to more than what many of them earn in one year. Although tuitions run only about \$425 a year for primary school students, many families live on less than that, both in Port-au-Prince and in rural areas of Haiti.



Angy Auguste

Angy has been in the Outreach scholarship program for a year. She finished her second-grade classes last June in fine form, achieving above a 7-point average (out of a possible 10). She is smart, according to school reports, and approaches her studies with enthusiasm.

Because of her high achievements, she was admitted to a summer enrichment program, run by Outreach, which offered art and music classes for qualifying scholarship students. Angy hopes to be an artist one day. A favorite activity in school is drawing, she says, but she also likes reading and mathematics. She gets high marks in citizenship.

Angy's achievements are particularly remarkable in light of the upheavals in her family life, caused, in part, by her mother's mental illness and by the earthquake in Haiti in January 2010.

Angy has one older sister, 11, and a brother, who is 6. Before the earthquake, the family lived briefly in the Dominican Republic. They came back to Port-au-Prince hoping to find a better life in the rebuilding of the capital city.

Although Angy's father is an electrician, he has not been able to get work in that field.

Today he looks for any job he can find, but the family has split up. Angy remains with her father and brother in the capital, where they live with an

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WE'RE JUST A CLICK AWAY

Learn more about our work and how
you can assist children and families in
Haiti. Visit our new website:

www.outreachtohaiti.org

Follow us on:

Twitter: @outreachtohaiti
and **Facebook:**

www.facebook.com/OutreachToHaiti

Join our e-mailed listserve by sending
your e-mail address to:
info@outreachtohaiti.org.

You will receive short updates on
happenings concerning our Outreach
mission and other Haiti-related
news and events.

UPCOMING EVENTS

A TOUCH & TASTE OF HAITI

- 4 pm Sun. Oct. 16 in Coventry, CT
- A chef-prepared meal and Haitian art & metal for sale
- At 1265 Main Street
- Hosted by State Rep. Tim Ackert with Barbara Charland & John Bouley
- Donations to benefit children in Haiti
- Must RSVP by Oct. 10 to: Barbara at 860.742.9378; barbchar623@charter.net

HEARTS OF GOLD

- 5:30-8 pm Thurs. Nov. 3
at The Inn at Middletown, CT
- Evening benefit for Outreach and United Way Women's Initiative.
- Bring your gold jewelry and other pieces for professional appraisal and possible sale.
- Drinks & plenty of appetizers; Pot of Gold raffle; and camaraderie.
- For more info, contact Outreach (info@outreachtohaiti.org; 860.848.2237 ext 206)

Winning Smile of Young Girl Opens Door to Education

By Anna DeBiasi • Development Director

Twelve years ago, Sister Rosie Cloughlin of St. Vincent Mercy Hospital in Elwood, Indiana, took a trip to Haiti. She wasn't sure what to expect or what she would find there, but she felt compelled to go.

What she found one day during her stay with Outreach to Haiti in Port-au-Prince was a small child. This young girl with the big smile tugged on Sr. Rosie's heart strings the moment she laid eyes on her. Immediately Sr. Rosie felt the need to speak with the young girl, whose family Sr. Rosie was visiting. She knew she wanted to stay connected to her in some way.

When she asked the child's name, Sr. Rosie was delighted to find out that it was the same as hers. Rose Kery Tregis. Sr. Rosie fondly gave her the nickname "Little Rosie."

Shortly after she returned from her trip, the administration of St. Vincent Mercy Hospital began encouraging each department to choose a cause to support on a yearly basis. Sr. Rosie knew immediately who she wanted to support. She told the staff in the Environmental Services Department the story of Little Rosie in Haiti. She told them about her beautiful smile and her big personality at such a young age. And she also explained how Little Rosie's family was struggling to come up with the money to send her to school.

Eleven years later, "Little" Rosie is in high

school. The Department of Environmental Services has sponsored her education since she entered kindergarten. Little Rosie is a bright student; the annual academic updates to her sponsors in Indiana show that her grades have been above average. In the annual photos, which also go to the St. Vincent Mercy Hospital sponsors, she's always smiling.

Rosie has just passed the national examination that allows her to move on to her third year of secondary school, which began the first week in October. (In Haiti, secondary school beings in seventh grade, and a sponsorship through Outreach to Haiti that pays tuition for an upper level student is \$500 a year.) Rosie's hoping to eventually go to university.

The head of the Environmental Services Department Head, Jewel Arnold, explains, "Our department organizes bake sales and other fundraisers that the entire hospital takes part in supporting. Everyone around this place knows the name 'Little Rosie,' and we are very happy to be supporting her.

"We are working on raising enough money over the next few years to send our Little Rosie to college."



Rose Kery Tregis

Scholarships Make All the Difference

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aunt. Angy's mother and sister have moved to Hinche, in Haiti's Central Plateau, many hours from the city.

Angy hopes that she will be able to stay with her aunt. She very much wants to remain in school and looks forward to the challenges of third grade.

Shesky Fortune also is happy that a new school year has started. A scholarship student since 2008, he is in the ninth grade. Without the help of a donor in the Diocese of Norwich, he would not be getting an education.

The 13-year-old lives with his mother and maternal aunt. His father died, and his mother struggles to bring in money by doing laundry for others and occasionally by selling silverware on the street.

Shesky's half-brother, who is 17, has not had the good fortune to receive scholarships and has completed only the fourth grade. He lives with relatives outside of Port-au-Prince.

Immediately after the 2010 earthquake, Shesky and his mother moved from their apartment, because a wall there was badly cracked. They stayed in a nearby tent camp for more than five months. Even today, though they live with Shesky's aunt, they keep a tent in that same camp, in case they have to move back.

In a life filled with financial hardships, setbacks and uncertainties, Shesky says school has been a center of

stability. His favorite courses are social science, geography and mathematics. He wants to become an engineer.

Every year since Outreach to Haiti's Education Program began in the late 1990s, more students have shown academic success. Even though the program requires students to maintain above-average grades, they work hard, valuing the extraordinary gift they have been given. Both they and their families realize that education offers the best opportunity to rise out of poverty.

Today, two "graduates" of the Education Program are doctors; one is a surgeon who plans to open a clinic in the slums of his childhood home. Another scholarship student earned his engineering degree in June, after being selected on merit to attend Virginia Tech for his final semester of university studies. Other students who were admitted to the scholarship program in their primary school years are now in universities in Haiti. The dreams they have held firm for many years are closer to realizing.

For more information on our Education Program, or to become a student sponsor, please contact us at: 860.848.2237 ext. 206, or at: info@outreachtohaiti.org. We invite you to visit our website: www.outreachtohaiti.org. (Click the PROGRAMS tab at the top, and then click EDUCATION.)

In a Time of Need

Twinning Program Fosters Personal Connection and Support

By Anna DeBiasi • Development Director

In the spare village of Morne Opital, the dirt road by the Catholic Church is crowded with people chatting as they trade medallions with their American prayer partners who have come to visit. Members of The Church of the Gesu have traveled from Wisconsin to Haiti to see the new medical clinic that their congregation has sponsored for The Church of St. Jude. The clinic is the only facility of its kind for miles. As more Haitians in this rural parish in the mountains high above Port-au-Prince arrive, they smile as they reunite with their friends from Wisconsin.

At a parish school in Les Palmes, some 50 miles west of Haiti's capital city, secondary school children are anticipating a visit from friends in Coventry, CT, in late fall. St. Mary's parish has collected materials so that the school can begin a sewing vocational program. A small group will be visiting Les Palmes to deliver the materials and new hope for a training that will lead to livelihoods.

In another mountain parish far north of Port-au-Prince, a large quilt hangs inside the

Catholic church of Fonds Baptiste. It reads, "To: The Parish of Fonds Baptiste, From: The Children of The Church of the Holy Family." It has been in the church for almost 15 years as a reminder of the kindness and support of their American partner, the Catholic parish in Hebron, CT.

For these three rural communities, the prayer medallions, the sewing materials, and the handmade quilt represent the connection between two groups of people: Haitian and American congregations. The gifts are signs of hope in a time of struggle, a reminder that there are people out there who hold them in their hearts, who pray for and support them, and who are there to try to help in times of dire need.

These formal partnerships and others like them have been established as part of Outreach to Haiti's Twinning program. It is through this program that Haitian parishioners gain the support of an entire American congregation, and American parishioners gain deep, lasting connections with the people of Haiti.

The Twinning program counts nine Haiti parishes twinned with 10 American parishes. (One Haitian parish has two American twins.) Also, Mercy High School in Middletown, CT is

partnered with a girls' orphanage in Port-au-Prince, and a parish in the Diocese of Norwich is twinned with an orphanage for children affected by HIV/AIDS. A church in Milwaukee, WI (Our Lady of Lourdes) is formally twinned with Outreach's mission house in the Haiti, which has been operating since the late 1980s and is open to guests on Immersion Visits or for other short-term stays.

In addition, The Diocese of Norwich twinned with the Archdiocese of Port-au-Prince itself in the 1990s. American twins can be found within the Norwich Diocese, throughout the state of Connecticut and beyond, reaching as far as the Midwest.

Each twinning relationship carries the same promise of mutual support in faith and desire for cultural exchange, however, every union is unique. The program does not require specific exchanges of funds or materials; rather each partnership determines how its connection will be fostered.

Outreach to Haiti acts as the liaison between the Haitian and American Parishes to establish this connection. With the addition of Outreach's

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CRS Provides Clinic

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noticed the clinic tent literally falling apart before their eyes. Valuing the working relationship it had developed with Outreach and appreciating the value of the medical clinic and program, CRS offered to help build a new clinic—one that is temporary but sturdy enough to last several years.

The two organizations made the plan a reality.

"The construction of the clinic is a direct result of our working relationship with CRS, and how much they have come to respect us," says Pharra Hyppolite, who took part in overseeing the project and is the Hospitality Director for Outreach. "Working together has been wonderful for Outreach and the entire Christ Roi community."

Thanks to this partnership, Outreach's medical team and its patients have now moved from the tent into the new building on the property. The official opening took place during the last week in August. The clinic has a concrete floor, several rooms with sturdy plywood and treated-wood siding, and a heavy metal roof.

Outreach provided the concrete for the floor and the labor of two masons. CRS provided the design, materials worth about \$20,000, and laborers. In addition, a personal donation of lights and wiring came from the CRS project manager and his family.

Days before the formal opening, a three-man team from the United States visited Port-au-Prince to paint the building. Alex Michel and Michael Lombardo visited from Suffield Academy in Connecticut, and Reginald Paige Jr. from Loomis Chafee, Windsor, CT. The three also moved files and medical equipment into the new clinic.

The clinic has a patient waiting room (similar to a covered porch), two exam rooms, a lab, and a pharmacy.



Suffield High School student Alex Michel and his friends Michael Lombardo and Reginald Paige Jr. visited Christ Roi from Connecticut to help put finishing touches on the new clinic.

The entirely Haitian staff consists of eight full-time employees, four of whom are health agents who do community outreach. Three part-time physicians offer specialty care. One day a week, an OB/GYN treats women and infants. A pediatrician practices at the clinic two days a week, seeing anywhere from 30 to 50 children a day on average. For the remaining two days of the week, a general practitioner evaluates and treats various illnesses for all genders and ages.

In the month of July alone, approximately 1,000 patients received services through the clinic and community outreach programs (including one for nutrition). About half of those individuals were paying customers at about \$2 per visit.

The Sister Ann Weller Clinic has been operating in Christ Roi for over 20 years. What started as a part-time primary care facility has grown to be a full-service primary care and community health center that people in the neighborhood and beyond have grown to rely on.

The new structure provides privacy, ventilation and space for services ranging from examinations and diagnoses, to laboratory and pharmaceutical services, to follow-up care and community outreach.

"We are one of very few facilities to offer full spectrum services, especially laboratory," says lab technician Nita Boule. "People come from all zones to seek help here because of the good service they receive." Since the new clinic doors opened, there has been a steady increase in the numbers of patients referred, evaluated and treated. "The facility is so badly needed that since its opening, people travel from all directions, arriving as early as 6 am. By the time the doors open at 8, there is a line around the corner," says James Michel, board chair of Outreach to Haiti, upon his return from visiting Christ Roi for the clinic opening. "It is a blessing."