

OUTREACH TO HAITI

ESPWA, our newsletter of HOPE



HELPING HAITIANS HELP HAITIANS

Hope amidst the chaotic conditions in Haiti

Widespread insecurity continues to cause massive internal displacement, disrupts access to basic services, and significantly hinders economic activity.

Despite these challenges, the resilience of the population remains remarkable, and signs of solidarity continue to emerge across many communities.

We remain deeply committed to serving vulnerable populations while continuously reassessing the security risks. We stand united in hope for a better future for Haiti.

The statements above were recently offered by our Director of Operations in Haiti, Ivlande Eugene, as part of her update on conditions in Port-au-Prince and more specifically in the neighborhood of our Christ Roi campus.

Each of these statements remains true. The safety of our staff and the beneficiaries who come through our gate is our top priority. Decisions to open or close are made on a day-to-day basis as well as changes in the operating schedule. But most days



School is in session at Notre Dame de Lourdes in Cité Militaire, the twinned parish of St. Pio in Westbrook, Conn. See story on page 3.

the campus has been open and, while it is not business as usual, operations continue.

When Outreach to Haiti was first formed, then Development Director Kyn Tolson selected *Esprwa*, hope in Kreyole, as the name that would appear on the masthead of our newsletters.

Hope is a small word that carries the weight of many emotions. It at once recognizes that things are not as they should be but they can and will get better. For things to get better for the people of Haiti hope cannot be passive but active. Haitian people are faith-filled and hopeful and are always working to improve their lives and taking every opportunity to do so. Our

staff in Haiti is hopeful that we can do more to make that happen. They are always asking to admit more beneficiaries into our programs and advocating for additional services. And you, our benefactors, remain hopeful. Despite the troubling news that comes out of Haiti you stay loyal in the hopes that your contributions of time, talent and treasure will lead to a better life for the people of Haiti.

This newsletter issue will feature the many faces and emotions of hope and, because of prayer and the generosity of our benefactors, the work being done during these challenging times to turn hope into a new reality for the people we serve.

“Hope is not the conviction that something will turn out well, but the certainty that something is worth doing regardless of how it turns out....[This] hope...gives us the strength to live and continually to try new things, even in conditions that seem hopeless as ours do, here and now.”

—Vaclav Havel, former Czech president and playwright “Disturbing the Peace”

Providing nutrition in a time of extreme violence

By G. O'Hare

"Sèl pa janm di li sale." ...salt doesn't need to say it is salty.

This Haitian proverb reminds us that true worth speaks for itself. Outreach to Haiti's Nutrition Program, based in the heart of Port-au-Prince, is one such example.

In the midst of unprecedented violence, when most health services shuttered their doors, our clinic remained open. As one of the only functioning clinics, we became a critical lifeline. The Haitian Ministry



The Nutrition Program provides food kits to mothers and children.

of Public Health and Population (MSPP) recognized this, referring a French NGO to us so that we could provide urgently needed food and medical monitoring to their children unable to access other programs.

Even during times filled with gunfire and chaos, families—some with pregnant women, some carrying malnourished infants—took the risk to reach us. They came because they knew we would be there to offer the help they needed, food.

As some normalcy slowly returned to Christ Roi and more families were able to reach our clinic again, we noted a heartbreaking trend—an increase in the number of severely malnourished children. The prolonged instability had cut off many from basic nutrition, and the cost of food has skyrocketed. For these families, our program became not just a support—but a necessity for survival.

In addition to the malnourished children and expectant mothers we serve daily, we have begun distributing food kits to the food insecure in our neighborhood and to families driven from their homes and now living in displacement camps. Many



Patiently waiting for her weigh-in.

of our neighbors there—especially households with older children and the elderly—are struggling to put meals on the table. Our food kits include staples like rice, beans, oil, and powdered milk.

Outreach to Haiti's Nutrition Program isn't just about food. It's about resilience, dignity, and hope. We offer health screenings, nutritional education, and follow-ups to ensure long-term care, not just emergency aid.

Our work continues not because it's easy—but because it's needed. And while we may never shout about our worth, those we serve—those who walk through our gates in the darkest hours—already know it.

Ralph Béliard, Rising Star

My name is Ralph Béliard. My personal story is one of resilience and perseverance. I have the honor of being a scholarship recipient through Diocese of Norwich Outreach to Haiti, an organization whose unwavering support has played a decisive role in shaping my academic and professional journey.



Ralph Béliard

I am currently completing my 9th semester in university with just one semester remaining before earning my degree in Civil Engineering — a field I chose for its concrete impact on sustainable development and community infrastructure.

In 2025, due to the worsening security crisis in Port-au-Prince, I was temporarily unable to continue my university classes in person. Rather than remaining idle, I chose to transform this challenge into an

opportunity to take meaningful action in the humanitarian field.

I was recruited by Save the Children to work on a project that allowed me to engage directly with displaced families, conduct community awareness sessions on health, nutrition, hygiene, and protection, and contribute to the monitoring and reporting of key program indicators. Initially a three-month internship, my contract was extended for an additional three months in recognition

Haiti and a City of Two Tales

By Rachel Higgins

The situation in Haiti seems worse than we have ever seen since our parish (St. Pio Parish in Westbrook/Old Saybrook) started twinning with a parish in Haiti in 1998. In 2024 Archbishop Mésidor warned that Haiti was on the verge of civil war and that nowhere was really safe; churches were being attacked and priests and bishops were targeted for kidnappings. Seeing such news reports, it is very hard to imagine how anything like normal life can go on there.

Our twin parish, Notre Dame de Lourdes, is located in Cité Militaire, a very poor and dangerous section of Port-au-Prince. Since 1998 it has



Dr. Valcin Minouche

grown from an empty block of land to a thriving parish family and every year we provide scholarships to send 40 children to school and 15 to colleges and trade schools.

Fr. Horelle, the parish priest, reports that, despite the dangers all around them, the parish has continued to be safe and the children have been getting to school. Valcin Minouche, who started in our scholarship program in 2007, just graduated from university with her medical degree.

In 2023 Fr. Horelle started a parish school and after its initial success he wanted to repurpose some open buildings as classrooms. We always trust this work to God and, as usual, the Holy Spirit inspired our parishioners with great generosity! Last August we raised the exact amount of money he needed and the work was started quickly. They added walls and doors to enclose classrooms and built a fence around the school to make a safe playground. It was very heart-warming to see videos of the young children dressed neatly in uniforms, sitting at desks in classrooms, getting a meal and running around carefree in the playground, playing on swing sets and kicking balls.



Children at Notre Dame de Lourdes school in Cité Militaire enjoy lunch in their renovated school building. The church is twinned with St. Pio in Westbrook, Conn.

Because of the Catholic Church, these brothers and sisters of ours have been able to create a little sanctuary for themselves and others in need. Here they can leave the horrors of the streets and experience joy and peace in the Mass and now also in the parish school. Here they are reminded that God loves them, they have not been forgotten.

God looks after us by means of their prayers, and our assistance and encouragement has helped them to be a light in the darkness for 27 years. Together, our parishes are working to help build the kingdom of God.

of my dedication and performance.

Today, I stand guided by a strong conviction: that my skills built on academic rigor are shaped by real-world humanitarian challenges.

I am deeply grateful to my personal sponsor, as well as the Tom and Julie Wood Family Foundation and Diocese of Norwich Outreach to Haiti for believing in my potential and investing in my growth. Thanks to their support, I am equipped to face future challenges with confi-

*"You have changed lives.
You have changed mine."*

dence, and I am committed to using my knowledge and experience to help build a more dignified and resilient future for the most vulnerable in my country.

I can say without hesitation that this program and this scholarship changed everything. It offered me not only educational support but also

opportunities for personal growth and leadership development.

I express my deepest gratitude. Your generosity has empowered countless young people including me to dream, grow, and build a brighter future.

You have changed lives. You have changed mine. I carry this opportunity and your support with me in everything I do, and I will always remain profoundly grateful.



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THE GOSPEL MISSION CONTINUES

Diocese of Norwich Outreach to Haiti's commitment to the people of Haiti is unwavering. Despite many challenges, our programs continue to provide education, medical care and economic development opportunities to the people whom we serve. Our Parish Twinning Program extends our reach beyond our Outreach Center in the Christ Roi neighborhood of Port-au-Prince, providing similar opportunities in surrounding areas all made possible by strong relationships between parishes in the US and in Haiti. The Gospel mission continues.

Outreach to Haiti welcomes Most Reverend Richard F. Reidy

Pope Francis appointed Richard F. Reidy to be the 6th Bishop of Norwich on Feb. 12, 2025. His Mass of Ordination and Installation occurred on April 29, 2025.

Many of the Board, staff, volunteers and donors of Outreach to Haiti were delighted to have the opportunity to get to know him when he attended the annual Outreach gala on April 5. He spoke with a great many of the attendees. Their reactions were uniformly positive. One person said, "In this brief but important interaction I felt respected and felt I could say what was on my mind honestly and would be heard." It was clear he was not only listening to people but was actively soliciting input.

While we hope to have many more interactions with Bishop Reidy, he,

fortuitously, had two fairly unique opportunities at the gala. Board Chair John Bouley introduced him to two young Haitian men who had come through the Outreach education program in Port au Prince, and were temporarily visiting in the U.S. The three had a lively discussion on the importance of education, a pillar of the diocese's ministry in Haiti. Bishop Reidy got a chance to see, firsthand, the results of our work in Haiti.

We look forward to your leadership, Bishop Reidy!

Biographic info and picture provided by 4 County Catholic.



Most Reverend Richard F. Reidy, JCL

As we welcomed Bishop Reidy, we mourned the loss of Monsignor James Paul Carini. "Fr. Jim" was part of the Diocese's first trip to Haiti in 1982 and was integral in establishing our mission. His dedication to that mission and his love for the people of Haiti is his lasting legacy.