



Solidarity News Notes...

News from the Rich in Mercy Institute – Winter 2015

RiM Emergency Support Aids in Restoring Life-Giving Water to Lamardelle Community

A **Rich in Mercy** emergency grant, supported in part by members of the **Latrobe Rotary Club** (Latrobe, PA), made to the **Fondation Enfant Jesus** (FEJ), has helped restore water to the Lamardelle community after a decade old well failed at the beginning of September causing a “water crisis” that lasted nearly 3 months!.

The crisis was initiated by a defect in the electrical wiring that damaged the pump. An attempt to remove the pump resulted in damage to the well casing and led to a collapse of the well, leaving the FEJ school and clinic without water, cutting off the normal supply of water to some 1000 families in the area and necessitating a new well. The new well will meet the needs of the Lamardelle community and also supply transported water to the FEJ orphanage in Kenscoff.



The **Foundation Enfant Jesus** (FEJ) is a non-denominational, non-profit organization that promotes sustainable human development for impoverished children and their families through programs that include education, health services, child and family advocacy and protection, community building and entrepreneurship.

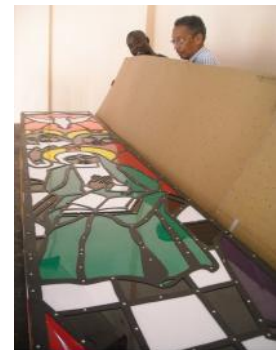
Celebrated Haitian Artists Unite with Furcy Parish to Create Landmark Church Building



Following the massive earthquake that devastated Haiti in 2010, the St. Paul parish in the mountain community of Furcy nearly doubled in size due to a flood of “earthquake refugees” fearful of continuing to live in urban Port au Prince and its environs. Under the pastoral leadership of Spiritan priest **Fr. Habens Simon, CSSp**, the parish began more than a year ago the construction of a new church large enough to accommodate the increased population

Because of the long history of Spiritan service to the Church in Haiti through education and pastoral ministry, some prominent Haitian artists are contributing their time and talent to design a functional worship space that will not only serve the larger congregation, but will stand as a landmark of Haitian sacred art!

Albert Mangones, famous for his statue of the “Fugitive Slave” which stands across from the site of Haiti’s national palace, designed a statue of Christ for the original church. His son **Frederick Mangones** contributed the design of the new church building. The most outstanding feature of the new church will be the addition of 15 stained glass windows designed and executed by **Patrick Vilaire**, Haiti’s most celebrated living artist. Vilaire, a research associate at the Smithsonian Institute, is an engineering and artistic genius best known for his metal and ceramic works and paintings. His windows depict scenes from the Old and New Testaments in a uniquely Haitian design that distinguishes the parish church of Furcy as a center of Haitian sacred art and witnesses to the deep religious faith of Haitian people and more than a century of service to the faith by the Spiritan religious congregation.



The **Rich in Mercy Institute** is supporting the production and installation of the windows through a generous grant from the **Bozzone Family Foundation** of New Kensington, PA.

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RIM Support Aids Bi-monthly Food Distribution to “At Risk” Elderly and Handicapped



In the isolated community of Barraderes, accessible by either of two rocky, dirt roads navigable only by large trucks and high-clearance, four-wheel-drive vehicles, the **Little Sisters of St. Therese** take very seriously their mission to serve the poor and vulnerable. **Rich in Mercy** provides financial support to **Sr. Denise Desil, PSST** whose community oversees a bi-monthly distribution of rice, beans, sugar, and cooking oil to some 300 elderly and handicapped citizens.

Rising food prices, linked to declining currency values and other economic factors, continue to increase the vulnerability of already marginalized populations who are at “high risk” for malnutrition and chronic hunger.

Sr. Denise and other members of her community of Haitian religious women have worked in Barraderes for 27 years. In addition to operating the “food pantry” for seniors, the sisters collaborate with the Haitian Ministry of Health to manage the local hospital and dispensary. Annual eye clinics and dental clinics bring in professionals from Port au Prince to provide supplemental health services. The Sisters also manage a “professional” school where approximately 80 young women and a few young men are taught sewing, needlework, crochet, cooking and baking,



Girls’ Vocational School Addresses Need for Livelihood and Business Skills Training



Girls in Haiti – and especially girls in rural Haiti – have few educational opportunities. Because family resources are limited, parents must sometimes choose which of their children to send to school. For cultural and practical reasons, they often give priority to the education of boys over girls. Many times girls who begin formal education are forced to quit before completing secondary school and have few opportunities to learn practical skills through which they can support themselves.

In rural Fondwa the **Little Sisters of St. Antoine**, a local community of approximately 20 Haitian religious women began addressing this problem in July through a “professional school” aimed mainly at equipping girls and young women with practical education, marketable skills, and the knowledge needed to create small businesses of their own.

Drawing on the sisters’ own practical expertise, the school already enrolls more than 20 students. The **Rich in Mercy Institute**, through its **Fondwa Women’s Fund**, is providing scholarships for nine of the students. Students learn basic culinary arts, sewing, pattern-making, and needlework skills. In addition – thanks to the community superior, **Sr. Claudette Prevot, PSSA** who studied business management in the US – they will study the basics of managing a small business.

The sisters themselves operate a successful van transport business and direct a primary care health clinic, malnutrition program, and the St. Antoine School that enrolls approximately 600 students at the elementary and secondary levels.

