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VOLUNTEER MINISTRIES IN HAITI

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A monthly newsletter to report on developments of the Volunteer Ministries in Haiti, a program of the Xaverian Brothers supported by the Diocese of Richmond. Further information is available from the Haitian Ministry Commission, Diocese of Richmond, 7800 Carousel Lane, Richmond VA 23294 (telephone: 804-359-5661) (fax: 804-358-9159) (e-mail: pschwermer@richmonddioocese.org) (website: www.richmonddioocese.org/haiti/hat111.htm)

LETTER FROM BROTHER MICHAEL McCARTHY

“...do this in remembrance of me.”

....and we did just that on February 15th at the Sant when the fourteen students in the house gathered for the Eucharist with two alumni and several friends/neighbors to remember all that Jesus does for us each day. We assembled on that particular day to remember as well Brother Philip Eisenhour, whose initiative and tenacity ten years ago resulted in the creation of the unique house we call *Sant Zaveryen*, sponsored by the Xaverian Brothers and supported by many faithful friends who value education as a hope for the future of Haiti.

The gathering was very inspirational as we recalled Jesus' mission as 'liberator.' The gospel for that day was the account of how Jesus freed a leper from his dreaded disease, thus allowing him to reenter as a full member into the society of the time. We were challenged to follow in his footsteps to work for the liberation of all forces in Haiti that limit the growth and development of persons. Thomas Prophil, one of the founding members of the Sant, recalled how Bro. Philip had a dream of making possible university education for men from the countryside who needed a place to live and a supportive presence to pursue professional careers that would benefit the Haitian people. The ultimate goal was that those who receive much at the house, would in turn give to the people of Haiti some of the liberation and healing power that education provides.

We remembered two men, Jesus and Philip, who had given their lives so that others may live and

prosper. We sang and prayed; exchanged signs of peace and fraternity; rejoiced in all that was being given, and renewed our commitment to continue in the spirit of Jesus and Philip to further the kingdom of peace, justice and equality in Haiti for many years to come.

We concluded the festivities with a delicious chicken dinner, replete with sodas!

LETTER FROM CAMIL CANES

We continue our series of letters from the young men living at the Sant Zaveryen while attending universities in Port-au-Prince.

Hello to all of you. We still continue very well our study in Haiti and want to let you know something about the country and especially about us who are living in the Xaverian Center. We hope that you're doing very well in spite of the difficult time.

MY PROJECT FOR HAITI AFTER MY STUDY

In one more year my study in electro-mechanical engineering at the Faculty of Applied Sciences will be completed, as I told you before. After that I'd like to increase my knowledge by having a specialty in energy production so that I can help Haiti to produce much more energy. For a long time our country has faced a great insufficiency of electrical energy. That's why I'd want to know more about that science in order to help the country to have much more energy that can respond to the request of the clients, the hospitals, businesses, and private as well as state institutions.

In the capital and the areas around it there needs to be a capacity of 160 megawatts. Though there are three energy-producing companies (two thermal and one hydraulic), they don't produce sufficiently energy to satisfy the need. Imagine that, altogether they produce about 95 Mw that is not enough even for the capital where most manufacturing takes place and where the large department stores and so on, are. And, if there isn't enough for the capital, you can imagine how it is in the other cities! The basic problem is a lack of financial resources to build more hydraulic plants for there is much water in the country, though not enough specialists. I hope with my contribution that will change and become better than how it is now. Even though this will not be easy to accomplish, I think that can be possible, perhaps with the help of the great president of United States, Obama.

HOW WAS MY CHRISTMAS VACATION?

Oh! That was pretty good. During that time I had a very good experience in my native city, Hinche. This time, when I got there as usual, one of great health problems, I learned is the result of the dust, especially in the dry season. The basic cause is that all the streets are not paved. While observing and thinking about the situation, I was wondering how I can help to solve or to improve the situation. I didn't really see what to do and I am allergic to dust—when I breathe it I get colds. Finally I decided to water the street each time the water comes in the neighborhoods (the water doesn't come everyday, only three times a week). I borrowed a long tube from a friend of mine every two days and attached it by turns in the neighborhoods' pipes to water the entire street, especially where I live. That would take me about three hours each time. Sometimes the water doesn't come with pressure and so it takes me more time. It is a tiring duty because each time I water another side, the first side got dried by the sun and I had to water it again until I did the entire street; and sometimes when there was no pressure I used a 20-litre bucket to carry the water so that was harder.

I had some satisfaction because every person

who passed by encouraged me when they said, "How clean a man you are!" and others said "This street is very beautiful." Another satisfaction I had was that some people living in the same street started doing the work, and some kids used to do that too—one of them a little boy named Bibi. That was a sign that when I am there the street gets watered and many say, "Ah! Engineer Canes is still here!"

One important thing for you to know is that these qualities were given to me by CFX (Xaverian Center) where I've been receiving formation for almost five years. It is a pleasure to tell you about this experience, but I hope that the situation won't stay the same—it will change when all the city is asphalted.

NEWS FROM THE UP-FRONT

I read in an *Up-Front* [a New York Times school magazine] that appeared last month deploring the critical situation in which Afghanistan's people are living, where women are forbidden to go to school. Education is one of the best way to improve any society, for there's proverb that says "As much worth the school, that much worth the nation." That made me think that in Haiti we don't have as situation as bad.

Congratulations to Hamid Karzai, who knows the importance of education for a people. We thank God for that and for Haiti.

May the almighty God be with you all!

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