

# **Our Sister Parish Our Lady of the Assumption**

## ***Anse Rouge, Haiti***

### **Official Cluster Visit**

Dear Parishioners,

As Deacon Jerry Temeyer and I prepare to visit our Sister Parish of Our Lady of the Assumption in *Anse Rouge*, Haiti (August 13-18, 2009), we pray that God continues to bless us in many ways as the Wright County Catholic Community. We are so grateful to our many parishioners for their prayers and donations of school supplies, medicine and money, which we will take with us on our visit next week. May our Father in heaven sustain us in our loving solidarity with the poor and their struggles for justice in their beloved motherland, Haiti!

Recently I have been reading the Holy Father's new Encyclical Letter *Caritas in Veritate* (Charity in Truth). In this Letter Benedict XVI offers sound reflections on human development. He recalls the enormous contribution of Paul VI in his Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* December 8, 1975, which states "evangelization would not be complete if it did not take account of the unceasing interplay of the Gospel and of man's concrete life, both personal and social."... "Between evangelization and human advancement — development and liberation — there are in fact profound links" [30-31]. Hence, the Holy Father concludes that "testimony to Christ's charity, through works of justice, peace and development, is part and parcel of evangelization, because Jesus Christ, who loves us, is concerned with the whole person" (*Caritas in Veritate* 15). The Holy Father reads the signs of the times in light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ reminding us that hope is crucial but with an unwavering faith in Christ. In addition, Benedict XVI is in touch with the present reality that affects us all during this time of many economic uncertainties.

I sometimes dislike my sister because she does things that I disagree with but, at the end, she is my sister and I feel the pain that she experiences when she suffers. I do not have choice but to love her because of my blood relationship with her. We have created a long time relationship with our sister parish in Haiti in which we have the choice to say no. Yet, it is a Gospel imperative to help the poorest of the poor as Matthew 25 tells us. It is hard to turn our eyes to the other side and say they are so far away that I can only pray for them and they are not even my neighbors whom I can see on daily basis. I ask myself repeatedly "How do I see my sister parish in relation to our cluster parishes? Can I ignore the pain of the one suffering?"

Mother Theresa saw the real suffering Christ in the one lying on the ground dying an inhumane death lacking love and care from others. It is hard to imagine what Deacon Jerry and I will

encounter when we go to Haiti. I personally wish I could bring the comfort of my house with me so that I do not have to be uncomfortable in the midst of misery and so much poverty. Yet, I remind myself to be there and be present to the situation even when it may be uncomfortable. Also, be present to our beloved brothers and sister of our sister parish and bring the living Christ to them. Bring the loving solidarity of our cluster parishes as Christ will be even more visible in the eyes of those who are less privileged than us here in the Wright County Catholic Community Cluster.

Please pray for us as we embark on this journey to Haiti!

Fr. Nils Hernandez, Pastor

### **OUR MINISTRY TO OUR SISTER PARISH IN HAITI**

The ministry to our sister parish in Haiti has very personal and emotional connections since my late wife Kathy was part of the team that initiated the drive to assist Our Lady of the Assumption Parish. The original team started something that has grown into a fulfillment of our Christian obligation to help the poor. It is not only personal though as I have witnessed people from the entire cluster join together and continually give of their time, talent, and treasure to help the poorest of the poor. I believe it has brought our parishes closer together with a new sense of collaboration and deep sense of solidarity for the purpose of proclaiming Christ's gospel message.

The ultimate goal is to help this community become self-sustaining which may be a lengthy process, but I feel a miracle has already occurred to see a school built and being used by teachers and students. It is a beginning to help raise the people from a life of poverty and starvation. We still have a long way to go since there is never enough food let alone money for teachers and school supplies.

On behalf of the Cluster Haiti Committee, I thank all those who are committed to help our sister parish and we hope that our Parishes will continue to support this great ministry to the poor. Our vision is that our entire community of Wright County prays for our Haitian brothers and sisters that they can rise above their poverty and starvation.

May God bless our loving solidarity!

Deacon Jerry Temeyer