

Easter, 2013

Outreach

at Assumption

Mission team celebrates parish feast with Haitian partners

by Members of Haiti Mission Team,

“Come to Haiti to celebrate with us,” said Fr. Leveque Bien Amie when he visited Assumption last September. Four members of Hands and Hearts with Haiti did just that this past February. We joined in the celebration of the feast day for Our Lady of Deliverance Chapel in Noyau, Haiti.

During the preparation phase of our trip, there wasn't much time to think about what a feast day celebration would be like. It wasn't until the day of the celebration, February 24, that the words from Matthew Kelly's book, *Rediscover Catholicism*, struck home...“We become what we celebrate.” As Catholics, we celebrate love with marriage, we celebrate Christmas and Easter. We celebrate communion with God & community with the Mass. **The spirit of Catholicism is about celebration**

We wondered what the feast day celebration in Haiti would be like.

As we went into the small, poorly constructed rural church, we were entering into a celebration unlike any we had experienced before. The spirit of celebration was like electricity flowing through the large crowd as it gathered. Youth choirs from the four rural chapel communities processed in singing and doing a liturgical dance. Musicians from St. Louis Parish in Mirebalais brought their generator and musical instruments to add to the drumming of the chapel players.

Parishioners sang jubilantly as Fr. Leveque and the chapel sacristan welcomed the community to the feast day celebration. The Liturgy of the Word was a celebration of the Transfiguration, but what was most reveal-

ing about the community's sense of celebration was the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Parishioners processed forward with bags of charcoal, baskets of fresh produce, grains and live chickens. They processed forward in dance carrying their produce on their heads or in baskets with arms out-



stretched. Everything was placed at the foot of the altar in a presentation of the first fruits for the table of the Lord. It was an experience filled with song, color and joy, but most of all, a sense of reverence and prayerfulness. Everyone's focus was toward the table of celebration.

There are no words that can adequately describe the celebration of this community on this day. Every-

thing bespoke a humble awareness of who Jesus is and his great sacrifice for us.

Economic disparity and abject poverty haven't disappeared from Haiti. But the “Richness” of worship that is at the core of this small, poor rural farming community was something that we, as a mission team, had never experienced before.

As Fr. Leveque processed out at the end of Mass, an elderly, weathered woman approached three of our team members and invited them into



a dance of celebration. The joy was contagious. It was beautiful to see them “Become What they Celebrate!”

Together we can make a difference in Haiti

Most of the mission team's time in Haiti was spent working with Water Missions International to evaluate a large clean water system for a rural chapel. We also listened to Fr. Leveque's vision for a future school in Noyau. It first requires the development of a Goat Project to provide an income for community members who would then be able to sustain the school by paying for tuition and text books. Through the generosity of Assumption Parish members, Hands and Hearts with Haiti has provided the funds to start this project.

Education team to visit Haiti in April

Mary Stout and Mary Zabrecky will travel to Haiti April 1-April 6 to visit with Fr. Leveque and the schools in and around Mirebalais. Together they hope to develop an understanding of Haiti's educational system and work with Fr. Leveque in the planning of the educational needs of our Chapel Communities. Please keep them and their families in your prayers.

Assumption Human Care collection helps Thea Bowman Center change lives

The Thea Bowman Center is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life in the Mt. Pleasant community of Cleveland through food support, children's programs, and adult education. Part of the proceeds from Assumption's monthly Human Care collection are donated to support these efforts.

"Miss Ella, I passed! I passed!"

Those were the words shouted exuberantly to Thea Bowman Center executive director, Ella Thomas, by a recent TBC GED student shortly after he passed his GED exam. For the first time, the young father, who had attended classes while his daughter was in TBC's summer program, was able to visualize a future that included the possibility of college. It was a great moment for him, and a special moment for the Thea Bowman Center.

Adults like this young father know the support they and their children can count on at the Center. As word has spread, TBC programs have expanded significantly in the past year.

A big THANK YOU for your support

The work of Hands and Hearts with Haiti and the Human Care Committee would not be possible without your generous support.

Your donations this Lent will assist in the ongoing funding of the Goat Project, the water projects and future educational projects in Haiti. Your support by prayer, shared talents or donations is appreciated and being used to help the poorest of the poor in rural Haiti. We cannot make a huge difference in

Adult Education:

- This year, 400 students enrolled in the GED program, which is the only one in the Mt. Pleasant area. Despite the challenge to attend regularly because of life's pressures, many persistently plug away.
- A record 18 students have passed the test.
- More than 225 took advantage of computer skills training.
- TBC hosted its first College and Career Training Educational Fair.

Children's Programs:

- The arrival of 60 children from multiple elementary schools quadrupled the previous year's enrollment in the summer TBC.KIDS program. This year even more are expected.
- Many of the children currently fill the ranks of the after-school activities where they receive an evening meal.

Food Assistance:

The food pantry serves an average of 150 children and adults each week, as does the community hot meal on Saturday.

this poor country but we will continue "to do small things with great love."

Your ongoing donations to the monthly Human Care collection help make possible many of the programs at the Thea Bowman Center. They are also used to sponsor children in the developing world, and support the West Side Catholic Center and Broadview Heights Lend A Hand. We also aid Good Shepherd Catholic Church in the Holy Land with our South Hills Cluster.

A busy Fall and Winter for members of Human Care Committee

Christmas Sharing Program

Preparations for the Christmas Sharing Program at Thea Bowman Center began at Assumption in mid October. Things swung into high gear from December 20th to 22nd when turkeys, potatoes, vegetables, butter, eggs and non-perishables for 300 families were picked up, packed, delivered, stored and distributed by Human Care Committee members, Knights of Columbus and many parishioners. Lots of work but worth it!!



Food distribution on December 22nd

Fourth Annual Snow Ball

This year's Snow Ball was held at St. Michael's Party Center in Broadview Heights. Two hundred and ten guests enjoyed hors d'oeuvres, a hearty meal and dancing to Dan Zola's nineteen piece band. Side boards and a basket raffle were also available. The occasion raised \$7200; proceeds were divided equally between the Thea Bowman Center and Hands and Hearts with Haiti.



SnowBall co-chairpersons Sally Zola, Joyce Linton and Carol Janas