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The
Lazarus
Project

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Issue 5

Responding to the cry of Lazarus in Haiti [Luke 16:19-22]

Academic Excellence At VoH

In spite of the 5-week delay before the opening of the school year (2008-09) due to the storms that ravaged much of Haiti, our VoH students performed remarkably well. National exams must be taken by all students finishing the 6th, 9th and 12th grades, and the Philo class (college preparatory).

The nation-wide average pass rate is said to be 30%; that was down to 24% this school year. At the VoH school the pass rate for 6th graders was **87%**, for 9th graders **86%**, for 12th graders **55%**, and for the Philo class **100%**. (The three 6th graders and many of the 12th graders who failed have taken the exams again — no results available at this time.) Although our pass percentages are down a little from previous years, they are way above the national averages. Considering all the obstacles to learning the children have to overcome, we can only say, to them and the staff, “**Well done!**”

Holy Spirit – Advent Lead VBS

A team of 12 dedicated servants (8 from Advent, Boca Raton, FL and 4 from Holy Spirit, Juno Beach, FL) conducted a VBS for 3rd and 4th graders at the Village of Hope school the week of July 19. According to Pastor Bollinger, the two groups blended so well and were so well organized one could easily have assumed they had been doing this for years! Imagine this: they met the students at the VoH gate at 7:45 AM each morning, which means they boarded the truck back at Hope House at 6:30 each morning, after spending at least an hour in preparation for the day! And not one word of complaint was ever heard.

Each day’s program at VoH consisted of opening and closing worship and four group activities — crafts, recreation, drama and photography — all built around the theme of the story of Moses leading the people of Israel out of bondage in Egypt into the freedom of the Promised Land. It was a theme that held special meaning for the Haitian children. It was a Spirit-filled experience our 3rd and 4th graders will never forget.

The team, under the leadership of Advent’s Pastor Andy Hagen, also found time to visit Grace Mission and the Little Children of Jesus home as well as Food for the Poor, where they had the exciting experience of helping to serve the people who came for the daily feeding program. Pastor Hagen, the only team member who had been to Haiti previously (and a member of the Lazarus Project Board of Directors) arrived eight days before the rest of the team to spend part of his Sabbatical observing Haitian culture. Other team members were: [from Advent] Scott & Debbie Dingle with their children Brooke and Colin, Steve and Lisa Becker, and Brian Ward, Advent’s intern from Luther Seminary in St. Paul, MN; [from Holy Spirit] Pat Cherry and son Chris, and Doug & Andrean Wessel (seasonal members at Holy Spirit who came all the way from Spearfish, S. Dakota, to join the team).

“Summer Enrichment” A Blessing

Village of Hope children in grades five and up, 140 of them, were blessed by this year’s “Summer Enrichment” program. The program lasted only one week (July 22-31) this year, but Pastor Bollinger reports it was the best such event ever. The classes in art, woodworking, crocheting, bead making, music, hand sewing, recyclable art, basket weaving and cross stitch were truly “enrichment” experiences for these children whose lives are otherwise devoid of such “extra-curricular” activities. The daily lunch for all attending the classes was another great blessing — for most of them there would have been no noon meal at home. The “show-and-tell” program at the close of the week became a contest to determine which was the best class. In the end the competition ended in a nine-way tie! They were all that good!

The excellence of the program was a direct reflection of the excellence of the teaching staff. They came from northern Virginia (8) and the Philadelphia area (3). Four of the eleven were Roman Catholic, one came from a Community Church, and the rest were Lutherans from Peace [Alexandria], Prince of Peace [Springfield], and Emmanuel [Vienna]. It was gratifying to see such a variety of God’s people coming together with such devotion and generosity to enrich the lives of some of God’s precious little ones. “THANKS” from all of us to Cynde Mausolf, Marni Maree, Marion, Stephen and Aaron McInturff, Jenny Murphy, Crystal Nichols, Stephanie Raleigh, Tricia and Mellissa Gillespie, and Tom Lambaise. They all gave, and received, such great blessings!

VOH Children Safer Now

Most of the children who attend our VoH school have to cross the increasingly busy national highway on the way to the campus. Fortunately, in recent years there have been no accidents and no children have been injured or killed — tragedies that did happen a few times years ago. But the danger has been real. Now, thanks to the VoH Parents’ Committee and the sewing ladies at Prince of Peace [Springfield, VA], there are uniformed crossing guards to help the children cross the highway safely. When the Prince of Peace team showed up on their most recent visit to Haiti they were sporting brightly colored vests and carrying flags that said



Teacher Training Another Gift From God

Every summer Pastor Bollinger has tried to offer some training seminars for the VoH teaching staff. This year, by the grace of God, the sessions turned out to be the best ever! Bob Alerte, a native of Haiti, and a Food for the Poor employee, who spent all of his adult life as a teacher and school administrator in Canada, came back to Haiti in his retirement to help his people. He has been working in Food for the Poor’s housing ministry. What a blessed delight when he offered to conduct the VoH teachers’ seminars this summer! He was all set to do it right after school closed for the summer, but unexpected surgery changed all that. The training was rescheduled for August 31 and September 1, but again Bob had to be hospitalized.

At the first annual assembly of the new Evangelical Lutheran Church of Haiti (August 28-29) Pastor Bollinger had an opportunity to talk with Dr. Pat Hanson, head of the Florida-Bahamas Synod’s Global Missions Committee. We have known Pat as an outstanding educator for some time; she spent most of her life teaching everything from Kindergarten to graduate classes in school administration.

When she told Pastor Bollinger that she was staying over in Haiti for another week, he jumped at the chance. Would she be interested in leading the VoH teacher training seminars? Her answer: “I would be delighted.” So she did it. And what did our teachers say about it? “These were the best seminars ever!” **Thanks be to Pat** for her gracious offer — and **thanks be to God** for opening a new door when another was closed!

“Stop!” A big “**thank you!**” to those PoP ladies, and an even bigger “thank you!” to God for continuing to move His people to help the children of Haiti in so many ways!



Prince of Peace team with crossing flags and a crossing guard putting the flag to good use.

“Storms” Of Food

Last year storms struck Haiti again and again. One result was a critical lack of food for months following. This year foreign food aid has come in abundance; but the storms have not come. (Praise God for that!) The result of so much food on hand — there is a distribution problem! Both Food for the Poor and the Haitian Bureau of Nutrition and Development (BND), our Village of Hope’s two primary sources of food for the children, are over-stocked! So we won’t have to worry about our children going hungry this school year!

Pastor Bollinger reports that BND has so much food they once again decided to provide VoH (the only school to be thus blessed!) with enough beans, rice, salt and oil to feed each of our VoH families for close to a month! The only problem — the food had to be distributed on the Monday following delivery on Friday. That took some doing! But Pastor Bollinger, with the help of eight of Roberta’s school children and the VoH staff, managed to get the job done. They worked all day Saturday filling plastic bags with rice from Germany, beans from Canada and Brazil, salt from Saudi Arabia and oil from the USA. What a miracle — that God could work through people around the world, filling their hearts with compassion, to provide food for the hungry masses of Haiti!

But Monday brought another chapter to this exciting story. Try to imagine hundreds of desperate parents hearing there was to be distribution of free food at the



school on Monday! Was it really true? And would there be enough for everyone? They came early, and in great numbers, fearing they might be disappointed — as they have been so many times before, and wanting to make sure they would get their share, not out of greed, but out of desperation for themselves and their children. Although they had been given tickets and were assured there would be plenty for all, when the VoH gates were

opened to admit the first group for distribution, the whole mob stormed the gates and rushed in knocking Pastor Bollinger and several others to the ground and almost trampling them! With the doors to the food storage area locked, the operation was shut down until help from the police arrived. When order was restored things went smoothly and every family received what they had been promised.

This is a picture to remember the next time any of us drive to our grocery store, fill our shopping carts, and load the contents into our cars to drive home and safely carry the over-flowing bags into our homes for storage in freezers, refrigerators and cupboards. No pushing or shoving to get our share. No walking for miles to get food for our families. No carrying it back home on our heads. No fear that someone will steal it from us. Does it even need to be said? — how blessed we are and how grateful we should be! How moved we might be to express our gratitude by sharing our blessings with the poor of Haiti!

E-Mail List Growing

More and more of our readers are saying “Yes!” to our offer of getting this newsletter to them via e-mail. Here are the advantages: 1) **Prompt delivery** — no more waiting for the US Postal Service to get around to putting it in your mailbox. 2) **Financial Savings!** The hundreds of dollars we spend for paper and postage could well be put to better use. To make the change contact Darrel Pfeffer (d_pffer@bellsouth.net); he will remove your name from the regular mailing list and send your e-mail address on to Board member Marni Maree who is in charge of e-mail newsletters. Or, contact Marni directly (mmaree@cox.net) and she will notify Darrel of the change. **Please consider this way of improving our service and of saving money to use for ministry.**

Address Changes

Sponsors, please notify Darrell Pfeffer. Other donors please notify Pastor Wolber. We have to pay for returned newsletters. We make this request to you **seasonal people** as well as to those who make permanent moves. Please let us know when you go back up north, and when you are returning. Every dollar saved means more service to the poor!

How You Can Help?

Are you already a child sponsor? Please keep your sponsorship payments current (\$30 a month, \$360 a year). The Lazarus Project does not bill sponsors. We rely on you to keep your vital support current.

Sign up to be the sponsor of a child —OR— send in your one-time, or occasional gift. In any case, clip this form and mail, with your check (payable to Food for the Poor) to Darrell Pfeffer • 3551 SW 23rd St. • Delray Beach, FL, 33445.

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Address _____ E-Mail _____

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Please check appropriate box: Current Sponsor New Sponsor One-time Gift

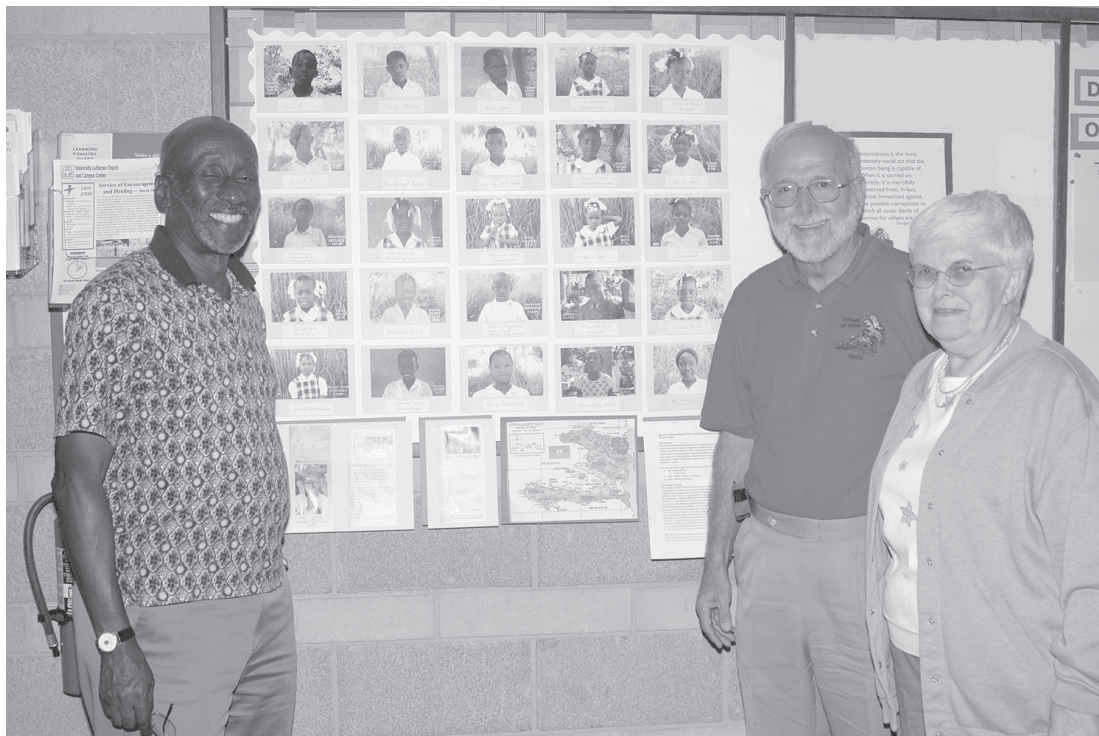
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Food for the Poor Mailings

Although most of our Lazarus Project supporters appreciate receiving the mailings that come from Food for the Poor to keep them informed on all the great things this outstanding organization is doing to serve the poor in Jesus' name, some would prefer otherwise. If you would like to change the number of mailings you receive from Food for the Poor, please contact the Donor Gift Processing department by emailing monicar@foodforthe poor.com -or- calling (954) 427-2222. You will still receive a year-end statement of your contributions for tax purposes.

University Lutheran [Gainesville] Sponsors 25 Children



Although University Lutheran [Gainesville, FL] is a fairly small congregation, members are currently sponsoring 25 children through the Lazarus Project. Pastor Bollinger recently visited ULC to say a personal “thank you.” Pictured with Pastor Bollinger are [L] Dr. Ron Gordon who is heading up a mission team next May, and [R] Janet Janke, sponsor co-ordinator.

This newsletter may be reprinted in part or in whole for local distribution.

Check out the Village of Hope web site: lazarusprojecthaiti.org

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