

Twin Parish News

A Partnership between St. William (St. Simons Island, GA) and St. Joseph (Côtes-de-Fer, Haiti)

Will You Help Students Continue Their Education?



The Poster Child for the 2018 Education Campaign, is from St. Anthony School.

Helping Hugs, Inc. is preparing to launch its **annual education fundraising campaign** in support of the children of St. Joseph parish.

Last month, you read the story of our recent education **fact-finding mission** to Haiti. Helping Hugs volunteers, Jo Heller-Orr and Mary Lynch, visited schools and met with teachers to better understand the needs of the parish's three schools.

Specific needs identified by Fr. Islaire Faustin include:

- * Back-to-school essentials (uniforms, shoes, book bags, textbooks, workbooks, teaching materials, etc.)
- * School lunch program
- * Tuition for 30 secondary school students
- * Salaries for 23 teachers, directors, cooks, and other workers.



*In addition to these operational needs, we've worked with local parish leaders to identify an **exciting, new program** that will give people of Côtes-de-Fer **access to computers** and the huge potential that technology can bring to their lives. Future issues of the newsletter will provide more information on St Joseph's new "Community Computer Center"*

Based on the above information, our **goal is \$16,000**. That will be a stretch for us, but it will go a long way to ensuring a quality education for the young people of this struggling community. **Won't you join us in this most worthwhile effort?**

Here's what you can do:

1. **Pray** - Pray for the members of our twin parish that God will continue to provide comfort and support to them in their struggle to improve their lives.
2. **Give** - Support Helping Hugs' annual Education Campaign. You'll be seeing more information about the campaign later this month.



As Jo Heller-Orr puts it:
"Against tremendous odds, Fr. Islaire Faustin and his staff are working hard to bring the benefits of a real, 21st century education to the young people of Côtes-de-Fer. We came away more convinced than ever that he knows what his people need and he will make good use of the money we send him."

Personal Reflections - My First Mission to Haiti

by Jo Heller-Orr

Editor's Note: *Every Helping Hugs meeting includes a prayer to Our Lady of Perpetual Help. Jo chose to begin her reflections with part of that prayer.*

"Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Patroness of Haiti, your image reminds us to reach out and help those in need, and with God's grace, help us to do what we can."

What a privilege it was to travel to Côtés-de-Fer representing Helping Hugs of St. William Church from April 9 to 14. I was part of an **education fact-finding mission** to visit schools and report back to the organization. I would like to share my personal perspective beginning with meeting Father Islaire Faustin, who is truly a Shepard of his flock.

As we traveled in the back seat of his pickup truck, up the side of a mountain, on a rock path, for over an hour to reach one of his ten chapel communities, I appreciated his need for reliable transportation. Father travels two hours and then walks two additional hours to reach another one of his chapels and he does this with a spirit of joy.



Fr. Islaire Faustin,
pastor, St. Joseph
church and ten
chapels

Immediately one sees how respected he is in the community. When we walked with Father through the campus at St. Joseph's school, the children flocked to give him a hug. Father Islaire graciously met with people from Côtés-de-Fer from sun up to sun down. Parishioners' issues ranged from a birth certificate to funding a youth event. All this was accomplished in addition to his pastoral responsibilities. Father gets more done in 24 hours than ten men!!!!





Madame Raymond Pierre and Jo Heller-Orr

I had the great privilege of meeting several parish members at a church function. After complimenting a woman on her cross necklace she immediately took the cross off and gave it to me with the most endearing smile. My heart was deeply touched that this lovely lady with so few material possessions was so quick to give me her personal treasure. I, in turn, put my angel necklace on her. The next morning she was the Eucharistic minister at mass. As I stood in front of her, we not only shared our faith but we wore a token of friendship from each other. A small part of me remains in Haiti and a part of Haiti sits on my dresser.



Children are a gift from God and the children of Côtes-d-e-Fer were a blessing to our visit. Even though we spoke different languages their smiles and hugs communicated the loving spirit of the children we met.

Father treated several children to popcorn and 7-UP after school on the rectory porch. (Photo at left)



Father Gilbert Exumé, Father Faustin's friend, Pastor, St. Matthew, Winder, GA; Jo Heller-Orr and Luthica Philogène (Douna).

We had the honor of meeting a high school student (Douna) who set the church up each morning for 6 a.m. mass, assisted with the daily readings, sang in the choir, led the youth group, and was a successful student. Her school uniform and appearance were impeccable even though she lived in the most dire setting. Her ardent spirit was inspirational

It seems that when we reach out to help others we receive so much in return. I am forever changed from my time in Côtes-de-Fer. How fortunate we are at St William to have the opportunity to directly impact the lives of people of St Joseph parish.

Your Construction Dollars at Work

Report to Donors



Last December, the next construction project was announced: the roof of St. Lawrence Chapel. At left, Father Faustin is pictured celebrating mass under a tarp.



Some masonry work was required before the roof construction could begin. That has been completed. Father sent photos of the green metal sheets and iron bars that have been delivered.

Thank you, everyone, for your continued support of our twin parish construction efforts.

Reading Glasses Distributed



At a recent Director's Meeting, Father Faustin distributed reading glasses that had been carried to Haiti on our Fact-Finding Mission trip in April.

Mary and Jo prepared a "test-kit" to choose the correct strength (above, right) and a generous donor made glasses cases to protect them from scratches (pictured with glasses below right).



You're Invited
to the next meeting of
Helping Hugs Inc. for Haiti

June 21, 2018

9 A.M.

Thrive at Frederica
3615 Frederica Road
St. Simons Island

*Plan to cast your vote for the Mayette water project

*Hear news of Father Faustin's 2019 Project Requests

*Preview the **Education** Committee's presentation to the parishioners

Dates of Note:

June 15 Start date: **EDUCATION CAMPAIGN FOR SCHOOLS**

June 21 General Meeting, Helping Hugs Inc.

June 23 Feast Day, Sacred Heart Chapel

June 23/24 **Education** Committee photo and oral
presentation to St. William parishioners
at all masses

July 1 **Education** Campaign flyer in St. William bulletin