

Brothers and sisters,

I am writing on behalf of our Sister Parish Committee to update you on Immaculate Conception Parish in Haiti. The committee is staying in contact with Father Junior online, as we usually do, and with gratitude to Debbie Gillott, our translator, we present them to you.

Referring back to the earthquake in 2010, Father Junior explained that, instead of repairing roads, bridges, buildings, and other infrastructure, Haitian leaders took the money to use for themselves. The last team we sent to Haiti in 2018 remembers how, even then, 8 years since the earthquake, the bridge leading from Saint Marc to Lalouere was still half-collapsed. It continues to deteriorate, now 2 years later. With the relief money having been appropriated by the unscrupulous, no medical infrastructure exists either, meaning no money and medical care to assist with the current pandemic. The leaders usually leave for America or Cuba when they need care, but now they are also stranded in Haiti to suffer with the rest of the country, which they betrayed in their greed.

In his own words, Father says:

*All goes on thanks to God. We live in a difficult situation in our country without the world. We are confined. The majority of the population is obliged to go out to find something to eat since we have no electricity to conserve things. The most serious thing is that the government has no adequate equipment for the doctors in order to care for the sick! Only God can manifest his mercy toward us and the world. Without this we will have many, many deaths. Pray for us. Pray to Our Lady of Perpetual Help for the people of Haiti that she will intercede for these poor people without wise and responsible leaders!*

More recently, Father added that, despite the circumstances, he's "holding on" and the school functions well, but inflation is increasing and so are the costs of living and of building materials for the school and rectory. Pointing to the ongoing political crisis which saw rioting and gang-like conscripted enforcement consume the capital, Port au Prince, over a year ago, Father said the situation is "truly sad" because of a growing lack of security, kidnapping everywhere in the country, misery, and strikes, noting that, "the political situation has taken over everything." He lamented that Haitian politicians do not seem to have a heart, as "they have done nothing to improve the conditions for the life of the people."

Father included some photos of the work completed on their new classrooms just before the COVID-19 pandemic struck. They have just enough money to finish the doors and the windows and for a few odd jobs. He continues to thank the sister parish committee, Father Wilke, Deacons Richard and Gregory, and all of the faithful for their support of the children and faithful of Lalouere. "Words escape me to express my gratitude toward you. A thousand thanks."

At this point, Father reflected on his history at the Immaculate Conception parish:

*I had an extraordinary experience with God. When I was named to this parish, it had nothing. I prayed and the Lord began to orient me to open my intelligence to see how to realize something for the glory of God and to show the world. And from there the idea to found a school at the parish came to mind. I set to work! With the Lord's help, I advanced with sureness, with confidence. The arrival of Sacred Heart Parish is a shower of grace and blessing after a time of intense prayer.*

When asked about the current COVID-19 crisis, Father reported that he remains confined by the decision of the Haitian government, which has closed everything. "I'm ok thanks to God," he said and, turning his attention to us, "I think of you and the whole team since the pandemic is raging in the USA also." He added concern for his people because many have to go out often for food since they have no electricity to conserve things. The greater tragedy is the lack of adequate medical equipment for the sick. He appeals to God, who alone "can manifest his mercy toward us and the world" and implored us to unite in prayer with them: "Pray for us! Pray to our Lady of Perpetual Help for the people of Haiti that she will intercede for this poor people without wise and responsible leaders! Nothing is impossible for God for our help is in His name. Union of prayer. BE CAREFUL!"

Your fellow servant in Christ,

Deacon Gregory