



JOINT CD BULLETIN

Haitian Update #5

March 1, 2010

A Bulletin of the Companion Diocese and missional relationships with the Diocese of the Dominican Republic: the Dioceses of the Central Gulf Coast, Georgia, Southeast Florida, Southwest Florida, Western Louisiana, South Carolina, Quincy, Southern Virginia, Virginia, and others.



(Editor's note: On February 14 DDG President David Morrow and yours truly went with Bishop Holguin to Port-au-Prince to meet with Bishop Duracin. We met at the Episcopal Seminary with Bishop Duracin who took us around to see some of the destruction. Going in we followed the DR Episcopal Church's panel truck carrying relief supplies. The following is a report and assessment of the situation. I send this out just three days after the cataclysmic earthquake in Chile – 500 times stronger but less destructive in terms of overall destruction and the loss of human life.)

Impressions: The devastation is massive – hard to get a physical feel from TV. The Episcopal Church's facilities in and around Port-au-Prince are a total loss. A vast majority of the concrete structures in Port-au-Prince were either completely destroyed or so structurally damaged that people are afraid to sleep in them. Consequently there are **hundreds of thousands of persons sleeping in tents in open areas** around the city.



Holy Trinity Cathedral in Port-au-Prince



Tent city at the Seminary

The Haitian Episcopal Church Efforts seemed well coordinated under Bishop Duracin. For example, some 2000 people live in the tent camp on the soccer field of St. Pierre Episcopal School adjacent to the seminary. It seemed well organized, had porta-potties, clean water (Water Missions International). Bishop Duracin oversees somewhere between **25,000 and 30,000 survivors who are living in more than 60 settlements connected to the diocese**. The seminary serves as the central supply point for the

distribution of food and other supplies. Religious services at the Cathedral are being held in a provisional shelter on the grounds of the old Cathedral.

There are positive signs: Daily life is reestablishing itself. We did not see any signs of violence and people all seemed quite peaceful. There appeared to be a **fair amount of petty commerce** going on



Rubble Removal at Holy Trinity School Complex

from street vendors, even the selling of souvenirs (to soldiers and other international relief workers?). People have to generate income to be able purchase food. We saw many people using sledge hammers to break up the rubble and pile it beside the streets – possibly with wages paid by the international organizations so as to help people earn money to purchase food. Activities have transitioned from immediate relief to cleanup. **Reconstruction will come later.**



Supplies from DR unloaded at Seminary

Development for its efficient and effective job in almost immediately (as soon as was humanly possible) setting up relief efforts to get food and other emergency supplies into Haiti. ERD purchased **two new panel trucks to distribute supplies in Haiti**, and an almost new one (at Bishop Holguín's insistence) for the Dominican Episcopal Church to use to send supplies over the border almost every other day. The Dominican Church is the land bridge to get supplies in, and Bishop Holguín has dedicated personnel to make sure this happens. **San Pablo Apóstol** in Jimaní on the DR side of the Haitian border is serving as a **staging point** for transporting supplies to Bishop Duracin.

Bishop Holguín **wholeheartedly praised Episcopal Relief and**



Pancaked building down onto first floor

Through contributions many of you have made to the **Dominican Development Group**, we have sent **\$140,000** to the Dominican Church dedicated for Haitian relief. With these funds we join many others in helping our brothers and sisters in Haiti.



Boy carrying water

Final Reflection: Reconstruction in Haiti will be a long term effort. The Episcopal Church's Executive Council and the Presiding Bishop have extended a **\$10 million challenge** to the broader Church for long term relief and reconstruction in Haiti. It will take years. **The challenge is for each of us, personally, to commit ourselves to help – over the long run.** With already strapped budgets, this money has yet to be raised. This will take all of us (individuals, parishes, dioceses and the Executive Council – i.e. the whole



The provisional cathedral

Episcopal Church) in multi-year commitments.

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