

Rebuilding Haiti Through the Empowerment of Girls

It was 10 years ago on January 12, 2010 that a 7.0 magnitude earthquake shook the island of Haiti. In the aftermath, 200,000 people died and 1.5 million left homeless. Homes, hospitals, and schools crumbled.

Lives changed in Haiti, ours did too, as we responded to a need in Leogane, Haiti. In the past years, we have been blessed to know many Haitians by name, our 10 girl-students, their families, the Sisters of the Companions of Jesus, the faculty of Annunciation, Our Lady of the Angels and Coeur de Marie Schools.

This past year the people of Haiti faced another devastating experience with protests and demonstrations against government policies and corruption. The unrest forced hospitals, schools, and businesses to shut down across the country for months. Only recently are classes resuming for students. This reality has significantly impacted the students, families, Sisters and teachers at our schools in Leogane.

“Schools raise a nation.” This quote reminds us of the critical importance of education. They represent the collective good of a nation allowing individuals to “educate, create, cooperate, produce, and prosper.” Education is the “engine of socio-economic development” in a country and beyond.

Knowing this drives us again to commit to educate 10 girls in grades 7-8-9 in Leogane, Haiti. You are invited to be part of their lives and the lives of their families at this critical time in Haiti through prayer and donations.

**Donations can be sent payable to:
Sisters of St. Joseph
5031 West Ridge Road
Erie, PA 16506
Memo: Mission Haiti**

Ash Wednesday Feb 26	Of 187 countries, Haiti ranks #168; the U.S. ranks #13; Canada #12. (Human Development Index '18) If you live in a top ranking country, commit to help 10 girls in Haiti.
Thursday Feb 27	Though there is a long history of political street protests in Haiti, the current challenge of day-to-day life has been paralyzing. Learn more https://www.thestkittsnevisobserver.com/in-haiti-protests-won't-stop
Friday Feb 28	Schools were forced to close including those in Leogane due to violence and barricades on streets. Schools opened again in January, 2020. Contribute for student school supplies.
Saturday Feb 29	Families and students depend on the meal provided at school for nourishment. Missing that meal during the school closing caused great hardship. If you have more than one meal a day, donate the typical cost of that meal.
Sunday March 1	Your donations supported the payment of Annunciation and Coeur de Marie teachers during the school closing assuring stability of teachers and their families. Appreciate the teachers you have or had. Tell them and donate in their name.
Monday March 2	To make up for school closings across Haiti September thru December, the school year at Annunciation and Coeur de Marie Schools opened in January and will extend thru July, 2020. Their school day goes from 7:00-3:00 daily.
Tuesday March 3	Violence in a community affects children as both witnesses and victim. They feel the effects of hunger, loss of regularity of school, support, and security. Pray for children experiencing effects of violence and war and pray for world peace.
Wednesday March 4	230 students-(grades1-6) attend Annunciation School. Coeur de Marie School has 282 students- grades (7-13).
Thursday March 5	Haiti remains the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. Learn more about their history. What has contributed to the long term poverty?
Friday March 6	What might your learnings mean for our girl-students in Leogane...for Ferlanda, Sheidna, Slat, Ferla in grade 7; Taila, Rose, Kimberlie, Princess in grade 8; Michela, and Nastacia in grade 9.. Talk to others about what you are learning.
Saturday March 7	In the recent uprisings, the people took to the streets to protest the rise of fuel prices, lack of safe water, food, safe housing, sanitation, and health care.

Sunday March 8	17 of 17 students from Coeur de Marie Secondary School graduated from Year 13 in July 2019. All of them passed the government test. Congratulations!
Monday March 9	The number of Haitians facing food insecurity rose to 3.7 million this year, up from 2.6 million in 2018. (UN Humanitarian) Have you ever really been without food?
Tuesday March 10	Nearly 1.2 million Haitians will only be able to eat one meal every other day and about 2.8 million might eat just one meal a day. What is the cost of eating 3 meals a day for you? Donate the cost or half of it to the Haitian children.
Wednesday March 11	In Haiti, a quarter of a million children – compelled by extreme poverty, social isolation and lack of access to food and shelter –live in a state of domestic servitude as a restavek. Look up what that means.
Thursday March 12	Restavek children spend their days performing menial labor without pay, education, nutrition, or hope. This has been called a new form of slavery.
Friday March 13	In the absence of family, full citizenship, and fundamental human rights, restavek children endure physical, emotional and sexual abuse. Think about why families are forced to do this.
Saturday March 14	The inability to pay school tuition and family pressure to start earning income cause many children to drop out before secondary school. Help enable the girls to stay in school
Sunday March 15	In pre-earthquake Haiti there were 250,000 restavek children in Haiti, two-thirds of which are girls. The level of poverty is so great that families can't feed the children.
Monday March 16	Daily life for a Haitian is extremely challenging. Infant and maternal mortality are the highest in the Western hemisphere. Most of these are preventable..
Tuesday March 17	Civil unrest and community violence impact the entire community, with detrimental effects on a child's health. Think about how you get medical help when you are ill.
Wednesday March 18	Haiti faces more natural disasters than other Caribbean nations. Positioned on a Faultline, directly in the path of most hurricane formations through the Gulf of Mexico, the nation suffers earthquakes, extreme flooding, and wind damage. This increases the level of poverty they experience.

Thursday March 19	Think about what you're learning about life in Haiti for our 10 girls, both the opportunities and the challenges. On this Lenten journey, how does it speak to you?
Friday March 20	Girls around the world face enormous obstacles to get a quality education, among them: poverty, geographical isolation, minority status, disability, early marriage and pregnancy, gender-based violence, and traditional attitudes about the roles of girls and women. Ponder that!
Saturday March 21	An educated girl is more likely to stay healthy, save money, build a business, have healthy children, educate sons and daughters equally. How about that for world growth!
Sunday March 22	In Haiti, only 5% of children in 1st grade will arrive at 6th grade and only 29% will reach the final year of upper secondary. Together we can help move that statistic to 100%.
Monday March 23	Watch THE GIRL EFFECT on YouTube. AGAIN! Find it at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WlvnE4_KMNw Share it with your friends. Invite them to also to make a difference in the lives of 10 girls in Haiti.
Tuesday March 24	Access to quality education opens doors and is key to the future development of Haiti, yet access is limited. How much has quality education made a difference for you?
Wednesday March 25	Over 80% of schools in Haiti are private. 90.5% of secondary schools are private. Tuitions is a barrier for many. The girls and families are very grateful to you for your help.
Thursday March 26	Less than 22% of students go on to secondary school after primary school. Haitians receive an average of 4.9 years of education.. You helped our 10 girls beat the average already...lets keep them in school!
Friday March 27	Imagine what the day is like as a student in Haiti. What might be the difficulties and the challenges?
Saturday March 28	About 2.5 million Haitians live in extreme poverty (below \$1.25 per day), predominantly in rural areas where they are heavily dependent on small family farms.
Sunday March 29	Fortunately, for the school children the Sisters of the Companions of Jesus operate Bethlehem Farm. This means help with food and work.

Holy Thursday - April 9

Jesus washed his disciples' feet as a sign of His love and service. How can you be a sign of Jesus' love?

Good Friday - April 10

Today recall Jesus' suffering and death. How is Jesus' suffering like the suffering of the people of Haiti?

Holy Saturday - April 11

Today await on the New Life that the Resurrection brings. Pray for new life for the people of Haiti.

Monday March 30	Bethlehem farm helps to feed children and families. The farm produces sugar cane, fruits, vegetables; and maintains live stock. This is a real blessing for students and families.
Tuesday March 31	Women are most often the collectors/ managers of water in a households and farmers of irrigated and rain fed crops. Support clean drinking water access for the students.
Wednesday April 1	By investing in education for Taila and Ferla and Michela you make a difference in their lives and they will make a difference in lives of others. Together you all become a part of a hopeful future for all of us.
Thursday April 2	"Haitians are proud and hopeful people who don't want our pity, but simply the opportunity to live the best life that they can. In many ways they are just like us." How does this speak to you?
Friday April 3	Coeur de Marie Secondary School, pictured on the front of this flyer, was originally destroyed by the 2010 earthquake. This new school opened in 2018. Thanks for your help!
Saturday April 4	Dieunis graduated from College Coeur de Marie, passed the entrance exam for University of Notre Dame of Haiti – UNDH and accepted into the 5 year Agronomy Program. Saradine , grad of College Coeur de Marie recently graduated from the nursing program at UNDH.
Sunday April 5	Our schools are more than schools in Leogane. This complex is the heart of the community: teaching, feeding, supporting elders, providing safe drinking water, offering encouragement.
Monday April 6	Your support from the trauma and poverty experienced by the students, parents, Sisters, and the entire Leogane Community offers encouragement and healing. It speaks to them of someone caring.
Tuesday April 7	A wise woman once asked "How many people are in your community?" After allowing time for thought, she said: "If you answer any less than 7- plus billion, you have left someone out." Food for thought as you journey!
Wednesday April 8	We all have a story that includes choice and opportunity to make a difference and have an impact on others and the world. Write your story and share it with someone.

Sisters of St. Joseph 2020 Lenten Journey With Our Neighbors in Haiti *Coeur de Marie Secondary School*



*"Respond to the Gospel,
Live it more fully and more deeply
Reach out to the poor and broken,
End injustice, build peace.
And find joy in it all."
Pope Francis*