



Christmas Reflections

You may have the thought that it might be great to run away to a monastery, away from the commercialization, the hectic hustle,



the demanding family responsibilities of Christmas-time so that we could have a prayerful holy Christmas. If we did that we might forget the lesson of the incarnation, of the enfleshing of God. We don't leave the world. Instead we live in it and try to transform it. So why not begin with the contagious joy of Christmas?

The contagious joy of Christmas can be seen in the loving spirit behind the gift-giving. The glory of God became one of us to tell us that he loves us. And, in our Christmas giving, the genuine person symbolizes their inner desire to spread this Good News.

At Christmas we celebrate Incarnation! It is a season to rejoice. The eternal God comes into the flesh and blood of humanity. Christmas cards portray the little Babe, the Manger, the Magi, the shepherd. Little children learn that today is Jesus' birthday. But these pieces of the story only touch the edge of the mysterious event which brings us together. The Good News is that the God of Mercy has come into the history of humanity to bring us perfect peace. It is the peace of mind and heart and soul that the world cannot give. Allow this peace of Jesus to fill your soul and joy will follow. Then do not be surprised to see that others are following, After all, the spirit of Christmas is contagious and desired.

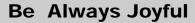
It is our mission to make holy the secular aspect of Christmas just as the early Christians baptized the Christmas tree. And we do this by being holy people - kind, patient, generous, loving, laughing people - no matter how maddening is the Christmas rush..." Don't spread the



"maddening". Spread the love and joy!

Pope Benedict XVI says: "Joy is the true gift of Christmas, not the expensive gifts that call for time and money. We can communicate this simply: with a smile, a kind gesture, a little help, forgiveness. And the joy we give will certainly come back to us...Let us pray that this presence of the liberating joy of God shines forth in our live."







An Invitation to Grow in Joy

I invite you at this time in history when our world seems to have no place for joy, to listen to St. Paul as he says to us: "Be always joyful." Repeat this often during the day. Let it be your mantra and the words

come all ye Fairh

will fill your soul. They will take root and you will be always joyful.

Christmas Blessings!

May the joy of Christmas fill your hearts.

May the glory of the angels surround your being so you too can make known the Good News that lesus is born.

Like the shepherds

may you adore Jesus on bended knee.

May this Christmas lead you closer to the heart of Christ

and deepen your understanding of the great gift

of God becoming man.

You are always in our prayers.

A novena of masses will be offered for you, your families and your intentions

Sisters of St. Paul



Sister Updates:

Sr. Francis went to Haiti on November 2 and returned on the 8th. She was able to bring money and help the Sisters with a way of reporting how they will be using the money.

Sr. Therese is with her family to help with the arrival of family members. Her parents moved from California to Texas and 37 family members are immigrating from Vietnam to take up residence in the United States.

Sr. Martha Trinh is still on a leave of absence to take care of her parents. Her younger brother died.

Sr. Anne Charles was granted another year to help to take care of her mother who has tongue cancer.



Despite the fact that Sr. Cristina just arrived in our District December 3, 2009, she has already been transferred to Canada at the request of Mother Myriam. Sr. Cristina responded with a generous "yes". The finance person in Canada is ill and Sr. Cristina has an accounting background and speaks French. May God bless her in this time of transition.



Sr. Marie Kim will graduate this month after having earned a bachelor's degree in nursing.





Sr. Gloria Schultz has been named the USA District Superior for three more years.

Sr. Gloria Schultz and her secretary, Debby, went to a workshop in St. Louis, MO on retirement funding for small communities. It was an inaugural workshop to address the issues of those in Religious Life and the aging. The trend is that there is soon going to more retired Religious than working Religious. We see this happening within our own community.



Mission Projects:

Thank you for your generosity in reaching out to others with such deep compassion. We raised \$47, 305.45 since October 2009. The break down of how the money was disbursed it as follows: Child and Family \$7627.00 Schools \$12, 872.00

\$1404.00 to each of the 9 schools + \$205.00 more for Holy Name

Haiti \$26,806,45

We have now begun our new set of mission projects. The students at Northern Michigan University through Campus Ministry helped us to prepare the mailing on October 5th. We are grateful for their help. They always make this project more interesting and fun.

This year we are continuing with our help to Haiti and to the Catholic Schools in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Once again we have Venezuela as one of our projects. There are many small tribes ignored by the government. The project for safe drinking water is well on the way however they still need more funds to finish it and then to build a central building for education of adults and the children.

Bishop Noa Home Nativity Set

Our hearts are very grateful to all of our generous donors who made it possible to have our first BNH Outdoor Nativity Set to be blessed and enjoyed this year! In this Newsletter we wish to acknowledge those donors who were not yet acknowledged in our previous Newsletter. Once again, "Thank you" and God Bless You in every way! We love you and hold you in our daily Masses and prayers. --Sr. Rosalie Hughes, SPC

Kevin Julian, Escanaba, MI Pat Chenier, Gladstone, MI Jeff Martin, Escanaba, MI Tom Pepin, Escanaba, MI Peter LaBay, Escanaba, MI Bert Perriman, Escanaba, MI John Hughes, Sr., Escanaba, MI Clarice Messier, Escnaba, MI Bob & Shirley Leveille, Gladstone, MI Frank (in memory) & Elaine St. Martin, Escanaba, MI

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Ellsworth & Mary Viau, Rapid River, MI
Delaine & Joey Bishop, Escanaba, MI
Charles & Therese Palomaki, Munising, MI
Special thanks for the MANGER: Built &
donated by John & Mary Baker, Escanaba, MI

We look forward to seeing you, and those donors acknowledged earlier, this Christmas at the Bishop Noa Home! Thank You ALL

Cameroon

From July 15 to 29, 2010, I had the opportunity to visit our Sisters in Cameroon along with Sr. Monique, our French Assistant. It was my first time to go to Africa, and I had some ideas what to expect – such as the poverty of the majority



of the people, the tropical climate, and the dangers of malaria – but there were so many things that I experienced that were different from other countries I had visited.

Our Sisters: We have 27 Sisters in Cameroon. There are 5 missionary Sisters – 2 from the Philippines, I from Madagascar, I from France, and I from Japan. The other 22 Sisters are Cameroonians. Our Sisters work at 2 clinics and one hospital. They help out in the parishes wherever they are. We have two schools of our own and work in two other schools that belong to the parishes. The schools were closed for the summer break while we were there, but we were able to see the buildings. The rooms are bare – one chalkboard, wooden bench type desks or wooden chairs and tables for the youngest children. I was

extremely surprised to learn that in many of the classrooms, they have from 50 to 70 students.

School system in Cameroon: There are "maternal schools" – which are for children from 3 to 5 or 6 years old – until they are ready





to enter the primary school. The "primary schools" – for children from about ages 6 to 8, and the "elementary schools" – for children ages 9 to 12. Then there are "lycées" for students ages 13 to 16, and then "colleges" for students aged 16 to 18. The academic year in



Cameroon runs from September to June, at which time, end of year examinations are always written. There are exams required for passing from one school to another, and when a student passes the "bac" (baccalaureate), it is a great joy because then they are qualified to go to the university. Unfortunately, most students in Cameroon do not go beyond the primary grades.

The roads: In visiting the communities where our Sisters live, none of them were accessible by black-topped roads. In the main city, Yaoundé, most of the roads are good, but about 25 miles out of the city to the north you drive over roads of hard-packed sand, although currently there is work going on to extend the highway over another 25 to 50 miles. To the east of Yaoundé, there was about 150 miles of good blacktopped road, and the rest was hard dirt road, with many gullies – not ruts from tires as we have in the US, but larger or smaller gullies where the rains washed out the sand at whatever angle had the least resistance.

Most of the time, we couldn't go more than 30 miles per hour, and wherever there were ruts we had to drive in low gear, and choose which part of the road was the most level. Actually we didn't have to worry about traffic because very few people outside of the city have cars, so we only encountered a few cars, some buses, several motorcycles, and some logging trucks – which do not do any favors to the bad roads.

It seems that most of the people walk or take the bus, unless they live in the bigger cities, which do have cars and taxis. The buses (large vans) can hold about 20 or 30 people, and the top of the buses are piled full of things that the people are bringing – huge bunches of bananas, bags of vegetables, baskets of chickens, etc. So every time the bus stops, it takes time to get the belongings off the top of the bus.



Cameroon (continued)

<u>Mbandjock</u> – We have three Sisters in Mbandjock. One of them is a nurse at the hospital, one is the director of the Catholic School and the other is a teacher. There is also a young woman who would like to be a Sister, and she spent the last year as a teacher in the school. The children have been coming to the Sisters' school for many years now, even though the buildings are very old. In fact there are two school rooms in the former barn.

But it has been the hope of our Congregation to build a new school, and the project is under way. So far the maternal school is completed and the primary school is half finished. Most of the funding comes from our Congregation, with contributions from the Sisters all around the world, and there have also been donations from Japan. Right now the main need is to dig a well and to put in flush toilets in the existing buildings, and to finish the primary building. At this point in early August, we are afraid that some students will have to attend school this year also in the old building.



In Obala, we have buildings for all levels of education. It is the first school that our Sisters had, ever since we began ministry in Cameroon in the mid 1960's. The Joseph Stinzi College is usually at the top of the list of secondary schools in the Diocese. We have

about 6 Sisters that work there.

In Obala, also, we are raising chickens and pigs in order to supplement the income we receive from the schools and clinics. As you can imagine, many of the parents are not able to pay much in the line of tuition, but the Sisters try to accept their children anyway. The same goes for clinic fees. People are never turned away.

In Cameroon, as in our first convent in Levesville, France in 1696, our aim is to help raise the human and spiritual level of the children and others with whom we come into contact.

Please keep our District of Cameroon in your prayers.















Pope John Paul II said: The traditional "Christmas tree" is a very ancient custom which exalts the value of life, as in winter the evergreen becomes a sign of undying life. In general, the tree is decorated and Christmas gifts are placed under it. The symbol is also eloquent from a typically Christian point of view: It reminds us of the



"tree of life" (see Genesis 2:9), representation of Christ, God's supreme gift to humanity.

The message of the Christmas tree, therefore, is that life is "ever green" if one gives: not so much material things, but of oneself: in friendship and sincere affection, and fraternal help and forgiveness, in shared time and reciprocal listening.



The Joy You Give John Greenleaf Whittier

"Somehow, not only for Christmas But all the long year through, The joy that you give to others Is the joy that comes back to you. And the more you spend in blessing The poor and lonely and sad, The more of your heart's possessing Returns to you glad."





The following article was written by Sue Zhulkie promoting our Mission Projects. We asked her if we could share her article since it has a clear perspective on the living situation in Haiti. We invite you to help us get her article to a larger population by sharing it with family and friends who do not get our newsletter.

<u>Do You Want to Help Children in Haiti or any of the Sisters Mission Projects?</u>

Have you continued to see appeals to help Haiti rebuild after the earthquake? There are several legitimate charities that are doing good work in Haiti, the poorest country in our hemisphere. You may want to help, but don't know how effective these charities are. Our own diocesan Sisters of St. Paul de Chartres have established missions in Haiti for a number of years. It's never been easy, but now the Sisters live in tents, just as their protégés are forced to do.

Around 56% of Haitians live on less than \$1 per day. 20% live on less than \$2 per day. The tuition at the eight schools in Haiti operated by the Sisters of St. Paul de Chartres is \$200 (\$20 per month) per student, which is almost two thirds of a total year's income. This meager amount provides uniforms, shoes and teacher pay for 10 months a year. Yet, how does a family decide to educate even one child? Haiti is still in the most desperate situation as a result of the earthquake and the lack of government infrastructure.

For example, there are few government run schools in Haiti.

Suppose the only school in your town was the Catholic school. As a comparison, say your household earns the median income in Marquette County, \$43.599 (according to USDA statistics in 2008), or about \$120 per day before taxes. If you wanted an education for your children, you would pay about \$29,000 per year for one child's tuition. Would education be that important for your children? How many could you send at that rate?

The Sisters are making do with whatever they have in the ruins. They need medicine and supplies for their medical clinic to serve the poor. Help is needed for children's tuition and to pay teachers' meager salaries of \$40 per month for ten months (\$400). Children are given food at school, but the family may have no food at home! They are increasing their efforts to feed the children at school, with a goal of sending a care package of food home as often as possible. The Sisters clearly make a difference in the lives of the people they reach. The motherhouse in

Rome is helping as much as possible, but more help is needed.

The U.S.A Sisters have three projects:

- Catholic Schools in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan
- Safe drinking water in Venezuela,
- Haitian Schools and Health Clinic

The Sisters' **Compassionate Hearts Club** is a way to participate in any of their projects. All donations go directly to the aid of those it is named for. According to Sister Gloria Schultz, USA District Superior, it will not go for salaries or organizational expenses (except possibly for shipping costs to get supplies to Haiti).

Many would like to help in Haiti but are not sure that their donations reach the intended recipients. The Sisters of St. Paul have established methods of getting donations directly to their schools and clinic. They are our local connection to the poorest of the poor in our hemisphere.

If you would like to join them in mission, in your charity you may send a donation to: Sisters of St. Paul de Chartres, 1300 County Road 492, Marquette, MI 49855. More information is available on their web site: sistersofstpaulusa.org

Let Me Not Keep Christmas Linda Felver

A Book of Christmas, Nashville: Upper Rooms,

1988, p. 48

"Let me not wrap, stack, box, bag, tie, tag, bundle, seal, keep Christmas.

Christmas kept is liable to mold. Let me give Christmas away, unwrapped, by exuberant armfuls. Let me share, dance, live Christmas unpretentiously, merrily, responsibly with overflowing hands, tireless steps and sparkling eyes.

Christmas given away will stay fresh—even until it comes again."





Bells on Christmas Day Pulpit Helps, 12-92, p. 23

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was filled wi sorrow at the tragic de of his wife in a fire in 1861. The Civil War broke out the same year and it seemed this was a additional punishment. Two years later, Longfellow was again saddened to learn that h own son had been seriously wounded in the Army of the Potomac. Sitting down to his desk, one Christmas Da he heard the church b ringing. It was in this setting that Longfello wrote these lines: I heard the bells on Christmas Day Their old familiar carols blay. And wild and sweet The words repeat

Of peace on earth, good will to men! And thought how, as the day had come The belfries of all Christendom Had rolled along The unbroken song Of peace on earth, good will to men! Till, ringing, singing on its way, The world revolved from night to day, A voice, a chime, A chant sublime Of peace on earth, good will to men! Then from each black, accursed mouth The cannon thundered in the South. And with the sound The carols drowned Of peace on earth, good will to men! It was as if an earthquake rent The hearth-stones of a continent, And made forlorn The households born Of peace on earth, good will to men! And in despair I bowed my head; "There is no peace on earth," I said; "For hate is strong And mocks the song Of peace on earth, good will to men." Then pealed the bells more loud and deep. "God is not dead, nor doth he sleep! The wrong shall fail, The right prevail,

With peace on earth, good will to men!"



Haiti - November 2-8, 2010 by Sr. Francis Mortola

Last April Sr. Gloria and I went to Haiti to bring much needed supplies for our Sisters and for their ministries. I am so grateful to be able to go back after seven months. This time, the airline is not as accommodating to passengers to bring extra luggage. It is just 2 free luggage of 50 pounds each piece and \$100.00 for the third luggage. The third luggage I brought was full of needed medicines for the clinic at Oriani.

Two of our Haitian Sisters met me at the airport. We went first to the "District House" in Delmas - just 15 minutes from the airport. Instead of tents, the Sisters have 2 small houses - at least they have cement floor and wooden

walls. The three story school building was totally destroyed. Now, they have a school "building"...made of some wooden poles and tarps for roof.

There is more traffic through the city of Port Au Prince. Buses are all over the highways managing through rutted

the devastation of the earthquake in January is still so visible. Crumbled buildings are still there as well as debris on the sides of the highways. I noticed men carrying twisted rods, wires, pieces of wood and metal that they were able to salvage from the ruins...anything that they can use to improve their "houses". Tents are still all over the city - many located around churches and government buildings that are partially or totally destroyed. UN personnel in vehicles and even a tank (!) - protect the tent dwellers. In all these, life goes on. Students in their neat uniforms wait for buses or the "tap tap" or walk with their parents to school. Schools were closed for 2 days due to Hurricane Tomas. There was heavy rain and strong wind in Port au Prince. Thank God, not much damage in the city. Flooding and mudslide were in the southern part of Haiti.

The Sisters in Haiti were so touched by the help they are receiving. They are doing a lot for the people around them.

roads. Open markets are operating in many areas. But

The resiliency and spirit of the Haitians is so visible in their worship. Their participation at mass is so moving. A young man was beside me at Sunday mass. He was singing with so much enthusiasm!.

After
each meal they
sing in
Creole: "mési
Papa, joudia e pou
toutan"..thank you,
Lord, today and
always!

Compassionate Heart's Club

In October we had sent our mailing for the 3rd year to join the Compassionate Heart's Club. The Mission Projects we are collecting for this year are for Haiti Schools and Relief, the Venezuelan Safe Water Project, and for The Catholic Schools in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan to help with tuition. We would like to Thank everyone who has responded so far. THANK YOU!!

Archangels

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Dr. Myrna Meneses, Marquette, MI Don & Rita Zalewski, Stevens Point, WI Angels

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We would like to send a heartfelt Thank you to all the generous souls who sent gifts and donations. Whether it was a donation to our community, Haiti or another project that inspired you to give through the newsletter, handing it to one of our Sisters or just a surprise in the mail.

Marguerite & Harley Adair, Marquette, MI Anonymous, Iron Mountain, MI Jocelyn Basse, Marquette, MI Tim & Carol Beauchamp, Rock, MI Jim Bugay, Escanaba, MI Church of the American Martyrs, Kingsford, MI Thomas Cody, Bethesda, MD Ari Fitzgerald, Silver Spring, MD Robert & Marilyn Flynn, Bethesda, MD Sandra Frattali, Bethesda, MD Gaurdian Angel Church, Crystal Falls, MI Sandra Goodreau, Brampton, MI Annette Greene, Marquette, MI Joseph Gregorich, Marquette, MI Barbara Walch Growdon, Escanaba, MI Denise Herron, Marquette, MI Ira Hutchison, Marquette, MI Jean Jackson, Marquette, MI 49855 Ms. Marjorie Knight, Washington, DC Janet Kwarciany

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Maria Terry, Bethesda, MD
Rene & Ilona Tuballa, Ashand, MA
Greg & Linda Yagodzinski, Escanaba, MI

Thank you to the parishioners of St. Jane Frances de Chantal for your continued donations for the Students and Teachers of Haiti, and also to those who donated for other Haitian

Stephen Boehm, Bethesda, MD
Patricia Brown, Bethesda, MD
Timothy Coogan, Springfield, VA
Cynthia Folcarelli, Washington, DC
Marita T. Frank, Bethesda, MD
Jean Gordon, Bethesda, MD
Scott & Kerry Matejik, Bethesda, MD
John & Adrienne Pappas,
Washington, DC

Marca Pekar, Bethesda, MD
Andy & Judith Strenio, Bethesda, MD
Jenna Schwartz, Bethesda, MD
Nan Venit, Bethesda, MD
Mercedes & Jose Luis Irigoyen,
Bethesda, MD

Want more information about becoming a Sister of St. Paul? You may write or email Sr. Gloria Schultz at: Sisters of St. Paul de Chartres 1300 County Road 492 Marquette, MI 49855 Email: srstpaulweb@vahoo.com www.sistersofstpaulusa.org **Envelope Enclosed** We are enclosing an envelope for those who may wish to make a donation, write for information, be added/make correction to the mailing list or to add a friend to the mailing list, etc. Address Telephone Email I wish to be added to your mailing list I would like more information on becoming a Sister I would like information on including you in my will I wish to make a donation for _____ I wish to make a donation for ______ to the Mission Projects Venezuelan water project To rebuild Haiti Schools and Haitian relief

____ The Catholic Schools in Marquette Diocese