

Papaya, Haiti
Dec. 26/89.

Kate Gerhardt -
Our Lady of Nazareth Parish
Roanoke Va.

Dear Kate -

I must tell you first - that Dr. Corine is no longer at Papaya and I have taken her place here this year. I did respond to your first letter, but as often happens - it evidently didn't get to its destination. Dr. Carmen Leduc is really the one in charge of the mission here - I belong to another community (Can. - English), but since she does not speak English she asked me to respond.

We were happy to hear that you are interested in the Normal School at Papaya. The school has only recently been established and there are still many needs - but it is very hard for those outside the country to send material aid of any kind - the cost of transportation is exorbitant and the difficulties trying to deal with customs are extremely frustrating. The only way that you can help is by sending money (American) which we can use to supply some of the needs. The library is very meagre - we don't have enough chairs for all the classrooms and the ones we do have keep breaking. We would like to put benches outside for the students to use, because they have to study in day light - (the electricity is a

"sometime" thing) Besides, the classrooms get very hot during the day. Also - since the level of poverty is so extreme - many students cannot pay the tuition and are always afraid that they might have to quit. Several of them came to us this Christmas to say that they had no money to go home. If a group like your parish became interested in helping with these needs we would be most grateful. Communication with the students themselves might be a bit difficult because they do not speak English - but I'm sure that pictures would speak as well as words. I would be glad to take pictures of the school and the students so that you can have a sense of who these students are. They are very beautiful indeed and the hope of the future of this country rests in them. There are so few educated people - good teachers are badly needed.

There are about 80 students in the school. There is a large staff (I haven't even met them all yet) - they come in from the neighboring town to teach one or two classes. The supply of trained

teachers is limited - especially in the central plateau where we are. One is the local band leader - another is the magistrate - another is director of a Secondary school and then there are others who are doing their best with the little they have. The course we offer is a 3-year course which prepares the students to teach in the primary classes - but they teach beyond this because trained teachers just don't exist in any appreciable quantity. They are very earnest in trying to learn to teach but their foundation is very weak. But at least a beginning is being made.

You mentioned that you were going to send a package - pictures etc. - If you did it has not arrived yet. I hope this will make it through the mail and that I have given you the kind of information you want.

May you and the parish be abundantly blessed for your generosity

In the joy of his coming
O. Gene Bezaire O.S.U.

2505 Electric Rd SW
Roanoke, Virginia 24018
USA

January 27, 1990

Sr. Anne Bezaire, O.S.U.
Ecole Normale de Papaye
Presbytère de Hinche
C. P. 1599
Hinche, Haiti

Dear Sr. Anne + Friends,

We were delighted to receive your letter of Dec 26 and am sorry that we never got your first letter. I am sending this by Sr. Cosmas Reubencamp, from our diocesan office, who will deliver it to you next week while he is in Haiti.

We enjoyed hearing about the school and students who attend there. We too, feel that teacher training is ultimately the best way to help the future of Haiti and are glad that we can be of some help to you. I am enclosing \$100⁰⁰ for your use, since mail is so erratic and I have heard that there are no international banks near you, we will only be able to send money to you when we know someone who is travelling there. So it will probably not be on a regular basis unless you can let us know of a better way to send it.

We did not previously send pictures, because we were waiting to make sure you received our letter. Enclosed are a few from our church picnic in August, that I hope your school will find interesting. Our parish has about 1400 families registered and is involved in many different community projects. On the weekend of February 16-17, Adèle Dellavalle and I will be presenting slides and a talk at each liturgy to share more information on Haiti. We will be asking for prayers for Papaye Normal and all of you who minister there. So be united with us in prayer especially on that weekend, although our prayers are with you daily.

Fr. Ken Stofft is our pastor, as I told you before, and he too, sends greetings. We have just recently been assigned an associate, Rev. Mr. Gregory Kanott, who is at the Deacon stage of becoming a priest. They stay very busy as you can imagine.

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but we also have many lay ministers who help to carry out the many ministries here. Our population consists mainly of suburban middle class to upper middle class working people who are involved in diverse occupations, I work as a school psychologist in the public schools here and especially enjoy getting to know people from many different backgrounds and cultures. I have been a teacher and certainly feel a kinship with your students who are preparing to teach. Adele is our Pastoral Care minister and is also in charge of our Peace & Justice Committee. She has been to Haiti and has been instrumental in helping us to develop our relationship with you. She can read and speak French, so maybe Sr Carmen LeDuc (we assume she speaks French) could write to Adele if she likes.

Interest has been expressed in having different families here, sponsor individual students at Papaye Normal. You mentioned that many have difficulty obtaining the tuition. What is your tuition cost for the year? Maybe a sponsoring family could help a student meet that cost.

We are anxious to hear from you again and to receive photographs and more information about your school & students. I had better close now so that I can get this to Br. Cosmas. I hope all enclosed here reaches you safely.

May God's light be your joy as you go about your day to day ministry.

In Christ,
Kate Bernhardt

Enclosed:

Letter
\$100⁰⁰
Postcards of Roanoke
1/1889 Roanoker Pgs. on Roanoke
Photos of Parish Picnic in photo Album



Office of the Bishop
811-B CATHEDRAL PLACE

Diocese of Richmond
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA 23220-4898 • (804) 359-5661

February 16, 1990

Reverend Kenneth Stofft
Our Lady of Nazareth Parish
2505 Electric Road
Roanoke, VA 24018

Dear Ken:

I was very pleased to learn that Nazareth Parish will beginning twinning with the Papaye Parish in the Hinche district of Haiti. This is certainly good news. Around 40 of our parishes have now had twinning relationships with various parishes in Haiti.

I have now visited Haiti on two occasions and plan to go this time next year. The need is great and the people of Nazareth will certainly be most generous. It is my hope that some members of the parish will join the Richmond retreat group when it visits the Hinche area. I assure those who go that it will be a most rewarding experience.

Yours sincerely,

Walter F. Sullivan
Bishop of Richmond

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SEVENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY/1914-1989

February 22, 1990

Sr. Anne Bezaire
Ecole Normale de Papaye
Presbytere de Hinche
C.P. 1594
Hinche, Haiti

Dear Sister Anne,

It is with a deep sense of joy that I am able to write this letter to you and the members of your school. The Ecole Normale de Papaye is now a twin with our parish community. We are proud and honored to have such a relationship with you, and will be seeking as many ways as possible to deepen that relationship in prayer, activities and support. May the Lord God of creation bless you, the Risen Son of God be with you, and the Spirit Blest empower you with joy and faith and guidance.

Thank you for the opportunity to join with you in serving the People of God. Please pray for us here.

Sincerely,

(Rev.) Kenneth G. Stofft
Pastor



Adele DellaValle, SNJM
c/o Our Lady of Nazareth
2505 Electric Road, SW
Roanoke, VA 24015
February 22, 1990

SEVENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY/1914-1989

Sister Anne Bezaire
Ecole Normale de Papaye
Presbytere de Hinche
CP 1594
Hinche, Haiti

Dear Anne,

Thank you for replying to Kate Gernhardt's letter. I shared some of your information about your school and your needs this weekend. I spoke at all the Masses explaining the twinning project, also using stories from my own visits to Haiti and some slides. It worked together beautifully to inspire our people to want to get to know you better and to help in whatever way we can. We realize how much God has given us, and we truly want to share; we also know that you have much that we need to know, and to share with us.

Enclosed is a letter from our Pastor, Father Ken Stofft. Also checks amounting to \$4620.19 from money that was contributed. Please use the money for your school and the students: chairs, books, and especially tuition.

You have mentioned that there are about 80 students in the school. So far, 35 people have asked to adopt a student and want to contribute on a regular basis for a particular student. You can help us by sending a list of the students' names, ages, and photos (if possible), plus anything else they may want to share. Eleven people want to write to students. I am fluent in Haitian Creole. We have people here who speak French. So - whatever language - I'm sure we can manage to understand each other.

I am a member of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary. I've been on the staff of this parish 4 years as Minister of Pastoral Care and Peace and Justice. Getting this twinning process underway has been a most rewarding experience.

I can see much good coming from our relationship. Please let us know as soon as possible that you have received the money. We need to know if our system is working!

Bon Dieu avek noutout!

Papaye Haiti
March 24/90

Dear Kate -

What a nice surprise and wonderful gift - that was! And to have it delivered personally right to our door. Thank you so much for your generosity. The cheques - amounting to \$3600.19 American will be changed into Haitian dollars at an exchange rate of 40% - giving us \$5040.27. The money will be used principally for school equipment - chairs - desks - and benches for outside where the students study - and also to help those who have not yet found money to pay their tuition.

Your offer of sponsorship will be a real bonus. What I am doing at the moment is checking each 2nd yr. student individually to see what their situation is financially. Then I will go to the 1st yr students and do the same. This will give me a list of those who really need help, there are a few who are managing on their own. I intend to photograph each student and then have them write a short biography of themselves to help the sponsors to know their student. As soon as I have all this done - before the end of the school year - I will send it all to you. you can distribute them to the sponsors who can then forward the money - all at once or by instalments - through the system which you used this time.

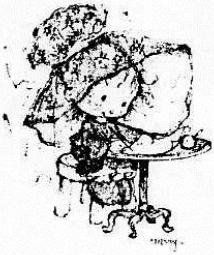
Hope you had
a great trip! I'm anxious
to hear about it.

I put an article
in Nozareth News

letter & notice for
Bulletin re: this

call me
Sunday

 Kate



It would be good I think to have the sponsors write directly to each student but they can all be placed in an envelope addressed to Mr. Carmel Leduc. The school year begins in October so there will be plenty of time to collect the letters and get them to Papaye around the middle of October. However there is no problem if they are not there for the opening. Tuition can be paid any time. The tuition for a year is around \$115. It varies some-what because it includes the various school supplies that they need. When I announced to the students that a parish had adopted them (winning was a difficult concept for them). They were very happy. They all want to write to

someone! I don't know how that is going to work exactly because very few of them could begin to write in English. However, I invited them to submit their names with whatever information they wished to provide. I will send them to you a bit later - since I don't have them collected yet. You might want to wait till you get my list of students needing tuition assistance. Those students (35) will then automatically have a correspondent. The 3rd year students will not be on that list since they will finish this year - but many of them wish to write.

I intend to record how we spend the money you have sent so that you will be able to tell the parishoners what their money has done for the school. We are all very grateful for your assistance and we shall keep you in our prayers -

Lovingly in St. Angela
 (M. Anne Bezaire.