

Gala Set for April 26

April 12 Conference to Feature Notre Dame Specialist

The 3rd Annual Twinning Conference of the Haitian Ministries for the Diocese of Norwich will be a daylong event and dinner on Saturday, April 12, at St. Peter Claver in West Hartford.

Nicholas McCann, who is project manager for the Asante program at the University of Notre Dame, will be the main presenter at the conference, speaking on "Parish Twinning and Public Health."

The conference, running from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and the dinner are open to the public.

Asante operates under the Haiti Project at Notre Dame and is a public health initiative to eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis, commonly known as Elephantiasis, in Haiti by the year 2013. The program seeks to extend LF treatment to communities where none exists by working with programs already having on-the-ground involvement in Haiti.

Today, Haitian Ministries oversees 13 twinned parishes and groups. These partnerships—uniting communities in the Norwich Diocese and elsewhere in the United States with communities in Haiti—have been a key component of the ministry's work in Haiti over the last two decades.

The daylong conference will be followed by a Haitian liturgy, then a dinner. McCann will also be the keynote speaker in the evening, talking about his varied experiences in Haiti.

People may attend different parts of the event, and costs—soon to be available—will vary, depending on a person's choices for attendance.

The conference will be at St. Peter Claver, 47 Pleasant St., West Hartford.

For more information, please contact emily@haitianministries.org, or call (860) 848-2237 ext. 206.

'For the Love of a Child' gala April 26

The 2nd annual evening "For the Love of a Child" gala to raise money for orphans and other needy children of Haiti will be Saturday, April 26, at the Crocker House Ballroom in New London.

The public is invited to this special event held by the Haitian Ministries for the Diocese of Norwich. The gala—the ministry's biggest fundraiser of the year—is set to begin at 6:30 p.m. and will feature a champagne welcome, a Caribbean-flavored meal, a special speaker from Haiti, and Motown music by



continued on flap back

BRIEFLY NOTED

From the desk of the Norwich Mission House director

Common Expressions in Haiti

I can't tell you how many times I've heard over the last six months, "Wow, I can't believe how clean the city is!"

Time and time again, our return visitors to the Norwich Mission House are simply amazed by the new cleanliness of Port-au-Prince. In the past year, the government has placed dumpsters throughout the city. Thankfully, people are throwing their trash in them, and trucks are emptying them on a regular basis.

Every night, teams of cleaners are also taking to the streets with brooms and shovels to clean up what others left behind during the day. These efforts have created jobs and are giving Haitians a city they can start taking pride in. Basic sanitation services might seem like a small step, but they are a big step in the right direction. (This new look also gives our visitors something to talk about!)

Also, I can't tell you how many times I've heard over the last few months, "Via ap vin pi che," or "Life is becoming more expensive."

I hear the complaints from friends, our parish priests, as well as individuals on the street—basically, everyone. The global rise in fuel prices has a trickle-down effect, and, unfortunately, it is most burdensome for the poor. Higher gas prices increase the cost of transporting food, which in turn increases the overall price of food. When a person lives day to day, as many Haitians do, even a small increase in food prices can mean the difference between eating and going hungry.

Next time you're at the gas pump and you feel a pain in your wallet, please remember and pray for those who feel the very real pain in their stomachs.



- Nick Kocmich

From the desk of the executive director

About Our Partners in Education

This has been a wonderful year for the students in the Tierney-Tobin Memorial Scholarship program, thanks to the generosity of so many of you, our loyal supporters.

The program now has almost 100 students, in first grade through college, and it provides education for children and young adults who could not otherwise afford schooling.

I appreciate all who sponsor these students, and I particularly want to acknowledge The Aaron Joseph Dornan Foundation of Wethersfield, which sponsors 16 students. We are also indebted to Cross International, which has provided generous funding and initiated a strong partnership with Haitian Ministries in this program. In the next academic year, they will be paying for the education of at least 40 boys and girls.

Working cooperatively with foundations and other organizations, the ministry is better able to reach out and help Haitians. I thank everyone who is part of this commitment to education.

- Emily Smack

THE HAITIAN TIMES

Office of Haitian Ministries
Diocese of Norwich
Bishop Flanagan Ministry Center
1595 Norwich-New London Turnpike
Uncasville, CT 06382-1319

Non-Profit
U.S. Postage
PAID
New London, CT
Permit NO. 155

OUR MISSION: Helping Haitians Help Haitians



THE HAITIAN TIMES



Photo: Nick Kocmich

Two of four children of Edner and Lusmen Saintilise (in the middle) stand with their parents in front of the concrete structure that will soon become their home. The family lost their old house, their pigs and chickens, and their gardens in the flood. Bernadette, 12, is on the left; Fedner, 15, on the right.

On The Road to Recovery in Zoranje

Aid from Hartford Parish Helps after the Flood

BY NICK KOCMICH
NORWICH MISSION HOUSE DIRECTOR

The Brutelle River runs through the mountainous region of Zoranje in central Haiti. As it slowly winds its way through the valleys, this tranquil waterway looks so insignificant that one wonders how it ever warranted being called a river. Haitians have learned to live simply along its banks, using its life-giving water for drinking, bathing and irrigation.

On Oct. 10, a freak storm hit Zoranje and turned the lazy Brutelle into a raging river. The flood waters took the lives of 11 people and destroyed or severely damaged 86 houses in Zoranje and another 114 nearby. Flooding also ruined countless crops, which were many people's only source of income.

In comparison to recent headline-making natural disasters, this loss of life and property might seem minimal; by numbers, the devastation in Zoranje is small. But in Haiti, recovering from any disaster is extremely

continued on page 2

New Assistant Director at the Mission House

All travelers to the Norwich Mission House will likely be greeted by the new assistant director there.

Colleen Larkin, who oversees the immersion trips while visitors are in Haiti, helps to run the mission house and to supervise the support that Haitian Ministries gives to various Haitian-run programs.

She joined NMH Director Nick Kocmich in November and has been studying Creole since that time. By mid-winter, she had already guided four groups from the United States during their stays in Port-au-Prince.

Colleen, who is a 28-year-old Danbury, Conn. native, last worked at the Center on Law and Security at New York University School of Law. There for two years, she started out as a communications associate and moved up to become chief of staff. She assisted in organizing conferences and forums on national security issues arising from the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

A graduate of New York University, she majored in international relations. In her first job after graduation, she worked for the National Organization for Rare Disorders.

One summer between her college years, Colleen went to the Dominican Republic, where she taught at a school near the Haitian border. She has also been to South Africa, as part of a team doing a film documentary about children of burn victims.

No stranger to Haiti, Colleen first went there in 2003, when she helped put together a sum-



Colleen Larkin



PARTNERS
FOR HAITI

continued on page 2

THE HAITIAN TIMES

A publication of the
Office of Haitian Ministries
Diocese of Norwich
Bishop Flanagan Ministry Center
1595 Norwich-New London Turnpike
Uncasville, CT 06382-1319

(860) 848-2237 ext. 206
haiti.ministry@snet.net
www.haitianministries.org

Bishop Michael R. Cote
Bishop, Diocese of Norwich

Nicholas Kocmich
Director
Norwich Mission House

Colleen Larkin
Assistant Director
Norwich Mission House

Emily M. Smack
Executive Director
Office of Haitian Ministries

Kyn Tolson
Director of Development
Office of Haitian Ministries

Peter C. Loden
Chairperson, Executive Board
Office of Haitian Ministries

WE'RE JUST A CLICK AWAY

You can learn more about the work of the Haitian Ministries and how your support is helping Haitians. You can also make online donations to the ministry. Please visit us at www.haitianministries.org.

'Hoof It for Haiti' 5-K Run & Walk-A-Thon

The 1st Annual "Hoof It for Haiti" 5-K Run & Walk-A-Thon is scheduled to begin at 9 a.m., Sept. 27, at St. Elizabeth Seton Church in Rocky Hill.

The morning event, which is open to the public of all ages, will include a craft sale and children's activities. Funds raised will support St. Elizabeth Seton's twin parish in Haiti and various outreach programs supported by the Haitian Ministries for the Diocese of Norwich. These programs give medical, educational, food and housing assistance to the needy. The ministry also helps two orphanages and operates the twinning program, which St. Elizabeth Seton has been involved in since 2000.

Anyone interested in sponsoring and/or participating in the event should contact St. Elizabeth Seton Church, 280 Brook St., Rocky Hill, CT 06067, or e-mail: JEFF563@aol.com, or call (860) 529-3222.

New NMH Assistant Director

continued from page 1

mer day camp for children in Jacquesyl, a fishing village on the northeast coast. Her parents founded Haiti Marycare there. Their program brings medical care and other assistance, and they travel to the small village a couple of times every year.

About her first trip to Haiti, Colleen says, "One thing I remember is sitting and talking to this man. He said to me, 'Go back and tell people what you see.' He told me to be the eyes and ears for the world."

Now living at the mission house, Colleen witnesses the reactions of others visiting the country. She's working on developing different ways that they can more directly connect with

Haitians when they're out in the field, seeing the programs.

"It's exciting—the idea of making some of our projects more interactive," she says. "There are a lot of ways to do that, even simple ways. At Mme Samson's, people can help cook the food, make the juice and serve the food. And they can sit down and eat with the kids. That's a whole different experience from just watching them eat."

Colleen looks forward to spending time with other groups that will visit this spring and summer. "I know I feel welcomed here," she says. "Right from the beginning, staff and people at the house and elsewhere have made me feel at home. It's been such an effortless transition."

New Homes In Zoranje

continued from page 1

difficult. Those affected have no savings in the bank to turn to in emergencies. There are no insurance companies to file claims with, and the thinly stretched Haitian government has neither the resources nor personnel to help. To add to the difficulties is the location of this rural community. Deep in the mountains, Zoranje is just far enough away from Port-au-Prince to be out of sight and out of mind.

But there was help for the people of Zoranje. The Catholic parish of this community—St. Genevieve—is twinned with St. Patrick-St. Anthony Church in Hartford. After the flood, Fr. Frixner Jean Francois, who is St. Genevieve's priest, turned to Haitian Ministries, which oversees the twinning program, for assistance.

With an outpouring of donations from the St. Patrick-St. Anthony congregation and the help of other donors, Haitian Ministries has been able to respond by creating a house re-building project. Catholic Relief Services, an international, non-profit, has joined Haitian Ministries by offering technical assistance.

In Zoranje, Edner and Lusmen Saintiliese, both in their late 40s, were among the hard-hit by the flooding. They lost their home, two pigs and piglets and nine chickens, and their gardens. They were left only with the clothes they wore. Today, while they build a new house paid for by their twin parish in Hartford, the Haitian family is staying in a farm house, which amounts to little more than a grass tent.

Edner and Lusmen have had eight children, four of whom died in early childhood. Today, their two youngest children, 12-year-old Bernadette and Fedner, 15, attend one of the schools supported by St. Patrick-St. Anthony.

To help the family survive, their two oldest—Roosman, who is 19, and 18-year-old Iseman—often hike three hours to a local market to sell water crescents.



Visitors from St. Patrick-St. Anthony with a family in Zoranje who will soon have a new house.

Asked recently if there had been any flood comparable to the one in October, Edner told a visitor, "All of the men with white hair say they have never seen floods like this before."

And speculating what would have happened to his family without the housing assistance, he added, "We would do what we could but probably nothing... Thank you!"

The gratitude of Edner Saintiliese has been echoed by others in Zoranje.

The housing project, which began in December, is progressing with construction of five homes at a time. The goal for St. Patrick-St. Anthony is to build 50 houses. Each costs \$1,450, which covers all materials and transportation costs. All the families getting the new houses help in the construction.

Last Christmas, St. Patrick-St. Anthony collected more than \$82,000 for St. Genevieve, much of which will go to the housing project. (Donations also go to a lunch program, which feeds about 400 children a year, and to teacher salaries and school tuitions.) In early February, eight parishioners from Hartford traveled to Haiti to visit their twinned community and to see the houses built and under construction.

The houses are simple—two rooms, a front porch, cement flooring, and a tin roof. However, they are bigger and sturdier than those destroyed in the flooding, and the families who live in them feel fortunate.

Holding Fast to Her Dream Scholarship Student at the Top of Her Class

BY COLLEEN LARKIN
NMH ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Sandra Larose appears calm and confident, dressed in her crisp navy blue jumper with the initials CMDM on the front. Her hair is held in place by three braids that fall down the nape of her neck. White socks with ruffles are neatly folded over her thin ankles.

Sandra has arrived at the Norwich Mission House from College Marie Dominique Mazzarello, where she has been studying for the last four years. The 18-year-old, who is one of the students in the Tierney-Tobin Memorial Scholarship program under Haitian Ministries, has come to talk about her life—her family, her education and her goal to become a doctor.

She laughs as she recalls the times when she was 4 and would cry and plead with her mother to let her go to school. Children in Haiti, if they are lucky enough to attend school, don't start until they are at least 6 years old.

Two years later, Sandra's mother did enroll her, but it was a huge financial burden for her parents, who have six other children. Unfortunately, not all of them attend school because of the cost; there is little public education in Haiti, and most students must pay tuitions to attend private schools.

All of the Larose family has sacrificed in order for Sandra to go to school for the past 12 years. In 2007, her family came upon difficult times and could no longer afford the tuition. Fearing her education might come to an end, Sandra applied to the Tier-

Today, Sandra is at the top of her class, with near-perfect grades. She studies for hours each night, often by the light of a single candle. Electricity in Haiti is sporadic.

ney-Tobin program. Due to her obvious financial need and her excellent grades, she was accepted.

As one of almost 100 students in the program, Sandra has received a donor's pledge for five years of tuition payments. But she must meet requirements that call for maintaining above-average grades. Also, she has certain expectations to meet at home. Once she has graduated and is working, she must help to pay for her siblings' education—a responsibility that she gladly accepts.

Today, Sandra is at the top of her class, with near-perfect grades. She studies for hours each night, often by the light of a single candle. Electricity in Haiti is sporadic.

Sandra's dedication to school is clear. "I tell my friends that they shouldn't have boyfriends yet," she says. "They should focus on what they want to accomplish with their lives first. Now is not the time. Now is the time for your education."

Sandra believes she will become a good doctor, because she has grown up with hardship and understands the suffering of others. When she was 7, a younger brother contracted yellow fever and, after



Sandra Larose

months of sickness, died. She remembers the sadness and grief of losing her favorite playmate and sibling. She envisions a day when she can help those who are gravely ill—people like her brother, who might not have died if he had received proper medical treatment.

Scholarship Donors Asked to Time Payments to Enrollment Deadlines

Students must make their first tuition payments in early August. If they don't have the money at that time, they cannot attend school for the entire academic year; late enrollments are not accepted.

1 of every year. This due date coincides with the time when all students are accepted and enrolled for the next academic year. Students must make their first tuition payments in early August. If they don't have the money at that time, they cannot attend school for the entire academic year; late enrollments are not accepted.

In the coming weeks, Haitian Ministries will individually contact each and every sponsor of a Tierney-Tobin student. We realize that synchronizing payments will take adjustment. We hope the adjustment will be made with the understanding that the change is for the benefit of Haitians—to allow more young people to have the opportunities that education can bring.

Tuition costs over the last two years, like fuel and

many other goods and services in Haiti, has risen sharply. Currently, Tierney-Tobin tuition payments are set at: \$325 a year for a primary student (five-year pledge); \$395 annual for a secondary student (five-year pledge); \$700-\$1,200 for a technical school student (usually a three-year pledge); \$1,200 for university student (four- to five-year pledge); \$2,000 for a medical student (five- to seven-year pledge). All sponsors who pledged at a time when costs were lower will be asked if their future annual payments could conform to today's expenses, however, original pledge amounts will be honored.

We anticipate meeting this spring with administrators of all the schools and colleges that students currently attend in Port-au-Prince in anticipation of an increase in tuition costs for the 2008-09 academic year.

If you have any questions or concerns, or if you are interested in becoming a Tierney-Tobin sponsor and connecting with a child, teenager, or young adult whose education you can help to provide, please email: kyn@haitianministries.org, or info@haitianministries.org; or call: (860) 848-2237 ext. 206.

continued from front flap

"In Tune" of New York City. An auction will include a stay at a home in Tortola, British Virgin Islands. Faith Middleton, Connecticut Public Radio's talk show host, is the honorary chairperson.

Last year, more than 250 people attended. Money raised went to two orphanages and to children in other programs Haitian Ministries has supported over the years.

The cost to attend is \$150, a large portion of which will be tax-deductible. Haitian Ministries also welcomes church groups, businesses and non-profits as special sponsors, at \$2,500 for a table of 10. Sponsors last year included Citizens Bank; Harding Development Group of Middletown; Delta Building Corp. of Cromwell; Brook & Whittle, Ltd.; and the M.J. & Carol G. Lebworth Foundation of New York City; St. Patrick-St. Anthony Church; and St. Elizabeth Seton.

For more information, or to buy a ticket or sponsorship, please contact Kyn Tolson at 860-848-2237 ext. 206 or email kyn@haitianministries.org

Tobé Malawista & Trio In June 8 Concert

A Sunday afternoon concert featuring soprano Tobé Malawista and The Guastavino Trio is set for June 8 at the Sacred Heart Church in Southbury.

This extraordinary musical event, entitled "All in the Golden Afternoon: Musical Word Paintings from Europe and the Americas," will begin at 4 p.m. and is open to the public.

The concert program has been designed for an audience of wide interests, including classical. The Guastavino Trio features Jane Shelly, flute; Tom Hudson, cello; and Sara Kohane, piano.

A graduate of Harvard University, Ms. Malawista received much of her training and inspiration for research in song repertoire from the late Irène Aitoff, renowned French singing coach. Mme Aitoff encouraged her to delve into the repertoire of other countries to seek out forgotten or neglected treasures, including the works of Hungarian composer Ferenc Farkas.

Ms. Malawista has appeared several times in concert with The Guastavino Trio, and plans for the June 8 concert include music from Europe, as well as America. The program will feature a new work written for the trio and Ms. Malawista on a text of Edward Lear by the young American composer Richard Pearson Thomas.

For information on tickets, please contact Dorne Dietsch at (203) 262-1698, or e-mail djdietsch@earthlink.net; or contact Catherine Hughes at (203) 758-5421, or e-mail chughesinteriors@yahoo.com.

Sacred Heart Church is at 910 Main St. South, Southbury.



Tobé Malawista