

Religious of Jesus and Mary HAITI MISSION NEWSLETTER



USA-HAITI PROVINCE • SPRING 2024

Why did you go to Haiti? It's a simple question that is at the heart of why the RJM *remain* in Haiti in 2024 despite the risks and dangers of gang violence, political chaos, and economic collapse.

Recently, Global Sisters Report, a project of National Catholic Reporter, met with Sisters Pat Dillon and Jackie Picard over Zoom to listen to them share about why the RJM remain committed to being with the people of Haiti and to sustaining the ministries that the RJM have established with Haitians in Gros Morne, Jean-Rabel, and Port-au-Prince.

St. Claudine Thévenet took risks in a dangerous time when she gathered women together to do what they could to educate and nurture poor girls in their French homeland. Those first companions of St. Claudine ministered as best they could as the world around them was rocked by violence and political turbulence that had taken Claudine's own brothers' lives.

That impulse to share God's merciful love with those who most need to experience it, despite risks, is what sent the RJM to India in 1842 and what brought them to the United States in 1877.

After the Church declared Claudine a saint in 1993, the Religious of Jesus and Mary in the United States accepted a challenge to look closely at their founder and her early companions to better understand their shared mission. As they reflected and prayed, the sisters saw Haiti, a nation so close to our own yet so far away in terms of the experiences of dignity and care that were available to the people there, and **Haiti reminded them of the conditions which moved St. Claudine and the first Religious of Jesus and Mary to take action.** ▶▶

Read what GSR learned at
rjmusa.org/sistersreport

rjm Sisters provide crucial support for Haitians
in the midst of crisis



GLOBAL SISTERS REPORT
GSR: A PROJECT OF NATIONAL CATHOLIC REPORTER

Together with some of our friends ...

Building on 25 years of RJM presence and mission in Haiti



Since the first RJM arrived in Gros Morne, Haiti, in 1997, the conditions on the island have varied and changed with earthquakes and hurricanes, coups and gangs, but the basic needs of the people have remained and over these last 27 years the RJM have been able to help Haitians by empowering them to make a difference in the lives of one another, despite the challenges, risks, and dangers.

Today, solidarity and love are shared through multiple RJM ministries in Haiti that not only provide education, nutrition, shelter, healthcare, spiritual care, economic development, care for creation, and tools for organizing as communities, but give Haitians reasons to hope. >>



Images from Jean-Rabel show signs of hope amidst the challenges of life in Haiti. The RJM sisters and our lay companions in mission provide leadership and service that make differences in real lives, every day, despite the challenges.

Learn more at www.rjmusa.org/haiti



in Fon Ibo, 587 students at **Lekòl Jezi-Mari**, the RJM parochial school, depend on our continued solidarity and care. Children from age three through 9th grade are not only being educated but fed thanks to the work being done by Sr. Pat Dillon and the faculty and staff.

At **Maison Bon Samaritain** in Gros Morne, Sr. Jackie Picard has built up a community who give shelter and support to elders and persons with disabilities who would otherwise be homeless.

The **JM Mobile Medical Clinic** in Jean-Rabel and the **San Jose Prosthetics Clinic** in Port-au-Prince provide professional medical care for people who have few options to maintain the health and wellbeing that they need to support their families.

RJM, like Sr. Valle from Spain, Sr. Rose from Ireland, and Sr. Liz from Peru, live and work with the people of Haiti to empower local lay companions in mission to conduct the RJM ministries and to help coordinate international volunteers like doctors and nurses who recently were able to support our Haitian partners in taking care of the sick in Jean-Rabel.

But, none of the work done by the sisters, by our Haitian partners, or by volunteers would be possible without the prayer and support of so many friends and family of the RJM, like you!



Give
HOPE

Donate online now at

www.rjmusa.org

or mail a check to

**RJM Haiti Mission Fund
821 Varnum St., NE
Washington, DC 20017**

Happiness is not so much in having as sharing.

We need your help!

The USA-Haiti Province is seeking to raise \$225,000 *by September 2024* to continue the quarter century of RJM presence and mission in Haiti. *Your donations help to cover the ongoing expenses of our sisters and companions in mission who work to lead and sustain:*

EDUCATION and FAITH FORMATION MINISTRIES including a school, early childhood programs, afterschool and youth programs, a residence for students, informal education projects, and educational efforts to support a healthy environment, sustainable agriculture, and dignified economic self-sufficiency.

HEALTH and WELLBEING MINISTRIES including a mobile clinic, nursing care, coordination of visiting international medical providers, referrals and financial support for local medical services, a prosthesis clinic, and a residence for elders and disabled persons with no homes.

NUTRITION, AGRICULTURE, and ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MINISTRIES including food distribution, financial assistance, agroforestry, a hen house, gardens, training/support selling art and crafts, and small business loans.

“We need to look on our world with love ... just as God looks on it. We need to feel the pains, the joys, and the hopes of our brothers and sisters as though they were our own.”

Pope Francis to the RJM, 2019



Support the RJM mission! www.rjmusa.org/donate