

Merry Christmas from Celebrate Jesus of Haiti

Dear Friends,

After the hurricane it was in our hearts to go and just be with the people of Anse A Galet. We went with no agenda and we took no one with us. Our sole purpose was to empathize with those who had suffered fear and loss and to assure them of our love and care for them. We share their vulnerability when they look to us for help after a disaster and we cannot meet their every need. It was emotionally draining to feel their pain. Alongside Pastor Joaquim we went house to house and listened, prayed, hugged, and let them cry. Each day we went to different feeding programs just to be with the children and mothers. Romans 12:15 says to be happy with those who are happy, and weep with those who weep. We came not to do but to be.

Six people died on the Island of LaGonave. Roads were eroded and food supplies were destroyed. The main island received much more death and destruction but they also receive the world's help. None comes to LaGonave. We had just started feeding 50 children on the south side of the island. The mudslides and deluge of rain flowed down from the mountains to that area and all their crops were lost. As soon as we arrived we purchased \$1,000 worth of food and sent it to them and upon our return home we sent another \$1,000 for them. In January we will help the neediest families in our church congregation with \$1,000 but among 300 families it is a small effect. Still, we do what we can do. The extra donations we have received from you have all gone toward food and roofing supplies. Most everyone had roof damage. We also increased the monthly allowance for medicine to be prepared to treat cholera and the Zika virus. There have been a few cases on the island and the standing water increases the risk.

For three full days our people sat inside enclosures but were not sheltered from the storm. Buildings there are open at the top and windows have no glass. That works well to circulate air during oppressive heat but 145 mph winds drove the rains inside through those openings. Families sat huddled together in our school classrooms for 3 days. They were soaking wet. They went without sleep or food. Our school remained closed for a full week, so those 300 children and staff did not get the daily meal they count on. We have so much respect for the Haitian people. They are so resilient and strong. They persevere in the worst conditions. It comforts them to know that we care for them and when we can get relief to them we will. God is merciful and He calls His people forth to relieve suffering through giving.

An older man in our church loves to worship the Lord in dance. On Sunday mornings he is celebrating Jesus in the aisles with his feet. Laibo's house was bad before the hurricane but the whole back of his house was demolished in the hurricane. We had been using one of the little

houses on Campus 2 for storage, but we cleaned it out for Laibo, his wife, and the 9 year old boy they are raising. He was so happy he started doing a jig and praising God.

Church services were wonderful. Our brothers and sisters worshipped with their whole hearts as they gave thanksgiving to the Lord for lives spared.

We returned to the warmth of family at Thanksgiving and were especially grateful for God's generosity and mercy toward us. He has given to all of us abundantly that we may have extra to share. As we all prepare for Christmas, the ease of online shopping makes it so easy with gifts dropped off on our porches. If you are an Amazon shopper, you can go to smile.amazon.com and enter Celebrate Jesus of Haiti as your nonprofit. Each time you go online to shop, sign on to AmazonSmile and a small percentage of all your purchases are donated to this ministry by Amazon. Every penny helps feed a child.

We are grateful for you this Christmas. After Jesus and the Holy Spirit, you are the best gift God has given us. We wish you a joyous time with those you love. May we all raise our voices in highest praise as we celebrate Emmanuel, God with us. He is our true shelter and provider. He loves us and He gave us His very best gift, Jesus.

Peace and love to you,

Jerry and Sonja