

## Haiti Update January 2016

Fr Marc-Arthur Emile was named pastor of St Louis Cathedral in June of 2014. Gary Boice and Don Kavanaugh were in Jeremie as part of the Tek4Kids program in the fall 2014 when they had an opportunity to meet with Fr Marc-Arthur. That's when we became aware of Fr Marc-Arthur's long list of needs. Among other things we learned that he had begun a project to provide a hot lunch to those most in need. About 70-100 people get a drink and spaghetti with sauce, corn meal or rice & beans on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, an interesting parallel to our own daily lunch program. An anonymous donor has stepped in contributing funds for that lunch program via our already existing school lunch program for Ecole St Therese. The Cathedral periodically wires those funds to the parish in Jeremie.

In January 2015, Toni Mudd was in Jeremie with Tek4Kids and spent some time investigating the list of needs. Toni brought back lots of pictures to share with the Sister Parish Committee. The one big thing that jumped out was seeing the building where folks are being fed those lunches. Hardly the Sandefur Dining Hall, but the end result isn't much different.



This sparked conversations as to how we might get more involved, especially since we had been blessed with a gift from Martha Voll's estate that was targeted for needs in Haiti. Jack Lydon and Dave Puckett traveled to Jeremie in March of 2015 with Tek4Kids. Part of that effort was to assist Tek4Kids set up a computer classroom in the recently completed second floor addition to Ecole St Therese. They also met with Fr Marc-Arthur to discuss the needs of his parish, in particular the building where the homeless are fed.



Baba Langder, a Tek4Kids project manager and an excellent interpreter, was key in translating. Haitian Creole and French are languages of the people ... Jack and Dave are significantly limited in both ... to say the least. After lots of discussion, Fr Marc-Arthur indicated he would convey to his committee that the

Cathedral of the Assumption Sister Parish Committee in Louisville had funding to repair the existing building, but not replace it. Before leaving on April 1, Jack and Dave got word that the committee had accepted the proposal for repairs.

Things sat for the next several months because of several other projects going on, both at the Rectory and Tek4Kids. In July Don Kavanaugh and Dave met with Deacon Jean-Rony to let them know we had not walked away. Finally, in late September, things began to happen. Bos Benice was available to do the concrete work, then Duvert Frantz, the paint contractor, came in with some finishing touches. Gary allowed Baba to coordinate the work and pay the contractors. The Sister Parish Committee will reimburse Tek4Kids just under \$4000 for the project. Our thanks to Gary for helping with “boots on the ground” to better guide the effort. Rita Owens was in Jeremie in November and was able to see the finished product.



The Cathedral Sister Parish effort supports the lunch program at St Therese Montessori via the Green Envelopes that Cathedral Parishioners receive with the regular weekly tithing envelope package. 332 students attend the school and are the target of those collections. Your gracious donations are needed to continue supporting that daily lunch mission and two annual parish events. We currently provide about \$1500 per month which is not as much as is needed. Additional donations are also needed to provide tables in the homeless building. Fr Marc-Arthur has also indicated that he and other priests receive no salary or income to support their medical or retirement needs. As you may be able to tell, the needs are substantial!