

St. Anthony on the Desert

Mission to Haiti

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Ministry Mission Statement: To promote, plan and accomplish meaningful mission projects in Léogâne, Haiti, at Sainte Croix Episcopal Church and School. Saint Anthony Haiti Ministry provides financial support to Sainte Croix church and school to support key community, facility and educational needs, and to continue to grow an enduring relationship between the St. Anthony and Sainte Croix communities. Additionally, the St. Anthony Haiti Ministry recognizes the integral nature of Hospital Ste. Croix and its close relationship to the St. Croix community and the broader community of Léogâne.

St. Anthony's relationship with Ste. Croix and the Léogâne community began in 2010 when David Page began to serve periodically as the manager of the Guest House at Hospital Ste. Croix. During that time David became intimately familiar with not only the Hospital and its post-earthquake challenges but also with the associated church and school. The community of Ste. Croix, as well as the larger surrounding community, are economically challenged as is Haiti in general. As part of his duties as the Guest House Manager, David was responsible for supporting the visiting volunteer medical teams that provided medical clinics in Léogâne and surrounding communities.

In 2012, St Anthony began the Haiti Outreach Ministry. Since then, funds have been provided to a variety of institutions to fill critical needs, largely focused on those related to crisis recovery, healthcare and education. The personal relationships that have been built and strengthened for over a decade allow us to provide direct assistance towards the most critical needs of the community and to have confidence in the way that funds are managed. Ministry team members maintain regular communication with the Rector of Ste. Croix Episcopal Church to gain insights into the most pressing needs and current conditions.

In addition to the financial support, we cherish the sense of unity and fellowship that has grown between the Ste. Croix and St. Anthony communities. Ministry team members have historically made visits to Leogane every other year. They

work alongside local tradespeople and community members, worship with the Ste. Croix parishioners on Sunday morning, and maintain personal relationships with the administration and members of the school, church, hospital, and community at large. Meals and housing for the Ministry Team members have been provided in the Guest House at the Ste. Croix Hospital.

Unlike NGO's and other relief organizations that utilize non-Haitian volunteer labor and have high overhead costs, the St. Anthony Mission employs local Haitian labor for the projects and the money goes directly to local institutions to maximize the effectiveness of the funds provided, as well as making a contribution to the local economy.

Early fundraising efforts of the Ministry supported an orphanage in Port-au-Prince and provided scholarships to nursing students at the Episcopal Nursing College in Léogâne, La Faculté des Science Infirmières de l'Université Episcopal D'Haiti. The Nursing College was instrumental in providing much need medical assistance to Léogâne residents following the 2010 earthquake.

Since then, the St. Anthony Haiti Mission has provided support for the Sainte Croix Episcopal Church and School, including physical improvements and safety features to the campus grounds, additional learning facilities, teachers' salary assistance, and other projects designed to enhance the learning environment of the school. It also has been able to provide more modest, yet impactful support, for example, by providing common OTC medications that are in short supply in Haiti to the hospital pharmacist. In addition, during each visit, St. Anthony ministry team members provide and serve an Agape Meal to the Ste. Croix congregation following their Sunday worship service.

Financial support for ministry efforts comes from St. Anthony's Outreach Grant Program, special fundraising, individual contributions from parishioners, ministry team members, and outside resources. The efforts of the Haiti Mission team have been supplemented by private donations from family, friends and colleagues of several ministry team members and parishioners. These contributions serve as tangible evidence of the impact that stories of ministry team members have had on individuals inside and outside of the St. Anthony community. Ministry team members learned during the 2018 mission trip that St. Anthony Haiti Outreach Ministry is providing the only outside support to the Ste. Croix school and parish. This exemplifies the significance of St. Anthony's presence and impact there.

Accomplishments:

- Provided scholarship assistance to Sainte Croix School (2013 and 2015).
- Refurbished all of the existing classroom desks to make them usable and safe for the students.
- Enclosed an existing classroom in order to provide a secure administrative workspace for the faculty.
- Modified an existing building by dividing a space into usable, administrative offices.
- Improved two kindergarten rooms and furnishings.
- Enclosed the educational campus and classrooms to provide for the safety and security of the students and school equipment following a series of intrusions and safety incidents.
- Constructed and equipped a science lab, serving not only Ste. Croix, but also the greater community of Léogâne and other of its educational institutions.
- Reconstructed and reinforced a school classroom and administration building damaged by the 2010 earthquake.
- Made improvements to the school courtyard to allow for safe and sanitary passage between classrooms.
- Constructed the first phase of an assembly hall to supplement the school classroom campus for events and additional classes.
- In the process of providing a permanent and reliable source of electricity for the school campus.