

Fall/Winter 2023

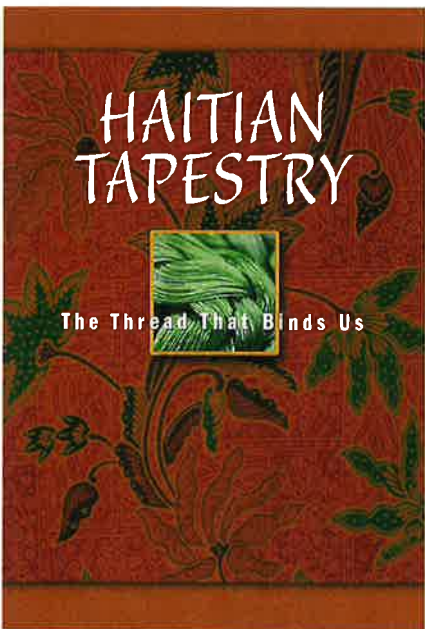
Haiti Outreach

Publication of the OSPIHM Haiti Outreach Committee



OSPIHM Haiti Outreach Committee Goals

1. Continue our partnership with the Little Sisters of St. Therese of the Child Jesus
2. Educate our Sisters about the needs of Haiti
3. Communication of advocacy for Haiti within and across our congregations
4. Encourage participation in projects for Haiti



Les membres du Nouveau Conseil Général, psst

The Members of the new General Administration Council, psst 2023



The Little Sisters of St. Therese of the Child Jesus (psst) held their General Chapter from July 23 to 31 this year. The members of the new general administration pictured from left to right are the following. Soeur Denise Desil, psst, was reelected the Responsable Generale. Soeur Marie Mocla Alcidas, psst, is the Assistante Generale. Soeur Jeanne Martha Pantal, psst, is a Conseillere. Soeur Joselene Mahotiere, psst, is the Secretaire Generale. Soeur Marie Francoise Jeanna Marseille, psst, is a Conseillere. Soeur Marie Jeanne Petit Jean, psst, is the Econome Generale.

On December 14, 2023 the Little Sisters of Saint Therese will celebrate 75 years of their foundation. On October 1, 2023 the festivities for the 75th anniversary began with a procession in honor of St. Therese of the Child Jesus, who is the patron of the Little Sisters. The parish near their Motherhouse actively participated in the procession and the Motherhouse chapel was filled with people. There is a full list of celebrations on page 3.

Sister Denise in every communication always expresses her gratitude for the OSPIHM generous response to the Little Sisters and their congregational and ministerial needs. She says that the Little Sisters are safe, but they stay near their mission houses. They live in fear of violence especially after two of their sisters were kidnapped. The people and police are fighting the gangs. But Haiti is their home, their country, and they continue to do what they can. Nothing deters them or dampens their spirit. Recently, the machine they use to make hosts has broken. They make the hosts to be sold to parishes and to missions in the countryside. They are planning to purchase a new machine.

“Restavek” Children in Haiti: A New Form of Modern Day Slavery

“Restavek” is a Creole term stemming from the French expression “rester avec” which means “stay with”. A restevak is a child in Haiti who is given away by their parents to work for a host household as a domestic servant because the parents lack the resources required to support the child. Restavek is a form of modern-day slavery that persists in Haiti, affecting one in every fifteen children.

Restavek Freedom is a movement to help bring an end to child slavery in Haiti within our lifetime.

Follow the link for further information.

<https://restavekfreedom.org/>

OSPIHM Haiti Outreach Committee Members

S. Anne Marie Murphy, IHM (M),
S. Camille Brouillard, IHM (M),
S. Susan Hadzima, IHM (S),
S. Eileen Coleman, (S),
S. Jane Gaughan, (S),
S. Cathy Nally, IHM (I),
and S. Paula Jameson, (I)



BE IT EVER SO HUMBLE...THERE IS NO PLACE LIKE HOME

Sr. Camille Brouillard, IHM (M)

Home is an experience we all have and these experiences are diverse. People have lived in caves, tents, mansions, cabins, mud huts, prisons, shacks, apartments, houses, cars, under bridges, and in emergency shelters.

Ideally, home is a place where one feels safe and has privacy, clean water, and shelter from the weather. It's also a place where one is surrounded by aromas of home cooking of one's culture and the sounds of one's native language spoken and sung. It is a gathering place of family and friends.

Having worked with Haitian refugees in S. Florida for 15 years, I visited many homes. Home for most was a one-bedroom apartment for 5-6 people. Even with such small and cramped spaces, the Haitians I knew treated their homes with respect, recognizing it was a place for family to be together. Church is another place that Haitians experience as home. Our local Mission was an abandoned furniture store with folding chairs. It was crowded with families celebrating Mass and singing praises in Creole to the beat of the drum. God, for the Haitian people is a refuge.

Visiting Haiti in 1986 and after 2010, opened my eyes to the suffering of the people. Home was a hut, or small cement block structure...often dark. I recall seeing a small girl washing a piece of clothing in a puddle left in the street. This opened my eyes to how much I have taken for granted. For example, home for me means clean water that is not three miles away, a bed to sleep in, and a kitchen rather than a fire pit. Home means safety and not violence which people in Haiti suffer daily with gangs ruling the Capital and surrounding areas. Home means privacy as opposed to living so closely. It means clothing bought in a store not on the street. I have a choice of almost any food while they eat rice and beans and are going hungry because of blockaded roads and control of the port.

As an IHM Community we have been connected to Haiti since our foundation. Our foundress, Mother Teresa Maxis Duchemin's mother was Haitian and we have connected with the Little Sisters of Ste. Therese as our Sisters since 1995. Sr. Denise Desil, psst, their leader keeps in touch with us via e-mail which we made possible with a solar powered computer. Today, I still pray, not for a very large bed, but for a very large heart that can not only hold the people of Haiti, but move me to action on behalf of the people. I pray that people who stay in Haiti and the people who flee might come to know a home that is safe and where families can live together with “enough”. This prayer must be backed by action to advocate for and support the people. It means direct aid and educating ourselves as to the underlying causes of this horror. Systemic change is needed to ensure that people have a place to call home.

Oblate Sister of Providence Helene Therese Stanislaus died on September 30, 2023. She had been a faithful member of our OSPIHM Haiti Outreach Committee since 2010. Her broad smile and contagious laughter, among many other things, will be missed by each of us on the Committee. May she Rest in Peace.



Congregational Responses to Haiti



Oblates Sisters of Providence Baltimore, MD

We, the Oblate Sisters of Providence and the IHM Sisters, impelled by the Gospel, stand in solidarity with the people of Haiti, the poorest nation in the Americas, in their struggle for dignity, life and human rights both in Haiti and the United States.



Sisters of IHM Immaculata, PA

The Immaculata IHM Sisters conscious of our humble beginnings pledge to raise awareness of the needs of the Haitian people. We support sustainable projects, assist indigenous religious congregations and communicate opportunities for advocacy on behalf of the people. We participate in Haiti Outreach as an outgrowth of our charism to serve the most abandoned poor.



Sisters of IHM Monroe, MI

The IHM Sisters and Associates, impelled by the gospel, stand in solidarity with the people of Haiti, the poorest in the Americas, in their struggle for dignity, life and human rights both in Haiti and in the United States.



Sisters of IHM, Scranton, PA

With a profound commitment to religious life, we proclaim God's unconditional love for all by channeling our energies to foster respect for diversity. Our participation in the Haiti Project is an expression of our commitment to bridge the gap between the rich and poor. We desire to channel our energies and resources to promote justice.