

NATIONAL MEDIA DEPARTMENT

PRESS RELEASE

Haiti Disaster Relief Progress Report

For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger; and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was in prison and ye came unto me (Matthew 25:35-36).

Upon learning of the earthquake which brought great devastation to Port-au-Prince, Haiti and severe damage to some of the surrounding areas, without delay, the Chief Overseer, Bishop Rebecca W. Fletcher, with a team of leaders (Bishop Semmie Z. Taylor - Bishop to the Republic of Haiti, Bishop Martha J. Thomas - IMOS Advisor, State Elder Timothy Mims, Deacon Michael Randolph, Deacon David Wilson and Elder Jerry Taylor - Agents to Haiti,) put together *a plan of action* for The House of God Church - Keith Dominion to mobilize efforts and provide immediate aid to Haiti. In the moment's notice - The Chief Overseer called for the Church-at-Large to unite in prayer for the deliverance of Haiti and to support the *Haiti Relief Effort*; thereby helping to address the humanitarian needs of the people in Haiti.

After consulting with Bishop Martha J. Thomas regarding the contribution of the IMOS to provide water to the people in Haiti and the need for the Florida East Coast Diocese to lead the way in organizing the goods going to Haiti, Trial Elder Clara B. Williams (President-IMOS), immediately contacted Elder Lillie James (Florida East Coast Disaster Relief Team Leader), who immediately contacted the churches in the diocese. And subsequently, through email messages and telephone calls on Wednesday, January 14, 2010, diocese churches quickly went into action, collecting, packaging and delivering items to the Pompano Beach # 1 church.

The churches in various dioceses responded quickly with high quality canned/dry goods, clothing, shoes, first aid supplies/kits, medical supplies, personal hygiene items, infant clothing/food, towels, linen, pillow cases, paper goods, paper towels, toiletries, toilet tissue, and blankets.

Deacon Wilson advised us that, for the moment, sending water is not recommended; because water is heavy by weight and is not being offered as an option at this time; instead, other alternatives such as water purifying pills, water purifiers, etc., will be most effective. While sending water purifiers are preferred, some research will need to be done to locate the type of system where water can be poured through - instead of a system that is connected to a faucet, for the water sources in Haiti are mainly drawn from the ground (from a well or a large reservoir) via a hand pump.

Churches and individuals who are sending monetary contributions to the Headquarters Office for Disaster Relief are encouraged to continue sending your valued donations. These contributions will help fund the eventual purchase of water purifying systems. Churches in various dioceses that mailed items to the Pompano Beach # 1 Church are asked to track your items and keep us abreast of the findings.

Disaster Relief Volunteers and Missionaries worked without complaints and in love while preparing the boxes for transporting the donations to the designated site in Boca Raton, Florida, a few miles north of Pompano Beach. Only new clothes could be sent to Haiti at this time; therefore, since we do not have the space to store used clothes, these items will be forwarded to other "faith-based" organizations that are accepting used clothing for distribution in Haiti.

In summary, the overwhelming support of the saints has generated (to date) over \$5k in cash and over 294 boxes and bags of quality items, which included a wide variety of food and non-food items. Since the contributions were substantial, deliveries had to be made directly to the receiving station in Boynton Beach, Florida north of Pompano Beach and Boca Raton. Special thanks to families and friends who came together, gave of their time and shared their resources for this "**Universal Call**". God is with us and has really blessed us in this endeavor. Other directions pertaining to continued relief efforts will be forthcoming.

Donations included:

- ✓ Cash Contributions sent directly to Headquarters from several churches
- ✓ Food: Canned goods, rice, beans, instant mashed potatoes, oatmeal, crackers, peanut butter, canned meats, juices, dry milk, pasta, baby food
- ✓ Baby: New baby clothes, pampers, and baby wipes
- ✓ Linen: Sheets (new and used), towels, comforters, blankets, pillow cases
- ✓ Medical: Alcohol, peroxide, bandages, gauze, hand sanitizers, first aid kits
- ✓ Water purifiers and filters
- ✓ Toiletries and Personal Hygiene: mouth wash, tooth brushes/paste, soap, sanitary napkins
- ✓ Paper Goods
- ✓ Approximately 100 boxes and bags of clothes and shoes (this number is included in the 250 total tallies).

The House of God Church, La Gonaive Update

Many of the students in grades nine and above who were attending school in Port-au-Prince were killed as a result of the earthquake; confirmation on the status of the other students attending school in Port-au-Prince is pending. Let us remain in prayer for their families along with our brothers and sisters in La Gonaive. As more information and identifications of the students are made available, the Chief Overseer's Office will make that information available to the Church-at-Large.

A subsequent tremor from the earthquake caused a crack in the wall of our Church in La Gonaive and cracks in the wall of the school; however, there is no structural damage. As a precaution, those members displaced by the earthquake who had taken up shelter on The House of God Campus are now living outdoors.

In response to this mounting crisis, the Chief Overseer has authorized the immediate release of additional funds necessary to support the acquisition of portable shelter, food and supplies specifically err-marked for our students and members on La Gonaive.