



St. Joseph of the Apparition Primary School

— Gonaives, Haiti —



May my teaching drop like the rain, my speech condense like the dew;
like gentle rain on grass, like showers on new growth.

DEUTERONOMY 32:2



We are a Catholic ministry

that mobilizes the global Catholic Church to transform the poor and their communities materially and spiritually for the glory of Jesus Christ.

Rather than create new institutions to distribute aid, we support existing ministries and churches already serving the poor. In addition to being the most cost-effective way of helping the poor, empowering these ministries allows us to support the Church's spiritual mission and its important position of leadership in poor communities.

We consider every gift we receive as a precious resource from God. We direct every donation to its intended project, provide honest and accurate reports to our donors, and keep overhead costs to an industry low. We handle funds with utmost integrity and hold our ministry partners in the field to the same high standards by asking them to document costs and the impact of their outreach.

We invite you to join with us as we seek to transform the lives of the poor materially and spiritually — ways that please the Father and glorify him in Heaven and on earth.



Project Synopsis

Description

This project will feed and educate vulnerable children at a Catholic school in one of Haiti's poorest communities.

Purpose

To fight hunger, give hope through education and manifest Christ's love.

Ministry Partner

The Sisters of St. Joseph of the Apparition.

Location

Gonaives, Haiti.

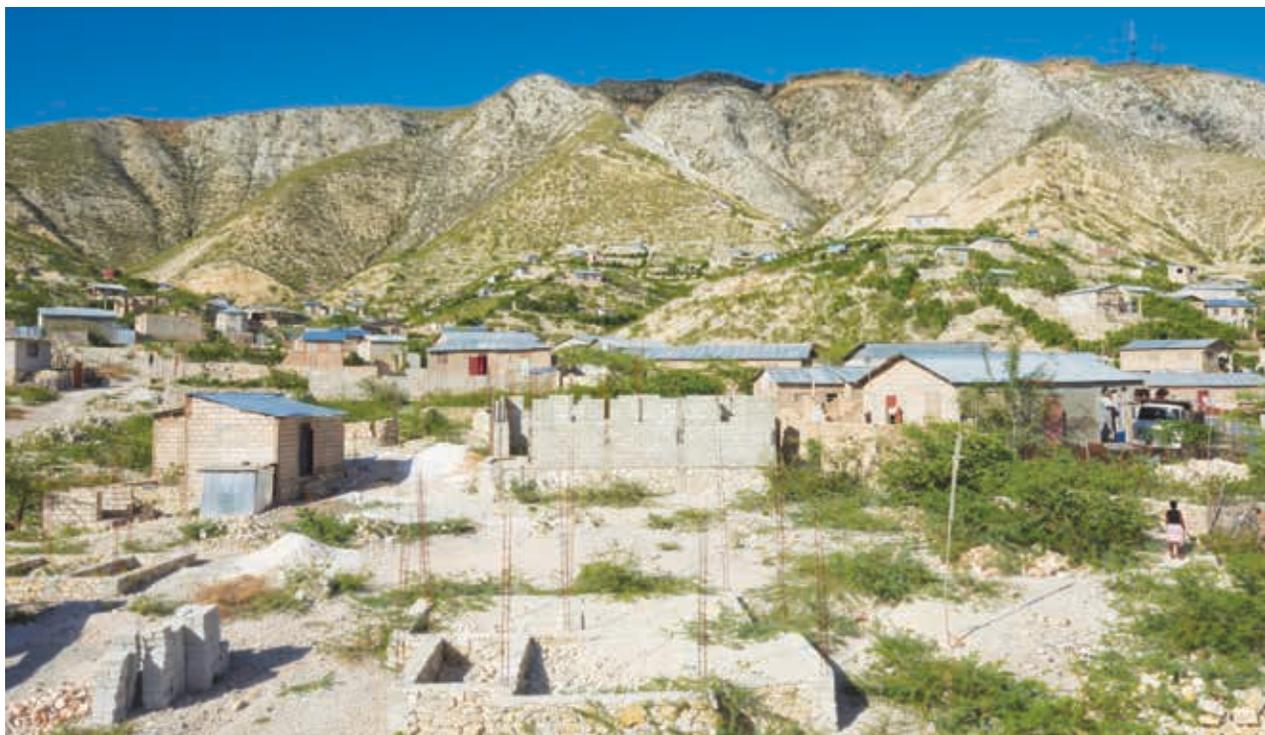
Cost

\$30,000 will help provide books, uniforms, teacher and staff salaries, and stipends for kitchen volunteers.

Highlights

- St. Joseph of the Apparition Primary School serves 674-plus students and is, for many poor Haitian families, the only hope of providing an education for their children.
- The school operates in an arid region where illiteracy is rampant and families live hand to mouth.
- This year, the Sisters of St. Joseph hope to expand the school with the addition of the ninth grade.
- Your generous gift will enable the sisters to focus on reaching the most vulnerable children in the community.
- With your help, families who have no money for tuition or supplies will be able to enroll their children in school, where students will also benefit from daily nutritious meals.
- Slow learners will be coached in an after-school program.
- Catholic students receive catechism classes; non-Catholic students will take a moral science class. All students will attend a bimonthly Mass adapted for children.
- This school is the first step on the path out of deep poverty for needy students.





Gonaives' arid climate prevents the poor from growing their own food — a key to survival for many Haitian families.

The Need

Some come from broken homes, all have experienced hunger, and most lack even a few dollars to put toward a basic education, but with your help, there could be another way of defining the condition of the children of Gonaives, Haiti. They could be the first in their family to learn to read and write.

Why is that distinction so important? Because these are the children of poor families living in a deeply impoverished part of Haiti, and the cycle of poverty there has trapped generation after generation in that poverty for lack of this opportunity. This opportunity can finally break that terrible cycle!

To fully appreciate the scale of that change, you need to understand how extreme their area's poverty is and how difficult escaping it has become. Most of Gonaives' families must depend on subsistence farming to survive, but the land they occupy is so dry that very little grows well there. Single mothers are commonly heads of the household, and most struggle to make ends meet; as a result, their children have languished on the verge of malnourishment since the day they were born. As they grow, most of these boys and girls have only dirty water to drink, endure inhumane living conditions and spend their days roaming the streets rather than participating in school. As days of this turn to weeks, months and years, their future erodes away. Before long, most are trapped in the same fate as their parents and the cycle begins again.

Fortunately, the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Apparition are aware of the uphill battle these children fight each day, and are working to improve their situations. That effort has faced many challenges, but the mission has always persevered. In 2004, when Hurricane Jeanne swallowed the city, their mission was lost along with it. In 2008, another bad hurricane season forced them to rebuild again. Then there was the 2010 earthquake that sent thousands of survivors fleeing to Gonaives for aid and shelter. Since then, cholera, economic catastrophes, social upheaval and most recently the COVID-19 pandemic have all taken their toll.

In spite of all of this, the sisters are determined to keep the doors of learning open to the poorest, most vulnerable children — and you can help them succeed! Through your compassion, the next generation *can* rise above these many setbacks and discover the positive opportunities an education provides.



Ministry Description

St. Joseph of the Apparition Primary School is an oasis in a dry and desolate land — and a pathway to a better future. It is literally the only chance many local children have to get a formal education. Seats are reserved for the neediest students, who receive books, uniforms, daily nutritious meals and a complete Catholic education free of charge. Even the small annual maintenance fee of about \$7 is waived for those who cannot pay it, because the goal is to move the most disadvantaged boys and girls from the streets to the classrooms.

“Only through education can we uplift this community. Most of our children are first generation for education. Our parents are not educated,” said Sister Margaret Michael. “By being in this area, our school has become hope for all these students.”

As they meet this need, the sisters become the hands and feet of Christ to the most vulnerable.

“We as religious are here in this country to share in the mission of Christ,” said Sr. Margaret. “We share the love of Christ to the people through our presence here.”

The education experience offered at St. Joseph focuses on more than core academics. As students get involved in organized sports, cultural programs, competitions, art, singing and dancing, they come out of their shells, become enthusiastic about learning, and demonstrate the discipline they need to succeed. They learn they have value in God’s eyes, and they pick up critical life habits that aren’t always taught at home. Attention must also be given to the parents, who are themselves uneducated and do not understand the importance of things like making sure their children arrive at school on time. The more the whole family is involved, the better the chances a child will excel in the classroom.

This year, more students than ever before have the chance to receive an education as St. Joseph adds ninth grade. This expansion means higher costs — but with your help, we can ensure that all 741 students get a solid Catholic education!



“We share the love of Christ to the people through our presence here.”



Help Now!

Please — empower St. Joseph of the Apparition Primary School to be a beacon of hope for the children of Gonaives! That light can shine only as long as attendance remains affordable to families who survive from day to day on less than nothing, and the sisters' ability to offer that blessing requires your support.

Your generous gift to Cross Catholic Outreach will keep education free by paying the salaries of the teachers and staff who impact students' lives. Your gift is also needed to buy books and school uniforms for those who cannot afford them, and to provide a monthly stipend for six volunteers who manage the lunch program — without which many students would simply go hungry.

An investment in Catholic education is an investment in a child's future, and it is an expression of the Church's divine obligation to lift up those in need. Christ's call to love the poor and marginalized includes taking steps to transform lives for the better and break their dependence on alms. To that end, please prayerfully consider joining us as we empower Haiti's children to hope, to dream, to aspire and to climb step by step out of the pit of abject poverty.

These boys and girls have so much untapped potential. Help them discover that potential and achieve their dreams!

“Give, and it will be given to you.”

LUKE 6:38

Our Promise to You!

Donations from this campaign will be used to cover any expenditures for this project incurred through June 30, 2022, the close of our ministry's fiscal year. In the event that more funds are raised than needed to fully fund the project, the excess funds, if any, will be used to meet the most urgent needs of the ministry.

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