Grand Anse Women’s Health Program
Medical Care & Health Education for the Poor

— Jérémie, Haiti —

I was sick and you took care of me.
MATTHEW 25:36
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 rehabilitate a health clinic to provide affordable, professional care for impoverished rural women.

Purpose
To save lives by providing health education, screenings, diagnoses, treatments and follow-up care for women who may be suffering from noncommunicable diseases, such as breast cancer or diabetes.

Our Partners
Grand Anse Health and Development Association.

Location
Jérémie, Haiti.

Cost
$48,000 will fund the training of women and nurses to identify potential signs of breast cancer and provide treatment and other services.

Highlights
- There is no organized national system for health education, testing, treatment and follow-up in Haiti.
- Many impoverished rural women cannot afford healthcare. Even if they find a way to pay for treatment, they cannot afford to travel to hospitals in Port-au-Prince and remain there for recurring appointments.
- This lack of access puts precious wives, mothers, sisters and daughters at risk. Too often, women do not realize they have a life-threatening illness until it is too late.
- Grand Anse Health and Development Association launched its breast cancer program in 2011 with support from the Third Order of Saint Francis. They have reached thousands of women with educational messages on breast health, and they have provided more than 1,000 women with clinical breast exams.
- Over time, the program has developed a wide network of volunteer U.S. medical professionals, including MDs, radiologists, anesthesiologists and surgeons.
- Grand Anse works with the Diocese of Jérémie to advertise their lifesaving services. Each educational session begins with prayer, and program leadership makes it clear that their faith inspires their service.
- Your generous gift is needed to educate women and train nurses in proper prevention and treatment for this silent illness. This facility will provide Grand Anse with the space it needs to serve its patients with excellence.
The Need

Mathilde brought her arms up, hoping to hide the infected, malodorous ulcer spreading across her chest. Doctors could do no more for her. Soon, they told her, the cancer would run its course. Fear and poverty had prevented Mathilde from seeking care earlier. Now it was too late.

Tragically, stories like this are common in Haiti’s poorest communities. In rural towns and impoverished urban slums, advanced medical care is simply inaccessible for many poor women, and those who reside in remote villages face the greatest hurdles to obtaining quality medical care. Many cannot pay for transportation to city hospitals or afford to remain in the city for ongoing treatments. Instead, they suffer in silence.

A lack of health education compounds this problem. According to local medical professionals, many women fall prey to cancer and other catastrophic conditions because they are unable to recognize symptoms while the problems are still treatable. Stigmas and misconceptions also keep life-threatening conditions hidden for too long. As a result, husbands lose wives and children lose mothers to tragedies that could have been prevented with proper care.

How long will noncommunicable diseases such as breast cancer, diabetes and heart disease continue to devastate Haitian families? Until something is done to change the situation.

In partnership with the Diocese of Jérémie and a network of volunteer medical professionals, Grand Anse Health and Development Association wants to prevent unnecessary tragedies and save the lives of women like Mathilde. Working together, we can help them fight these frightening illnesses and offer hope to families that have nowhere else to turn.

Average life expectancy in Haiti is only 63 years — about 15 years less than the life expectancy for United States citizens.

Source: World Bank
Ministry Description

Grand Anse launched its women’s health program in 2011, and over time, it has been able to establish an extensive network of volunteer medical professionals from the U.S. One of those volunteers is Dr. Dan Scopetta, a Connecticut native who encountered Mathilde as she was being discharged from the hospital.

When Dr. Scopetta became aware of the patient’s situation, he demonstrated Christlike love by working through Grand Anse to provide Mathilde with hospice care for the rest of her days. Nurses gently cleaned the poor woman’s wound, and her husband and children were able to visit. Within a few weeks, she passed away with dignity.

Mathilde’s life could not be saved... but her story should not be forgotten! It should inspire us to act and provide solutions to others facing a similar fate. That is exactly what Grand Anse aims to do.

Like Dr. Scopetta, compassionate physicians, nurses, anesthesiologists, radiologists and surgeons are all poised to provide quality care for the area’s poorest women, but it is currently a struggle for them to conduct laboratory testing and to diagnose illnesses such as breast cancer, diabetes, heart disease and anemia. In order to execute their critical mission with excellence, they need help....

Good Health: A Gift From God

Grand Anse has established a strong relationship with local Catholic leaders, who help refer suffering people to the program and its services. Parishes also alert local women when educational seminars on breast health are taking place, helping prevent tragedy and catch problems in the early stages. Each informational session begins with prayer, and program leaders make it clear their services are provided in Christ’s name.
Help Now!

Christ promised, “I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Today, many women feel alone in their pain and sickness, but the Church can represent the compassion of Christ and bring his love to victims like Mathilde. These women need not suffer in silence until it is too late — they can be blessed and lives can be rescued!

By empowering the Grand Anse Health and Development Association’s mission, you will be reaching out to poor women who are hurting, afraid and unable to access adequate healthcare. You can bless the community with educational training and competent medical staff to reassure women through every stage of testing, diagnosis, treatment and follow-up. Compassionate medical professionals want to serve patients with breast cancer and other life-threatening illnesses, but they will need our help to achieve their goals.

Working together, we can show these women they are not alone in their fight for life.

Please — help the volunteers at Grand Anse use their skills and education to share the love of Christ and serve those in desperate need. Support their incredible work! Your donation will save lives and bless entire families for the glory of God!

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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.