

January 13, 2010

Haiti update

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

I have been able to receive some news from Haiti. First the good news. We were able to confirm that my friend Bishop Jean Zache Duracin survived the earthquake, though his wife, Marie-Edithe, injured her foot. The bad news is that now they are homeless.

The diocesan cathedral, Cathédrale Sainte Trinité, and the entire cathedral complex, including the entire Holy Trinity School complex adjacent to the cathedral, are also gone. The Sisters of the Society of St. Margaret are safe, but their convent was destroyed. The College of St. Pierre is gone, although the apartment for the college is still standing. St. Vincent's School for the Handicapped in Port-au-Prince, a diocesan residential school and the only one of its kind in Haiti, was reportedly destroyed.

We have also heard that Roman Catholic Archbishop Joseph Serge Miot of Port-au-Prince died in the earthquake.

In Trouin four people were killed during a service at St. Mark's. In Grand Colline St. Matthew's Church is gone, as well as the church in St. Etienne. The church in Les Cayes is OK, but some people were injured trying to get out of the building during the quake. The rectory in Les Cayes is in very bad condition.

I spoke with Bishop Julio Holguin from the Dominican Republic, who said his diocese is beginning to coordinate its help for the Church in Haiti. He said that he was able to see Bishop Duracin in a news report that showed him trying to dig people out of the ruins.

I will keep you posted as soon as I receive further reports. Please pray for the people of Haiti, and don't forget your brothers and sisters of our Haitian congregations in Southeast Florida that have no news from their families on the island. Archdeacon Fritz Bazin and other Haitian clergy are working very hard trying to make contact with our church and families in Haiti.

We are planning a diocesan service of prayer for Haiti on Jan. 23 at 4:30 p.m. at Holy Sacrament, Pembroke Pines.

Also stress to your congregations the immediate need for financial help for the church and people of Haiti. Your contributions can be sent to either online at www.ecsefl.org, or mailed to Episcopal Charities of Southeast Florida, 8895 North Military Trail #205C, Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33410 and we will make sure that it gets there as soon as humanly possible.

Blessings,

+Leo