



# ***HELPS INTERNATIONAL***

*A Commitment to Serve the Nations*

March 1, 2010

Dear Family & Friends,

We hope and pray that all is well with you and your families. I have said this before but I feel that I need to say it again. We are a blessed people. God has blessed us with so much and in doing so He has given us the ability to bless others. I am so thankful for this gift that He has given us, and so thankful for all of you, for your giving to others, this gift of love.

As many of you know, on January 12, 2010 Haiti was shaken by a 7.0 earthquake and over 50 aftershocks since then. A significant aftershock occurred as recently as February 22, which Phyllis Newby mentioned to me when talking to her in Haiti on February 23. It was felt in the Saintard area.

Haiti is a nation that has had to deal with a great number of hardships over its history, including political unrest and social tension, as well many natural disasters. A year and a half ago, four hurricanes ripped through Haiti. With many communities still trying to recover from the hurricanes, less than 2 month ago they were shaken by a 7.0 earthquake which destroyed large sections of Port au Prince and the surrounding areas ~ Petionville, Jacmel, Leogane ~ as well as many other communities as far out as Saintard (50km away from Port au Prince)

Saintard is where Mission Haiti is located and where HELPS International's main base is. Saintard received less damage than the core cities like Port au Prince. The Mission Haiti orphanage, training centre and the hospital which are located on a ten acre property, received only cosmetic damage. The Mission Haiti primary and high school, which has 1500 students, will need major repairs to the second and third floors. They are not able to use the school in the condition that it is in. Kids throughout Haiti have not been able to attend school since the earthquake. The government is hoping to get students back into school by March 1. Will this happen? Only time will tell. Also, there was major damage to the church/school in Cabaret, to the point that it will have to be torn down and rebuilt. Cabaret is located between Saintard and Port au Prince. Human lives have been torn apart. Families that once were, are no more. Parents lost children, wives lost husbands, children lost parents. One example of this was with our Haitian Mission hospital director Dr. Paddy, who minutes before the earthquake struck, left his home to go out. As he walked away from his house, the earth shook and his house crumbled to the ground. Less than a minute determined life and death. He lost his house, clinic, the hospital he worked at in Port au Prince, and all of his friends. His neighbourhood was totally destroyed. Dr Paddy is a paediatrician. He is a man that gives back to his community and country, caring for the sick and needy. Dr. Paddy has his life and he weeps and rejoices for that.

On January 26, 2010 Steve Omand and Chuck Kerr were scheduled to go to Camp Perrin, Haiti to start working on a new Youth Outreach Centre and Young Adults Vocational Training Centre. We planned to start by helping the ministry in Camp Perrin to finish building their church / school structure. This, as you know, did not happen. On January 12th the earthquake struck Haiti and we did not know if we were going to be able to go to Haiti or not. For over a week we were unable to communicate with Phyllis Newby and the other leaders in Haiti and when we were able to get through, it was very sporadic. When the earthquake struck, all commercial airline flights to Haiti stopped operating. American Air just started their flights back to Haiti on February 19.

Steve and I had tickets booked to Haiti for January 26 – February 8. We knew if the way were to open up for us to go to Haiti, we would take the opportunity to go and assess the situation both in Port au Prince and Saintard to find ways to help in the relief efforts.



On Friday January 22, I received an e-mail from Hans Steinke who mentioned Kinderhilfswerk Global Care, an organization in Germany which was sending a group of doctors to help at the hospital in Saintard. A large media company in Germany was donating a helicopter for 5 NGOs to use while they were in Haiti. The Kinderhilfswerk Global Care group was going to be flying into Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic on January 26. Well, this was the indication we were waiting

for. We knew that the door had been opened and that we would be going to Haiti after all. We changed our tickets that had us flying into Haiti and flew into Santo Domingo, DR instead. We arrived late on the 26<sup>th</sup> and met the German group the next day at a small airport outside of Santo Domingo. After many delays and changes in transportation arrangements, we had Steve Omand and three of the German medical team fly to our Saintard compound on the helicopter and Chuck Kerr and the five others from the German team chartered a plane and flew with all the luggage to the Port au Prince airport.

From the time we arrived at the compound in Saintard on January 27, until we left on February 4<sup>th</sup>, it was non stop 12-14 hour days helping and assisting at the hospital. Dr. Mark Fulton, two orthopaedic surgeons, and a nurse, also arrived on the 27<sup>th</sup>. We also spent time with the kids at the orphanage and working in and around the Saintard community. Chuck had an opportunity to travel by helicopter to Pignon, with Phyllis Newby from Mission Haiti, and Rolf Schild and Reinhard Gertz from the Kinderhilfswerk Global Care group. Pignon is a village in the north of Haiti where Pastor Saint Dieu Louis has a property and base structure for an orphanage. Kinderhilfswerk's primary function is to work with orphanages around the world to set up sponsorship programs for the kids. At this time they have over 3500 children sponsored in multiple



countries. They are looking at setting up a sponsorship program in Pignon, Haiti. It was a privilege to be able to fly over Haiti and see all the different terrain and how and where people live. It was truly an amazing experience.

After being in Saintard for a week, we took a trip into Port au Prince to assess the damage and to see how HELPS could assist in the near future. We also needed to secure medical supplies for the hospital in Saintard and purchase rice and beans to distribute to displaced individuals. What we saw was many people living on the streets and in tent camps. The structural devastation was astounding. The concrete that will need to be removed is in the millions of tons. They are already removing concrete from Port au Prince and leaving it on the side of the roads just outside of Port au Prince. Buildings that were 3-4 stories are now flattened to one story. Many bodies are still buried in the rubble, not to be recovered until the concrete is removed.

I must say that the Haitians are an amazing and very resilient people. Within weeks they were back doing business, selling on the streets, cleaning up shops, getting back to living, to surviving. One large food depot we bought rice from was badly damaged but they had their office outside in a tent with people going into the building to bring out the purchased items. Despite the destruction and mayhem, there is a form of Haitian order being established. As in the past, they will continue to rise up and overcome this catastrophe with the help that they are receiving from the world community. This will not be a short term process. The Haitian people will need our help to restore and rebuild their lives and their nation.



So family, friends and partners of HELPS, we want to give you a big thank you for all your generous giving over the last month and a half. When we were in Haiti, we purchased \$10,000 USD of rice and beans for displaced people in Port au Prince and the surrounding areas. Some of this was distributed while we were in Haiti and the rest has been given out since we left. We have also put an application in to CIDA, the Canadian International Development Agency, for a grant of \$250,000.00 from the Haiti Relief Matching Fund. Canadians raised over \$100,000,000 for Haiti relief in a one month period. The Canadian government has committed to match these funds. Canadian NGOs that work in Haiti can apply for funds through CIDA to be used in Haiti relief.

HELPS International and its partners, Children of Hope, Church of God in Eastern Canada and also the Church of God in Western Canada, and all of their donors have raised \$66,249.32 to date, and more is coming in every day. Our goal in the short term (January 12 – June 12, 2010) is to raise \$100,000.00 through individuals, clubs and corporations. To meet this goal we will need to raise another \$33,750.68. With all of us working together and trusting in God, it is possible.

Of the monies raised to date, \$9041.78 will go to Children of Hope, an organization that works in Haiti with children who are orphaned, disabled or have one or more parent but need a helping hand with support in food, water, medical and getting an education.

The rest of the funds ~ \$47,207.54 minus the \$10,000.00 USD that bought emergency supplies of rice and beans ~ will be used to start developing and building a small village complex in Saintard, on a piece of land that Mission Haiti owns. The village complex could potentially house

40-50 displaced families, providing the CIDA application is approved. Our main focus will be families that have not only suffered total material loss, but also have someone within the family that has had a body part amputated due to injuries sustained in the earthquake.

The Mission Haiti hospital in Saintard has a department that is being developed to work with patients that need prostheses. HELPS and the village complex that we will be building, will partner with the Mission Haiti Hospital to help these individuals and their families regain their lives. Our desire is to have 16-20 units in place by June 1, 2010, before the hurricane season. This means that up to 200 people will be back in permanent housing with a roof over their heads. Each unit will cost \$4500 USD. At this time we have enough money to start building 8 units at the beginning of April. So if you are an Individual, Family, Church, School, Club, Small business or a Corporation, we ask you to consider donating to help us build a living unit for a Haitian family with a family member that has an amputation due to the aftermath of the earthquake. ***You can do this by sending a cheque in any amount, to HELPS International 5987 Bell Harbour Dr. Mississauga, Ontario L5M 5K5.*** Receipts are issued for donations. We want to move families from tents to small houses where they can restart their lives again. Let's see 50 units built by the end of 2010. This can happen with your help. We thank you all again for your outpouring to the Haitian people.

Our plans are to return to Haiti at the beginning of April to work with the Haitian people and to start working on the village complex project in Saintard. We will continue to keep you up to date as this project progresses forward.

For updates on our most recent trip to Haiti (Jan. 26 – February 4, 2010) visit our website at [www.helpsinternational.ca](http://www.helpsinternational.ca).

Sincerely,

Chuck Kerr  
HELPS

