



Spiritual Journey Through Action

Carol Lyle

I have been attending St. Bart's since the late 1980's, with a break in the early 90's when I was away from Atlanta. For about the last 15 years, I have had some connection with Outreach ministries here, ever since I got asked to complete an unfinished Vestry term and was given the assignment to be the liaison to the Missions Committee. This gave me the opportunity to be inspired by the amazing Charlie Gearing, whose love for Haiti - the largest Diocese of the Episcopal Church USA - was the starting point for St. Bartholomew's participation in their Partnership Program in 2006.

Among the many things we as a parish have done during our work with our Partner, the St. Marc's School in a rural corner of Haiti, is conduct medical mission trips. I think we have made a total of at least 7, and I have been able to go on each one. Usually we see children and adults of the Bois Blanc community for 3 days of clinics, and then worship with them on a Sunday. Sometimes we have been a group as small as 4; earlier this year we had a record setting team - in many ways - of 9! This is pretty hard work in uncomfortable conditions for us pampered first world people, and it has taken me out of my comfort zone on many occasions, in ways small and great. But the rewards of this experience are far in excess of its demands. Here are just a few. After my first trip I recall vividly the awareness, which lasted for weeks, that the comforts and privilege of my day to day life were so immense that I could never again fail to be grateful for these things which were not of my making. It has been gratifying to see in person the positive changes in the community over these years - symbolized by the new additions to the school building funded by gifts from the communities of St. Bart's and St. Paul's Atlanta, and built by members of the community in Bois Blanc. And there is the gift of personal relationships with the children and adults of this community whom we have seen year after year.



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- In our time, how have the events of the world around us impacted your vision of giving?
- Have the disasters in the Caribbean and Mexico enhanced your understanding of giving?
- Have you thought of these events in relation to your response to the needs of others closer to home?



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