



# The Children's Medical Mission of Haiti

• St. Vincent's Centre for Handicapped Children • The Haiti Connection December 2015

## Who We Are

The Children's Medical Mission of Haiti is a 501c3 organization committed to providing support for the delivery of medical and educational services to the people of Haiti through St. Vincent's Centre for Handicapped Children, Port-au-Prince. It also serves as an umbrella organization for related missions in Haiti and facilitates and organizes the Haiti Connection Conferences.

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*This beautiful home, located in the northern suburbs of Port-au-Prince, Haiti, along with its seven acres, now belongs to the Episcopal Diocese of Haiti and will become the new home of the St. Vincent's Centre.*

## New Home, New Vision for St. Vincent's

In October 2015, after more than 18 months of negotiations, fund raising, and sheer determination, a new site for St. Vincent's Centre for Handicapped Children was purchased in the area of Santos 17.

It is located in a northern suburb of Port-au-Prince about a 20-minute drive from the airport. The site includes a large house, which can be converted into a residence hall for the students, fruit trees, a swimming pool that can be used for therapy, and about seven acres of open, flat land surrounded by a security fence.

### Where are the children now?

The children currently live and go to school at Site 2, formerly known as the Foyer. These are temporary facilities constructed after the earthquake to house the children while developing plans for a new school. Recently, water damage in the boy's bed-

rooms revealed some structural damage. After a more complete examination by engineers, it became apparent that significant renovation and reconstruction would be necessary to make the present facility safe and functional.

One plan was to spend about \$200,000 on the current facility, which would be torn down by the government as soon as the students left. The site is located in an area of a major downtown restoration. Or the newly purchased site at Santos 17 could be renovated to receive the students while funding for the larger, new facility was obtained. While this option would cost more, about \$300,000, most of the work done there could be used permanently, or repurposed when the new construction was completed.

To encourage the start of the renovations at Santos 17, and to help jump-start fund-raising for the facility, the Board of the Children's Medical Mission of Haiti approved a \$100,000 matching grant from its endowment. The Development Office of the Episcopal Church has taken on the responsibility for raising money for the renovations at Santos 17 and funding for the new school, as well as securing additional funds for the St. Vincent's Endowment.

### **So what is the role of CMMH?**

While the purchase of the land, the renovation of the buildings, and the move to Santos 17 are significant steps toward a new vision for St. Vincent's, the day-to-day needs of the children need to be met. Teachers need salaries. Food must be purchased. The children need places to sleep and the care and comforts of life. That is our role.

***CMMH is the only group currently focused on meeting the operational needs of the Centre.***

Currently St. Vincent's cares for some 328 students – 71 blind or visually impaired, 164 deaf or hearing impaired, 45 physically handicapped, 23 mentally handicapped, and 25 non-disabled children for inclusion. No small task.

### **Broadening the Base**

In August, a collection of groups working with St. Vincent's called the *St. Vincent's Gathering of the Committed* met in Connecticut. This was the group's second meeting. Its purpose is to focus and coordinate the efforts of the various groups. Its goal is to help St. Vincent's to become a self-sustaining resource that will effectively and efficiently serve the physical, educational, spiritual, and independence needs of the handicapped children in Haiti.

CMMH participated in both meetings and continues to work collaboratively with the effort. Some of the groups included are the Catholic Medical Mission of Haiti, Friends of St. Vincent's, Jacob's Color Link, the West Tennessee Haiti Partnership, 100 Gardens, and various Episcopal churches.

### **New Director Named**

As part of a normal reassignment of priests in Haiti in August, The Rev. Sadoni Leon, Director of St. Vincent's for the past several years, was reassigned to a church and school in the northern part of the Diocese. The Rev. Frantz Cole, also known as Pere Fan Fan, was named Director at St. Vincent's.

Pere Cole was ordained as a priest in Haiti in 1987 and served five parishes since then – Saint Esprit, Lascahobas, St. Paul's, Montrouis, St. Paul's, Les Cayes, Ascension, Port-au-Prince, and Notre Dame, Port-au-Prince. Among other accomplishments, he started a micro-loan program in Montrouis, helped to found *Maison de Naissance*, a birthing center, while in Les Cayes, and served as Development Officer for the Diocese.

### **Success Stories**

The Friends of St. Vincent's provides scholarships for students at St. Vincent's to help them move ahead in life. A recent report gave the following brief updates:

*Carlot Dorve* – in Michigan continuing his studies

*Mause Darline Francois* – staff member at CBM (Children Blind Mission, NGO)

*Denis Marquise* – secretary for Mr. Gerald Oriol, Secretary of State for Including, for the government of Haiti

*Preval Bazelais* – employed by Digicel, the largest cell phone company in Haiti

*Asias Derosier* – now on his own, self-supporting

*Samuel Elizaire* – obtained a degree in accounting and is working at St. Vincent's

*Genie Mergenor* – obtained a diploma as a secretary and is working at St. Vincent's

*Clauriciane Morigene* – currently working as a translator and studying design

*Dieumene Clorisin* – studying English at the best school for English in Haiti



*St. Vincent's students on a recent field trip to nearby Botanical Park.*

## Recent Special Activities

Pere Cole reports that the children at St. Vincent's enjoyed a variety of special activities during the past few months. They visited LeClerc Park, a botanical garden emphasizing the importance of reforestation in Haiti; participated in a march through Port-au-Prince to remind the country of the importance of improving education for children with disabilities; watched a puppet show teaching good dental hygiene; began an exercise/sports class three times a week with a gymnastic teacher; and every Sunday enjoyed musical and other fun entertainment.

## Brace Shop Work Expands

St. Vincent's hired an additional orthopedic specialist to expand its ability to provide prosthetics and orthopedic services. According to Pere Fan Fan, the shop experienced a large increase in productivity.

## Aquaponics Program Begins

100 Gardens, working with Friends of St. Vincent's, has set up an aquaponics program for St. Vincent's that ultimately will help the Centre become food self-sufficient. The new Santos 17 property will be of particular value as it will have the space to develop a variety of gardens, including aquaponics.

In addition to providing food, the 100 Gardens program offers a vocational track for the students in the areas of science, gardening, and small business skills.

## Haiti Connection 2016

The Haiti Connection Conference, originally scheduled for October 21, 23, 2015, has been rescheduled for April 6-8, 2016 — same city — Port-au-Prince, Haiti — same host hotel — The Montana Hotel — and the same purpose — sharing, learning, inspiration and connections with others who are doing God's work in Haiti.

A tentative schedule and registration form has been posted on our website.

In addition to the regular conference schedule — Wednesday afternoon through Friday afternoon, there will be three pre-conference trips — to Les Cayes and points south, to the Central plateau and points east, and to Cap Haitien and points north. Each will be led by an experienced guide. Registration will be limited.

A tour to the new site of St. Vincent's and Holy Trinity Cathedral will be held on Wednesday morning.

Please go to our website [www.haitiepiscopalconnection.org](http://www.haitiepiscopalconnection.org) for updates and registration forms. You can also contact Ken Quigley at [khquigley@comcast.net](mailto:khquigley@comcast.net) or Jerry Harner at [gerald.harner@gmail.com](mailto:gerald.harner@gmail.com).

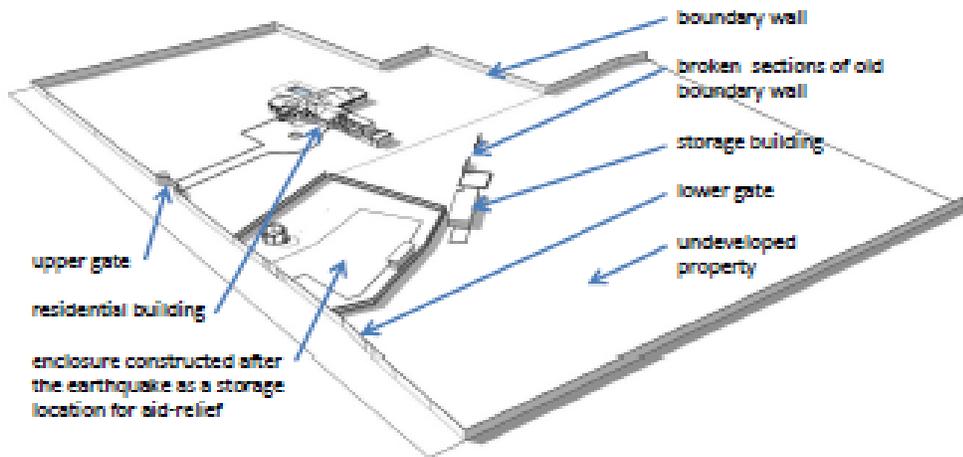


Figure 5 – 3D View of the current property and infrastructure

*Above is an elevation of the existing site at Santos 17, to become the new home of St. Vincent's.*

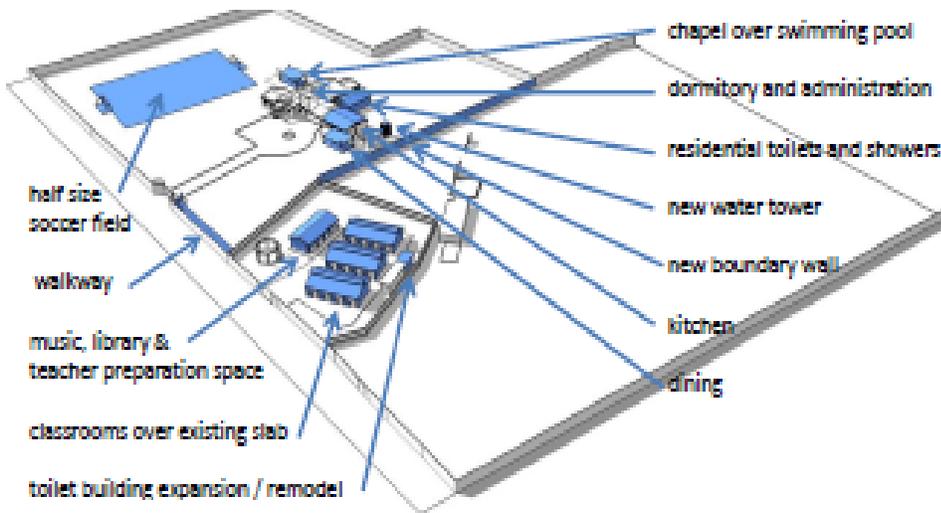


Figure 6 – 3D image of the proposed use of the property

*Proposed renovation/reconstruction of Santos 17 for the near term. Additional space is available to construct a new, larger facility as funds are raised.*

## Your support is needed now more than ever

St. Vincent's approaches the New Year with new hope and a new vision – to become the premier Centre for handicapped children in all of the West Indies. Recent support from prominent leaders in business and government in Haiti mark a change in attitude toward handicapped persons in Haiti, with St. Vincent's as a leading proponent and example of what that means.

***Please join this special cause – send a gift today.*** Go to our website [www.cmmh.org](http://www.cmmh.org) and contribute using PayPal, or send a check by mail to the Children's Medical Mission of Haiti, 925 Hertzler Road, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055. Thank you.

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