

Père Duveaux Names Chaplain to Oversee Brace Shop & Medical Clinic

Ernso Plantin is a vocational Deacon who also lives in proximity to the School. He provides religious instruction for our students and holds worship services for children and staff. As needed, he provides counsel and spiritual guidance to staff, students and their families. Père Plantin is also St. Vincent's liaison with the Diocese of Haiti.

Somewhat further afield from Santo 17, Père Plantin oversees the operation of our downtown Medical Clinic and Brace Shop on Rue Paul VI. Known throughout the country as **the place** for the poor to come with medical issues. Our Clinic operates five days a week with pediatricians, orthopedic physicians and optometrists. Soon, the new x-ray machine, gifted by the Japanese Embassy, will become operative. It's being tested right now. On the second floor of the same building as the Clinic is our Brace Shop, where we make - and tailor - the braces and prosthetics needed for mobility. It is Père Plantin's job to oversee all who work here and the equipment which they use in their healing work.



Prosthetics stand ready to be used by those who need them.



A skilled SVC worker removes a cast from a young child correcting a club foot.



Thank you for your support!

Sustaining St. Vincent's

As we pray for peace and political stability in Haiti, our focus is on the 200 children entrusted to our care, their teachers and caregivers, and the employees of our Medical Center and Brace Shop. We can - and do - make a difference here. Our support educates, feeds, provides medical attention and loving care. It is a sacred trust.

Your gift is a blessing to so many in Haiti at this critical time. Please continue your support and send your check to:

St. Vincent's Center, Haiti
P.O. Box 771142
Memphis, TN 38117

Or go to www.stvincentshaiti.org click on the **DONATE** button.

Your support will change a life.



Who We Are

Members of the St. Vincent's Center Board

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Port-au-Prince, Haiti
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Ary Theodore, Esq.
Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Dr. Pierre Marie Woolley
Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Full details on board members can be found on our website: www.stvincentshaiti.org

Our Mission

The mission of SVC is to provide children with disabilities in Haiti special opportunities, support and resources to learn, grow and reach their full potential in their young life's journey toward adulthood.

Contact Information

Website:
www.stvincentshaiti.org

Ken Quigley: (717-796-1852)
khquigley@comcast.net

Diocese Names New Director for St. Vincent's

Appointed Director of St. Vincent's Center by the Standing Committee of the Diocese of Haiti on July 1, 2019, Père Irnel Duveaux is a native of Cap-Haïtien. The late Bishop Luc Garnier ordained him to the Diaconate and the Priesthood in 1988. Père Duveaux is married and the father of one child.

He comes to St. Vincent's from service as a parish priest in several churches in the country. Happily, he lives close enough to the School that he can ride his bike to work!

As Director, Père Duveaux has a complex role. He oversees the daily operation of the Center, develops a strong leadership team, maintains careful fiscal control and accountability, and develops and maintains partnerships for the benefits of SVC, both in Haiti and the United States. Père Duveaux works closely with the Diocese of Haiti and the St. Vincent's Board, to which he reports.



The Rev. Irnel Duveaux

He is in regular contact with the SVC Board Chair, Ken Quigley, and participates in the bi-monthly Board conference calls.

While French and Creole are his native tongues, Père Duveaux also communicates effectively in English. Upon discovering the critical need for working Braille machines, he acted strategically to garner the information needed to assess the situation and plan for repair. As emails flew back and forth on an almost daily basis, it was

his plan of action which successfully resolved the crisis.

With tact becoming a diplomat of the first order, Père Duveaux has already proven his finesse in bridging the cultural differences among the many St. Vincent's constituencies. He listens first, and because his very nature is to collaborate, he is a reconciler and a problem solver.

We are delighted to welcome him to St. Vincent's!

Adult Residents Enjoy Hi-Speed Internet

Friends of St. Vincent's collaborated with the SVC adult residents to have hi-speed internet installed in September so that the adults could take continuing education courses without the expense and security risk of leaving the Santo 17 property.

Friends also provided scholarships to both Rosana and Evens to return to school to finish their degrees. When the turmoil recedes, schools reopen, and the streets are safe again, they will return to Heart of Jesus School.



Repairs & Renovations Continue

Our Buildings and Grounds Supervisor, M. Mentor, has been busy! The former Physical Therapy Room at our downtown Medical Clinic has been renovated and newly tiled to meet the rigorous requirements for housing our new x-ray machine. And another room has also been tiled to become the new location for Physical Therapy.

An interior ladder now rises from the second story of the Clinic to the roof. Access was needed, because the roof was leaking badly. The roof has been repaired; and the ladder remains in place - for any future roof work. Meanwhile, lest we think the work on the Clinic is fully done, a large tree has fallen. The root has taken with it part of the sidewalk and a wall! Fortunately, security is not an issue, and fortunately, also, M. Mentor can handle this.

Out at Santo 17, very low water pressure was a problem. Toilets did not flush fully, unless the pump ran continuously, on a generator: a luxurious use of electrical power. Multi-talented M. Mentor has now added a second 600-gallon water tower; and the issue is solved.

M. Mentor trained at the Holy Trinity Professional School. From water tower installation to creation of an organic garden and irrigating it, to tiling floors and repairing roofs, M. Mentor has proven to be a man for all seasons. We are blessed to have him on the St. Vincent's staff.



(Top) Visitors look at the open space at Santo 17 and imagine the changes that the future will bring; (Bottom) The pump for the water tower at Santo 17.

In Haiti Right Now...

Behind the current massive protests in Haiti is the 2006 agreement with Venezuela known as PetroCaribe. This permitted Haiti to purchase fuel upfront at 60% of cost and pay the remaining 40% over 25 years at 1% interest. Because the Haitian government has a monopoly on fuel, it was able to sell that 40% at a profit. The PetroCaribe monies were to be used to fund infrastructure on health, education, and social services. Under three successive administrations, at least \$2 billion has disappeared; and Haitians from all walks of life have had it with corrupt political leadership.

Taking to the streets, they have closed businesses and schools. As businesses close, employees lose their jobs and their income, and become desperate to survive. There are barricades and blockades in most cities and towns, some of them controlled by armed individuals. Mobility is difficult and unsafe. More

violent demonstrators are burning tires and businesses. People are staying inside for fear of violence. Fuel is in short supply, as is food. Inflation has grown 20% in the past year, making the cost of food exorbitant. Despite demands for his ouster, the President refuses to resign, although his removal from office would not guarantee a short-term course correction. Corruption and lack of infrastructure remain paramount issues.

At St. Vincent's, our 40 residents are safe and have food and water. There are no school classes, and some of our students have gone to the countryside. **We continue to pay the salaries of all of our dedicated faculty and staff.** In many instances, they are the breadwinners of their families. One of the blessings of St. Vincent's employment is that they are able to sustain their families in this crisis, as their paychecks stretch to cover literally hundreds of people.

Board Champions Braille Repair and Replacement

Made in India and purchased from Perkins School for the Blind, Braille machines cost \$810 each. With our 60 blind students, St. Vincent's really needs a complement of 20 working Brailers. Right now, we have one. Hard and daily use over the years have rendered 19 of our stock of 20 unusable.

Director Père Duveaux selected three residents to work with a video provided by Perkins to clean the 20 machines, in the hopes that thorough, proper, cleaning would make a difference. Using Google, Adrien Kenson (who also repairs wheelchairs) translated the very specific 26-minute English video into Creole. Jean-Louis Jean Leonard then translated the Creole into American Sign Language for Pericles Lux Mainy, who is deaf. The three then set about cleaning all 20 machines. That's how we know that only one works properly now!



Broken Braille machines waiting to be fixed at Santo 17.

Next, this industrious group, working with an English list of parts provided by Perkins identified all the needed parts to repair the Brailers. Then they quantified all of the needed parts (in English, which they do not speak), so that the SVC Board could order them. That's been done! We've also ordered five new Brailers to build up our working stock.

Brailers have 296 parts, so repair is a complex task. Enter Bill Grass, husband of newly-elected SVC Trustee, Karen Grass. Bill is the proverbial Mr. Fixit. He borrowed three Brailers from a nearby institute for the blind, one of which worked and two which did not. Armed with Perkins manuals and repair kit, Bill fixed the two non-working machines over a week-end. He is now committed to spending his first visit to Haiti repairing Brailers - no visits to museums or other sites for him - he'll be 100% focused on repair and training residents to do the work.

The other necessary component for our Brailers and our students is 90 lb. weight Braille paper www.maxiaids.com. The SKU is 10463. This paper weighs twice what "regular" paper weighs. It's not available in Haiti, but it is what enables our students to read and write. SVC Trustees carry it down and encourage other visitors to do so, also. Braille repair and upkeep at St. Vincent's is a complicated process. Patient communication in several languages — English, French, Creole, ASL — is essential. It took nearly four months of coordination and nearly daily emails with SVC, Perkins, Bill and Karen Grass, and other SVC Trustees to arrive at a system which provides the information needed to ensure that our blind students have this essential equipment.



A blind student works with a Braille during class.



A young student rests with a drink after using his Braille.