



CHALLENGE

Education in Haiti: a luxury for mountain folk!

In the beginning ...

Since 1804, the year in which Haiti became independent from French Rulers, Education or Instruction has always been a MYTH or LUXURY for the ones that are not living in the cities of Haiti. You seem to be nobody if you are not in the cities.

12 years after our independence. In 1816, Christianity was brought to Haiti by the United States of America. Those Pioneers' involvement; Americans as missionaries, was going to have a great impact on the whole country. Even though those missionaries would rather live or stay in cities, in the big hotels in Port Au Prince, they would affiliate with Indigenous Christian Leaders where they would encourage education up to sixth grade in some parts of those mountains of Haiti. Big thanks to the United States of America for its involvement in the community of Bayonnais!

Let's say, for instance, the unique Free Methodist Church with a school was the first Institution in Bayonnais where 80,000 people are living to have a sixth grade class in 1979 with:

Duvalier Joffre, Kechner Danaus, Ivan Pierre, A Haitian American with his ministry "living water" near OFCB and Joseph Duchene Zamor.

Since sixth grade level, at that time, was such a sophisticated level (a big deal), the 6th graders had to be brought into Port-au-Prince, 160 kilometers away, for about two weeks in order for those poor 6th graders to take their national exams.

Everyone my age or older here in Bayonnais can very quickly remember that during the old days rice, meat, ice, ice cream, soft drinks, electricity, TELEPHONES, medical care and even tin roof houses, were a tremendous luxury for the mountain folk.

TIMES ARE CHANGING,

HOWEVER!

Actionnel Fleurisma



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Bayonnais Classroom

Closing the Gender Gap

In 1980, we had Grégoire Sainté, Julio Pierre, Ivonnette Mondesir (girl), Abraham Thélusmé, Pierre- Cius Isaac, Ivonne Sanon (girl), Justin Pierre, Jean Bernard and Claudette Zamor.

In 1981, we had only 2 sixth graders at the Methodist school: Alcius Adisson and Rosemond Pierre.

In 1982, students were Amérique Fortilus, Lessage Saint-Juste, Prévilon François, Rémy Séjousna, Sainvil Séjousna, Michelet Jean-Louis, Michelène Charles (girl) and Actionnel Fleurisma. That group of eight 6th graders took their National exams in Bayonnais, close to route 1, toward Gonaives (Julot). As you can see from above names for the first 4 years of education in Bayonnais, it is clear that not too many children would have access to education in the late 70's - 80's. Much worse, mostly boys would go to school. Girls would be good to wash clothes, to clean, to cook, to go to the market places such as: L'Estère, au Poteau, Desdunes, Chappelle, Ennery or Gonaives with heavy baskets over their heads.

Praise God that today we have over 50% of girls in our school system.

Christianity

Believe it or not, church or Christianity has brought revolution to many countries and communities in the world, including the Methodist church and school (American affiliated) in Bayonnais. It is true, however, that sixth grade was not enough, but there was a will, a vision to do something better for the little people in the neglected mountains of Haiti.

Praise the Great God Almighty for America that introduced Christianity to Haiti in 1816 and Praise the Lord for the Indigenous Christian leaders who cooperated with America to bring some hope to Haiti. Especially in the mountains, where the fancy people or educated ones would not go or places where politicians would go only when they wanted votes.



School Devotion



Worship in Bayonnais



Hubert Zamor

Mr. Hubert Zamor

The first person to teach 6th grade class in Bayonnais in 1979, is answering Challenge's questions.

CH: How long have you been a teacher?

HZ: *I have been in teaching ministry since 1975.*

CH: Where did you start the career of teaching?

HZ: *At the Free Methodist Church-School here in Bayonnais.*

CH: How do you feel like being the first person to teach 6th grade class here in Bayonnais?

HZ: *I feel really proud to have contributed in the academic training of certain boys and girls in Bayonnais, who now are serving their community as well.*

CH: Where were you born? In Gonaives or Bayonnais?

HZ: *I was born in Bayonnais.*

CH: How long have you been teaching at ICB? And what is your feeling on serving your community in the education of young people here?

HZ: *I have been a teacher at ICB since February 2005 and I am delighted to have the occasion to contribute to the education to those who are also my relatives such as: nieces, nephews, cousins etc.*

CH: What grades do you teach at ICB, and what subjects?

HZ: *I teach history from 7th through 10th grade here at ICB.*

CH: Being a long time career teacher, what are your prospects for the youth of Bayonnais?

HZ: *I nourish the dream of seeing the youth of Bayonnais flourish at all levels: intellectually, socially, morally, professionally and economically.*

I would love to see jobs creation here. I would also like to see a professional school for the young men and women in Bayonnais for those who cannot pass 13th grade or 12th or 9th grade national exam, including for the ones that can pass those exams, but no means to go to Port Au Prince to attend colleges. I wish after our departure that those we are investing in today, will be ready to take the helm of the boat to lead Bayonnais to the rank of a community which would call up on her DISPERSED children around the world to return to live in peace, love, unity, happiness, mutual respect, loyalty and mutual understanding.

CH: Thanks a lot, Mr. Zamor, for taking the time to answer our questions.

HZ: *It has always been my pleasure and may God have mercy on his children here in Bayonnais.*

For the last 15 years, school in Haiti would have started always in September officially. But with the arrival of Mr. Joseph Michel Martelly's administration, on May 14, 2011, managing schools in the country has become a major problem. School principals or schools administration can no longer plan in advance with parents and students.

Always last minute decision to postpone school opening for a month later. However we started on September 2nd with no uniforms but with our full staff and food for the kids.

Fewer days for the school system, and even much fewer for a school in Bayonnais where floods and school bus getting stuck in mud in Savane Ronde are always imminent.

Thank you for your contributions in 2013

The ongoing work in Bayonnais is made possible by your generosity!

This is the time of year to maximize your tax-deductible charitable donations for 2013. While sponsorship is the preferred way to support a student, we recognize that some donors cannot make the commitment to the monthly donation and the letter writing.

If you would like to help a student(s) in the Haiti Community, you may do so, by sending a non-recurring donation for:

- Uniform (\$24 per student)
- Shoes (\$30 per student)
- High School Textbooks (\$30 per student)
- Elementary Textbooks (\$10 per student)
- Bathroom facilities at Nicolas (\$2,000 total)

- Food storage facility at Nicolas (\$2,500 total) would allow OFCB to get food assistance from The World Food Organization
- General Donation (any amount)

Donations can be accepted online at www.worldofgod.org, click "Make a One Time Donation", add what the donation is for in the comments box.

Checks can also be sent to World of God, 338 S. Sharon Amity Rd, No. 280, Charlotte, NC 28211. Please note on the check what it is for.

All of us at World of God, Friends of OFCB and OFCB Ministries sincerely thank you for your support during 2013. You are helping to make great things happen every day in Bayonnais.

May the Christmas light shine always in your heart and life.



Contact Us

WORLD OF GOD

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— OR —

FRIENDS OF OFCB

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... a child is waiting