August 2015

Dear Hands Together Supporter,

I just left Fr. Tom in Haiti and from my window seat on the American Airlines flight to Miami I am writing to you for or annual appeal and yearly update. Looking out I see the rooftops of 4 Hands Together schools in the Cite Solei and I’m amazed that we have created decent schools in one of the poorest and most hostile places in the world. It reminds me of the simple advice that St. Francis de Sales offers us all – that we be roses among thorns – with charity shining forth amid afflictions. And that is precisely what Hands Together does. There are no glorious “centers or programs” but rather our schools and programs are the a product of small acts, one by one on a daily basis, with the humility to know that any success here is far more God’s than anything we have done.

Hands Together exists to walk alongside and help the very poorest of the poor. And Fr. Tom and I have learned painfully that working with the poor is neither glamorous nor fun. In the last 12 months, two of our top staff people were murdered, we have been robbed and lied to countless times, and we know the frustration of experiencing more failures than successes. What is most clear to us is that working with the poor - when you boil it all down - is mostly WORK. It is not easy, but with faith and perseverance, God transforms our effort into something wonderful. This is reflected in the hope filled eyes of students who once played all day in piles of garbage piles and in proud faces of the parents and workers who can finally participate in programs that actually change communities and lives from the inside out.

It’s astonishing we helped more people and expanded more than in any previous year. Only 10 months ago, after the murders of two key Hands Together staff, we contemplated closing it all down. Our “little boat was almost capsized” and had lost many of her crew and was fragile and weak. We experience what St. Paul tells us in his letter to the Corinthians, "For when I am weak, then I am strong...for my power is made perfect in your weakness." From the hardship and trials of last year emerged a stronger, more balanced Hands Together. Here are just some of the many things we accomplished this past year with your help:

**Notable accomplishments July 2014 - June 20-15**

* Ran 4 major delegations for deacons and others who will make mission talks for HT
* Added 36 more acres to the Clarke Farm and started construction on the farm managers living quarters .
* Purchased refurbished and rebuilt T3W Ingersoll Rand water drilling rig and provided two weeks of training for our Haitian-run drilling team
* Partnered with the Archdiocese of P-au-P to create Haiti’s first full scale music and fine arts school
* Built our first of what will be many “dignity centers” providing showers, food and programs
* Outfitted our H.S. and middle schools with laptop computes
* Implemented briquette fuel cooking to all school kitchens in Goonies
* Expanded our Becky DeWine college scholarships for college
* Doubled the outreach of our Mobile clinic and greatly improved health services
* Completed 60% of an artificial turf playing field and recreation center at our middle school

The opportunity and timing to get these things done all fell upon us this past year, but it has left us with a deficit of nearly 1 million dollars to complete all the projects that we started. Much of this funding went into large, 1 time purchases that we probably won’t make ever again, but we sorely need funds to complete several of our largest endeavors. Please look at our items for which we need funding, and help us with whatever you can.

The enclosed annual update outlines our major funding needs and we are begging you to help us if you can. Last year with your help we generated almost $900,000 from this mailing, and we pray that you can help us again.

Fr. Tom’s letter on the back of this page, mentions one of our 2nd grade students filling in a butterfly page in a coloring book. I was with Fr. Tom when she looked up at us with a sad face and said, “There can never be butterfly’s in City Solei.” There will be butterflies in our school and our gardens. They said there could never be a turf field for our poor students in Cite Soleil, but in July, our students will be playing on that turf field.

God bless you,

Doug Campbell

P.S. As promised, this is the only major mailing and appeal we make during our fiscal year. If you would like more copies of the enclosed flyer please email or write us. You can find the latest news on our work and a copy of our audited financial statements by visiting our website at [www.handstogether.org](http://www.handstogether.org/).