

St. Joseph's Family Celebrates 26 Years

Last year the 25th anniversary of the founding of St. Joe's was overshadowed by the earthquake. That event will always be in the mind, body and soul of everyone connected to Haiti. We can not forget the total devastation and the suffering of so many people.



Bottom of photo: Balloons and preparations for 26th Anniversary celebrations

Top of the photo: Demolition of St. Joseph's Guest Home is complete and foundation prepared for construction.

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But now it is time to move on!

This year we celebrated the 26th anniversary of the founding of St. Joseph's. And believe me—it was a celebration filled with the hope of what tomorrow will bring.

We gathered in front of what used to be the entrance to St. Joe's. The courtyard used to be a cozy little space but now it is perched on an abyss... 'the empty tomb' as Michael calls it. From the edge, one looks down at a massive excavation for the foundation of the new home. The 'hole' is probably ten feet deep, encompassing what will be the base of the home. All of this digging was done by hand using pickaxes, shovels and five gallon buckets.

Eight tons of rebar arrived while I was there and soon workmen were busy constructing massive pillars for the foundation. But will it be earthquake proof? That is impossible to predict, but the Haitian architect who is designing our building comes with this commendation! None of the buildings he designed collapsed in the 2010 earthquake!



The tree is cut down and the artist sculpts it on site.

The Family's Tree

Through much of its life, no one paid any attention to the tree growing right beside St. Joseph's — not until the earthquake, that is. This tree saved Bill from being buried by a massive chunk of roof which would have fallen on him.

Bill was on the St. Joseph's roof top when the 2010 earthquake struck. He was tossed into the garden of the home next door at the base of the tree whose mighty trunk held back the rubble from landing on Bill.

During the 26th Anniversary celebration, we honored the tree. First, we festooned its branches with brightly colored balloons and streamers (picture-right). Then, we reflected on the saving grace of that old tree.

Unfortunately, the tree has been removed as it would have caused problems with the foundation of the new home. But we will never forget its sacrifice.

Part of the tree will be used in a sculpture (picture-left), and another portion will be used to make Bill a new drum. Happily, a new tree has been planted.



The tree which saved Bill Nathan's life is decorated and blessed during the 26th Anniversary celebrations.

Promoting Innovation, Diversity & Entrepreneurship



Construction is underway beside Trinity House for a coffee roasting business and coffee shop... The Nouvo Vi Bakery has its equipment in place and bread is being produced daily... Why a bakery? Why a coffee roasting business? It is our goal that one day the homes will be self sufficient. By encouraging the kids to "get creative" and come up with ideas to help themselves, we all will see a much brighter future for our children.

Fransique continues to collect coffee beans from the women up in the mountains. He pays them a fair price for the beans and then brings the sacks of beans home to sort and to prepare for roasting. The bakery is starting to produce goods and Tracey is trying out recipes. And our very own Walnes has set up a jewellery-making business at St. Joe's. In fact, he has hired five workers to help him make jewelry, utilizing coconut shells as the basis for their product.

Nouvo Vi Bakery — Smokin' Fresh Goodness

The Nouvo Vi (New Life) Bakery, located in Trinity House, is practically up and running. The bakery equipment has arrived and is awaiting the proper electrical hookups to move future plans forward. Tracy Pierre is busy experimenting, making bread for the school children, communion bread, and has actually begun to sell some of her tasty products. Jacmel has the possibility of developing into a tourist destination, so in preparation for that, Tracy has been canvassing the hotels in the area, hoping that they will start purchasing product. Of course, there is a delay. The generator is three phase while the ovens are two phase. Hopefully an electrician will be able to rectify that problem soon.



Nouvo Vi Bakery equipment and Tracy Pierre is ready and waiting to produce delicious goods.

Trinity House

Trinity House in Jacmel is thriving (as you can see from all the improvements and developments, I'm sure)! It did not suffer from the earthquake and as a result about twelve of the children formerly at St. Joe's now call Trinity House home.

Lekòl Sen Trinite

It was great to see all the happy children in school at Lekòl Sen Trinite. There have been approximately 150 children registered in the school program for this year, and I'm happy to report that this term the grades of the children have improved immensely. They now have a library and a computer room — but unfortunately, the electrical system does not allow the students to use computers yet. But -- one of these days.....

Wings of Hope Demolition Complete, Construction Delayed

Although the old structure has been removed and the rubble cleared, construction on a new Wings of Hope building will have to wait until the architect finishes drawing up the plans. Meanwhile, the children housed in their inadequate (but temporary) home are happy and content.

Great sadness accompanied the festive Christmas season as three of our children passed away. I know that during their time at Wings of Hope they were treated with dignity and respect, something they would not have received from the general population of Haiti.

Water Filtration System Comes to Trinity House



Water bottles wait to be filled at Trinity House.

Last fall, Trinity House was blessed to have a clean water system installed. Safe and clean drinking water is now available for the boys and guests of Trinity House, the Lekòl Sen Trinite students (and staff) and many families within the Jacmel area. The addition of the clean water system not only offers a clean-water resource, it opens up job opportunities to former St. Joseph's Family graduates to purify the water and educate the people.

The filtration system is working well. Parents of our students are able to purchase purified water three times a week — at a fraction of the cost of water in the market place. With the dangers of unsafe water on everyone's minds right now, this is surely a blessing for Jacmel.



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Broken Wings Missions Inc. is a registered Canadian non-profit charity that was founded in 1998 to support the work of the St. Joseph's Family of Homes established by Michael Geilenfeld, a former brother with Mother Teresa's Sisters of Charity.

Broken Wings Missions Inc.'s mission is to provide relief from the hardships experienced by impoverished children in Haiti through the provision of housing, food, education and health-care.

Broken Wings Missions Inc. accomplishes this with the development and promotion of books or products about the homes and the children, and creating annual touring opportunities throughout Canada and the United States for The Resurrection Dance Theatre of Haiti (or more often, if opportunities arise).

www.broken-wings.ca

Did you know that.....?

- ♥ 93% of the donations to Broken-Wings Missions Inc. are sent directly to St. Joseph's Family of Homes. A mere 7% covers the Canadian charity's administration costs.
- ♥ Broken Wings Missions Inc. has a Facebook page.
- ♥ All newsletters, more St. Joseph's Family information and more photos can be found on the Broken Wings website. www.broken-wings.ca
- ♥ The website is completely maintained by volunteers, with all website charges provided *free of charge* by **myhosting.com** through their Non-Profit Web Hosting program. <http://myhosting.com/web-hosting/non-profit/>
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This will allow Broken Wings to reduce administration costs even further — and give a hug to the planet.