

# **The History of Bon Samaritain (formerly Ste. Marie Madeleine) In Bondeau Haiti and the South Florida Haiti Project**

## **Circa 1980**

A visionary Haitian priest, Pere Octave Lafontant, purchases small plots of land in the northern part of the Western peninsula of Haiti for the Episcopal Diocese of Haiti to develop new parishes and schools. Included plots for 3 parishes... one was Bondeau.

## **Circa 2000**

Food for the Poor with Bishop Frade as a member of their Board, organized trips to Haiti that included Anita Thorstad, and the then Rector of St. Gregory's in Boca, Fr. George Price.

Anita at this time worked for Food for the Poor with frequent assignments in Haiti. Also similar time, individuals at The Chapel of St. Andrew with connection to Anita begin to support pay for teachers at Ste. Marie Madeleine School which was then a part of St. Marc's Parish at Jeannette supported by the Diocese of Milwaukee.

Fr. George Price at St. Gregory's, travels to Haiti with Food for the Poor. Brings speaker from FFTP to preach at St. Gregory's, generating new interest in outreach to Haiti.

St. Gregory's develops small group of people led by Anita Thorstad interested in Haiti and working to support the school at Bondeau.

## **Circa 2003**

With support from Anita Thorstad, and Sr. Warden David Gury, St. Gregory's Episcopal Church Boca Raton, FL begins relationship with Ste. Marie Madeleine in Bondeau Haiti.

Individuals at the Chapel of St. Andrew and St. Gregory's continue financial support for teachers at St. Marie Madeleine.

## **2004**

St. Gregory's begins to raise funds to build a school on the donated land at Bondeau held by the Diocese of Haiti.

## **2006**

New school construction began funded by St. Gregory's and built by Food for the Poor.

## **2007**

St. Marie Madeleine School and chapel was dedicated April 22, 2007, by Bishop Duracin of Haiti

## **2008**

Feeding program started - daily meal provided for the students.

St. Paul's Delray Beach became a partner. Several mission trips take place.

A loosely organized committee of people interested in Haiti representing St. Paul's and St. Gregory's begins

## **2009**

South Florida Haiti Project is formalized

Bishop Duracin makes Ste. Marie Madeleine a parish.

Additional land is purchased increasing the campus many fold allowing for construction of Maison d'Amitie/Guest House.

Infrastructure work: diesel generator purchased, 2 wells drilled, school yard lighting

Maison d'Amitie/Guest House, built and opened in November.

## **2010**

January 12, 2010 – the devastating earthquake that impacted Haiti in every way.

Main highway construction begins that passes by Bondeau.

Mission teams visited in May 2010 and July 2010.

Children's Home construction begun.

## **2011**

Housing consisting of 40 housing units, 38 families, 145 people for the people of Bidaw Island completed.

Kay Timoun (Children's Home) begins operation.

July Cornerstone laid for new church foundation

## **2012**

Pere Jean Berthold Phanord was named Priest-in-Charge

SFHP Board Members traveled in December of 2012 – met with community leaders to identify priorities

- 1) A church building
- 2) Healthcare
- 3) Clean Water

## **2013**

- March 13-16 – Medical mission with the team from St. Paul's & Church of the Advent, Palm City
- June 6-10 – St. Gregory's Youth Mission Trip
- July Foundation is completed for the church led by Rev. Sam Owens of the New York Diocese
- Dorcas Boucher's 2-week mission trip
- First Food Packing at St. Paul's Delray Beach
- November 7-10 Medical mission

## **2014**

- March 18-22 Medical mission
- May UTO Grant received for Music Program at School
- August 5-9 Combined Medical Mission and Church of the Advent Chicken Project
- Sept 13 Food Packing Event at St. Mark's in Palm Beach Gardens
- October Grades 7, 8 and 9 are added to the school
- Water For Small Villages founders visit Bondeau to evaluate water supply
- Nov 11-15 Medical Mission

## **2015**

Name of Church and School are changed from Ste. Marie Madeleine to Bon Samaritan

- April 20-25 Medical Mission
- May 26-30 Church of the Advent Maintenance Mission (Roof on secondary school)
- July Solar power system installed for Guest House and Kay Timoun
- July 15 Church building is dedicated on Bon Samaritan Feast Day
- August Musical Instruments delivered to Bondeau purchased with UTO Grant
- September School expanded to Grades 10 and 11
- Oct 17 Food Packing at St. Mark's in Palm Beach Gardens
- October 26-30 Medical Mission

## 2016

- May 2-7 Medical Mission
- June 6-10 Church of the Advent Maintenance Mission (completion of secondary school)
- July Pews installed in new church
- September Teacher Training by Touissaint L'Oueverture High School administration  
"Teaching by Heart" curriculum developed for Haiti
- August FAU Mental Health Survey
- September School expands to Grades 12
- October 4 Hurricane Matthew devastates southern Haiti
- Nov 5 Food Packing at St. Mark's in Palm Beach Gardens for school lunches

## 2017

- Jan 30- Feb 2 Healthcare Mission
- February 2<sup>nd</sup> Teacher Training by Touissaint L'Oueverture High School administration  
"Teaching by Heart" curriculum developed for Haiti
- 22 roofs replaced on Bondeau homes damaged in Hurricane Matthew
- May Tile installed in church
- May Board completes Strategic Agenda
- June Well-Drilling led by Water for Small Villages in partnership with  
2 pumps installed for non-potable water for utilitarian use
- Summer Solar power system installed at church
- September School expands to Grade 13 now offering all grade levels
- September 3<sup>rd</sup> Teacher Training by Touissaint L'Oueverture High School administration  
"Teaching by Heart" curriculum developed for Haiti
- October Night School began for teens and adults through a \$20,000 grant
- June 24 of 25 Ninth Graders passed the national ninth grade exam
- October 9-14 Healthcare Mission
- October Bondeau Bows economic sustainability project begins
- October Pilgrimage with Good Shepherd
- December Kay Timoun closes

## 2018

- June 1<sup>st</sup> Graduating Class from school with 15 of the 17 passing the national high school exam
- June 6 Graduates pursuing higher education
- Food For The Poor builds 20 new homes for Bondeau families
- September 4<sup>th</sup> Teacher Training by Touissaint L'Oueverture High School administration  
"Teaching by Heart" curriculum developed for Haiti
- September Night School for Adults and Teens expands to 3 classes
- October Board visits Bondeau for meeting with administrators & Vestry

## 2019

- January 12 Food Packing at Good Shepherd
  - January 14 Healthcare Mission
  - September Record enrollment of 360 students in Preschool - 13
  - June 100% of 9<sup>th</sup> graders and Graduating Class passed their national exams
- School Library established in school  
\$15,000 Grant received from Bethesda by the Sea Episcopal Church to fund Chicken Project  
Political unrest with violent demonstrations prohibits safe travel within Haiti cancelling all mission trips

## 2020

- Covid-19 Pandemic cancels all mission trip possibilities
- February 1 Food Packing at St. Mark's
- Feb/Mar Chicken Broiler Project begins in partnership with Food For The Poor
- Bon Samaritain School closed for extended periods by order of Haiti Ministry of Education due to Covid
- SFHP Website completely redesigned
- August 7 Journey With Bondeau – Virtual Event – highly successful raising over \$26,000
- Hunger becomes the overwhelming issue for Bondeau (and Haiti).
- Emergency Food Shipment funded by Bethesda-by-the-Sea in August feeds over 450 people
- \$75,000 Grant awarded by UTO (United Thank Offering) to bring clean drinking water into Bondeau and to improve sanitation by building 12 bathrooms for the school
- November Bon Samaritain School classes resume with longer days & Saturday classes to catch up

## 2021

- January All 12 graduates of Bon Samaritain School pass the National Exam!
- Feb – April Food Pairing is initiated due to inability of having the annual Food Packing to provide school lunches.  
300 sponsors provided funds for school lunch for the Sept 2021-July 2022 school year.
- May Good Shepherd – Tequesta funds full container of rice & beans shipped to Bondeau
- May SFHP Board of Directors formalized & updated Strategic Plan for 2022-2025
- June Bon Samaritain School forced to close a month early due to Covid.
- Growing unrest & surging violence in Haiti with kidnappings becoming rampant
- July President of Haiti is assassinated
- Bathrooms for Bon Samaritain School completed in June funded by UTO grant
- August 14 Massive 7.2 earthquake hits with epicenter only 35 miles from Bondeau  
No loss of life but several classrooms were damaged as well as the Guest House.
- August 29 Potable water piping project begins to bring water from spring 1-1/2 miles up the mountain into the campus (funded by the UTO grant)
- Sept / Oct Emergency repairs to classrooms and restructuring of undamaged classrooms to accommodate 3 classrooms unable to be repaired.
- November SFHP completes tedious paperwork to apply for 501(3) status on its own after being under the Diocese of SE Florida 501(3) group exemption since inception in 2010
- December One third of the Diocesan Appeal for Haiti (\$10,000) is awarded to SFHP

## 2022

- January Food Packing at St. Mark's in Palm Beach Gardens 75,000 lunches for Bon Samaritain
- Feb-April Lenten Reflections created by SFHP offered weekly for six weeks to database by  
Constant Contact emails with six authors
- May Construction begins on Kindergarten Building as the community's highest priority to keep the most vulnerable safe
- June IRS determines SFHP to be a 501(3) exempt organization
- September New Kindergarten Building opens with 3 classrooms
- Throughout 2022, large steps were taken to assess, research best practices for non-profits, and determine what structure would support SFHP going forward to the next level growing into a stronger organization.
- \$20,000 grant received from Episcopal Charities to fund part-time Executive Director. Beth Shires was hired in December to begin position in January 2023.

## 2023

- January Potable Water flows into Bondeau and a water station is built on the school campus for water bottles to be filled.
- January Guest House rebuilding begins with a new name Friendship House
- March Food Packing at Good Shepherd in Tequesta \$75,000 lunches for Bon Samaritain
- April Primary School Buildings (Grades 1-9) are determined to be unsafe due to over 900 aftershocks weaken and crack the walls exposing the rebar within to the tropic weather causing rust which further exacerbated the cracks
- Food For The Poor builds temporary classrooms for Grades 1-9 (concrete foundation with roof).
- May 1<sup>st</sup> Matching Grant from Cisco is received
- September All primary classes begin the 2023-2024 school year in temporary classrooms  
Record enrollment of 380 children with all Kindergarten classes filled to capacity with 35 students each.