

The following correspondence was received from Fr. Joachim Samedy, the pastor of St. Louis Gonzague, our sister parish in Bonbon, Haiti.

Bonbon/Parish, March 30, 2006

Father Joachim SAMEDY- Autobiography.

My name is Reverend Father Samedy. I am 51 years old. I was ordained a priest in 1985. I have held the following positions in the catholic Diocese of Jeremie:

- Assistant Priest (St. Louis' Cathedral, Jeremie)
- Diocesan youth Chaplain.
- Pastor, our Lady Queen of Heaven Parish, Abricots.
- Pastor, St. Helen's Parish, Jeremie.
- Pastor, St. Louis Gonzague Bonbon, since January 8, 2005.

I like the priesthood vocation and I am happy as a priest to serve God in the least of my brothers and sisters. I am honest with myself and I defend the catholic Truth, always showing my catholic identity. I am a humorist, compassionate, and serious person.

Once again, I thank the Parish Priest, the parish council, particularly Rich Geoghegan and the entire parishioners of the Transfiguration Parish. I assure and guarantee you that your contributions and funding go to the appropriate projects. I look forward to seeing you in the nearest future.

May God bless you!

Father Joachim

History of Bonbon Parish/Haiti.

Bonbon a coastal farming village became a district in 1935. It was created a parish in 1989. It was six chapels and twenty- five catechists. It has twenty thousand people, two-third of the population are Roman Catholics. Most of the population live in the scattered mountains surrounding Bonbon. The income of most the people come from medieval form of fishing and subsistence agriculture. Almost eighty percent of the people are illiterates. There is a clinic and a maternity center which serve the entire community.

The government has long neglected this area and therefore the Catholic church has to fulfill the neglected area in Education, Health and Social Services.

In the field of Education, the parish runs seven K-6 Grade, and Junior-High School which starts from the 7th Grade to the 10th Grade. We lack books and learning materials and there is no feeding program for the pupils. Some pupils drop out from school because they cannot afford to buy books. Such children who drop out have no bright future. I am in-charge of the parish. I have with me an assistant priest. There is also a community of nuns Sisters of Wisdom who came to work in the parish since 1978. Bonbon Parish is an economically deprived parish with a monthly income of four hundred American dollars. The parish monthly expenditure is between two thousand and three thousand five hundred dollars.

Projects in the Parish.

Before I was appointed the parish priest in January 2005, there existed: one K-6 Grade run by the nuns the parish. The 7th to 10th Grade is not completed, however the pupils attend classes in them. The other five K-6 Grade are temporarily housed in the chapels. The maternity clinic is an adobe house and is also run by the nuns in the parish. An unfinished rectory which was started before I took over as a parish priest.

My projects for the parish:

My first priority is: Religious Education. I want to start off training catechists to help me in Primary Evangelization.

Second: Rehabilitation of the Parish Church which was built in 1970. It is in a deplorable state, with rusted iron sheets and leaking roof.

Third: Rehabilitation of Four chapels: St. Joseph, St. Anthony's, St. Monica, St. John the Evangelist, and Immaculate Conception.

Fourth: Construction of Our Lady of the Rosary Chapel.

Fifth: Rehabilitation of the Parish School 7th to 10th Grade and the construction of five primary schools.

Sixth: Start a School Feeding Program and procure books for the schools in other to lend books to the pupils.

Seventh: To finish the construction work on the rectory.

Eighth: Construction work on the maternity clinic.

Ninth: To start a sponsorship for the needy pupils.

Tenth: To solicit financial support for the maintenance of the Priests and the vehicle of the parish.

Eleventh: Invite our Sister Parish to visit us in Haiti and to organize a mobile clinic for our parishioners, once a year.

Twelfth: Solicit salary to pay twelve Health Agents.

Thirteenth: We need a Satellite Communication System in the parish like other parishes in the diocese which have such system provided by their Twining Program sisters parishes. Bonbon is cut off from ordinary telephone system. I mean that, there is no telephone in the district of Bonbon. A Satellite Communication System will enable me to call you and send email to you easily.

Fourteenth: The parish needs a refrigerator, preferably a Solar Power Refrigerator, which is very practicable in Haiti.