



Grace!

WINTER 2009

AT WORK IN HAITI & THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Thousands of Rural Haitians Get Medical Treatment . . . Thanks To You!

Let all that I am praise the Lord; may I never forget the good things he does for me.

He forgives all my sins and heals all my diseases.

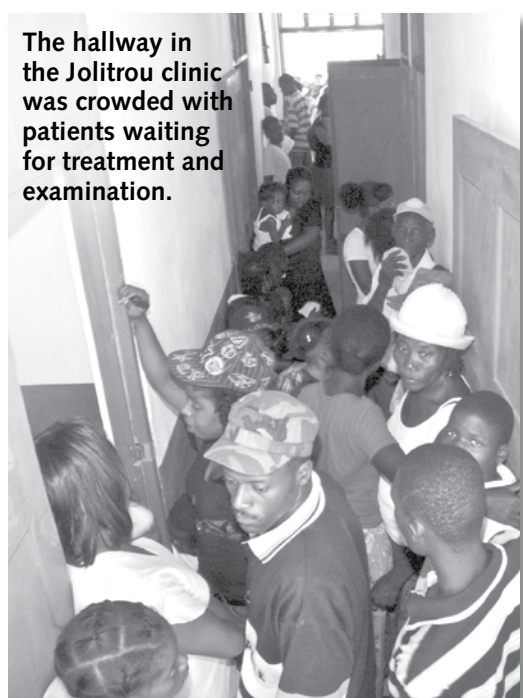
He redeems me from death and crowns me with love and tender mercies.

Psalm 103:2-4 (New Living Translation)

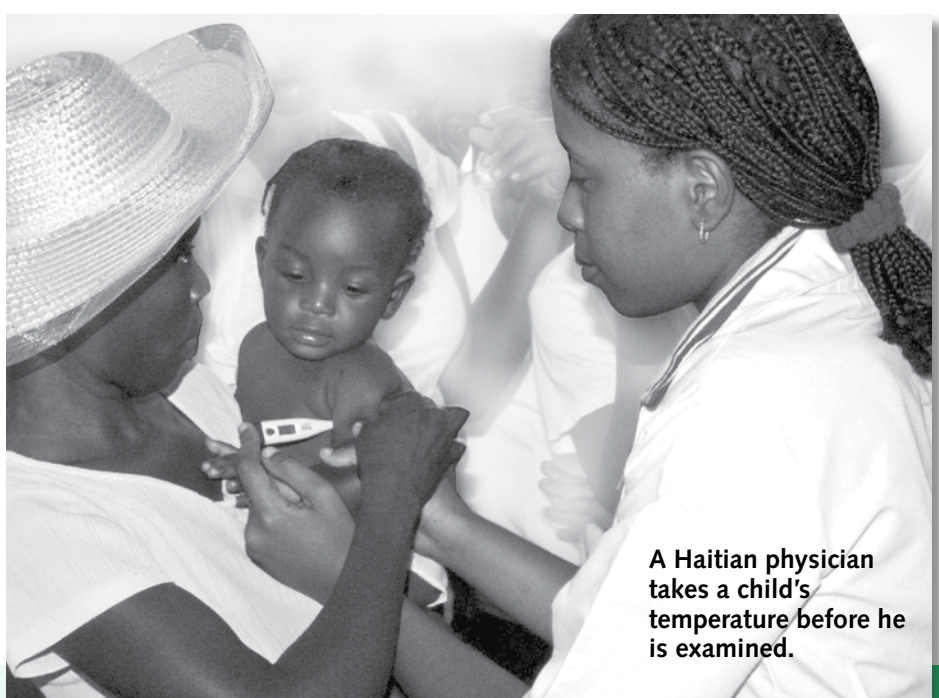
The line of patients at the Jolitrou clinic stretched out the door of the neat green-and-white building; a line so long that not all of the patients could be shaded by the tarp loosely strung across the entrance to the clinic. Many more patients waited under an awning next to the building, and still more waited under the young banana trees on the other side of the clinic, snatching up shade and getting a little reprieve from the tropical heat. Inside, people were crammed into every available crevice, waiting for treatment from the North American doctors who were working feverishly in the small, dim exam rooms.

The day before, as the visitors met with village leaders and ICC community health workers around the large table in the clinic's reception area, the building had seemed airy and spacious. The three exam rooms were tidied and ready for the next day, exam equipment covered with clean white sheets, the pharmacy shelves bare but clean. In the laboratory, tiled countertops waited for the portable equipment that would arrive with Haitian technicians for the bi-monthly open clinics held in the remote Jolitrou clinic. On this day, however, the building was cramped and ready to burst with the influx of people who lined up before dawn for examinations and treatment. The pharmacy shelves were stocked with donated medicine which was going fast.

Haitian staff assigned patients to the doctors in each exam room, but the result was a tangled line that rendered the inside hallway nearly impassible and spilled out the back door of the clinic. Crowded into each exam room, patients, assistants, translators and medical professionals were filling out charts, answering questions, and dispensing prescriptions and smiley-face stickers. ▶



The hallway in the Jolitrou clinic was crowded with patients waiting for treatment and examination.



A Haitian physician takes a child's temperature before he is examined.



Eighteen-month-old baby Dacheta has suffered with diarrhea and fevers almost from the time she was born. Today she is sitting in front of pediatrician Dr. Jeannine Hatt who will diagnose the problem and offer desperately needed treatment and assurance to this anxious mother. They have waited in line for many hours, but it has been worth the wait.

As the day wore on in Jolitrou, the lines outside the clinic grew, but people remained patient. Two health workers, sitting outside in the shade, offered confidential HIV testing to the constant line of patients.

Back on the unpaved road leading up to the medical clinic, masses of people meandered, waiting to line up for treatment or clutching small bags of medication and soap issued at the clinic's pharmacy. A few women were cooking over charcoal fires in the shade of a thorny hedge, selling cupfuls of stew.

The Jolitrou clinic is the culmination of hard work and shrewd determination of women in that region who pooled profits from their micro enterprise businesses to purchase the land the building now stands on. Students from Valparaiso University in Indiana also raised money to help construct this much-needed facility.

More funding is urgently needed for this clinic to provide more medical equipment and additional Haitian staff so it can open more than two days per month. Funding shortages require ICC to shift Haitian health professionals from their regular jobs to meet the needs of the Jolitrou clinic, resulting in dangerous shortages elsewhere. With your ongoing support, we will be able to provide more funding to the region and more frequent clinic hours. Meanwhile, ICC has initiated a Medical Mission Education Encounter program so that North American doctors can help provide urgent health care to people living in remote communities in rural Haiti.

Dr. Jeannine Hatt, an ICC affiliate board member and pediatrician from Denison, Texas, led the medical team working at the Jolitrou clinic. The team and support staff was made up of people from Shawnee United Methodist Church in Lima, Ohio, as well as Dr. Hatt's colleagues from Texas. They spent the week traveling through the northern region of Haiti and providing care at a number of rural clinics. In addition to two days spent in Jolitrou, the team also toiled away in the villages of Bas Limbe, Port Margot, Petite Port Margot and Grand Riviere du Nord. All told, the group examined and treated around 1,400 patients. They passed out

15,000 chewable vitamins and various donated prescription drugs. The doctors diagnosed many routine problems such as gastrointestinal illness, skin diseases, respiratory infections and malnutrition in children. They identified several cases of malaria and at least one new case of pediatric HIV infection. The doctors also treated a great number of adults throughout each day. The adult maladies varied from general aches and pains, skin diseases, cataracts, hearing loss, to malignancies and trauma, as well as frequent cases of hypertension.

While ICC's Haitian medical staff is doing a tremendous work to improve health conditions in Haiti, the needs are more than they can cope with at the moment. *With support from faithful people like you, ICC is planning to bring other medical personnel in the future to offer treatment and assistance and to improve the health conditions of Haitians.* ●

Photos © Keith Mumma



Patients wait outside the clinic. Once they enter, they have their vital assigned a physician.

The North American medical team who were working at the Jolitrou clinic were part of the inaugural medical Mission Education Encounter Team.

Dr. Jeannine Hatt, Pediatrician

Dr. Chuck Phelps, Radiologist

Dr. Ellen Palmer, Professor of Nursing

Lumanie Bangerter, Nurse and Translator

Dr. Julia McDonald, Pediatric Emergency Medicine Specialist

Dr. Dan Imler, Pediatric Hospitalist

Sally Greenwald, Medical Student/Pharmacy Assistant

Dr. David Imler, Internal Medicine/Adult Nephrologists

Carol Goodman, Registered Nurse

Michele Imler, Pharmacy Assistant

Rev. Charlotte Hefner, Pharmacy Assistant and Support Staff

Lyndsay Hefner, Photographer and Support Staff

Reflections

Shock, Sadness and Satisfaction



*Peter Montgomery,
National Director,
ICC Canada*

It was blatantly clear from the moment I arrived, that life in the Dominican Republic was not golden beaches and all-inclusive Club-Med holidays for the vast majority. After visiting a couple of barrios, where ICC works with disabled children, I was shocked at the conditions in which people live. Children with disabilities in the DR are outcasts – there is little or no help from the government. ICC-trained community health workers work closely with the mothers of these precious children, teaching them how to properly care for them.

Little 10-year-old Argenis, a victim of cerebral palsy, lay on his makeshift bed in a ball of emaciated flesh. His questioning eyes looked helplessly upward. His mother sat beside him holding his head, trying desperately to comfort him while he coughed incessantly. As I stood in their home, I was deeply saddened by this spectacle of human misery. It's just not fair, is all that came to mind!

Haiti was another story. The poverty in Haiti is the worst in the western hemisphere, and, as if a living presence, it assaults every sense. The sheer desperation of people trapped in extreme poverty is almost tangible. A field trip into a community in Port au Prince took us into the 'Urban Poverty Intervention Project' where ICC community workers specifically target poor families with TB and AIDS.

We arrived at an abandoned warehouse and climbed the crumbling concrete steps into a large unlit space filled with makeshift shacks made of corrugated iron, bits of wood and material. The oppressive heat and rancid smell of this cramped space, where over 200 people lived, made me nauseas. It was a breeding ground for every kind of opportunistic disease. Water and sanitation were non-existent, and I could not understand how these people survived. We were ushered into a tiny space where a TB patient lived. CHC workers pay regular visits to check on patients and ensure compliance with the drug therapy

However, the outlook is not all bleak. Haitian people are beautiful, hard working and keen to escape from poverty. Through the wonderful work of Grace Children's Hospital, and all its community outreach programs, people's health is being restored and the fight against TB and AIDS is gaining ground. Through our 127 rural clinics, children are vaccinated, potentially fatal waterborne diseases are treated along with common respiratory diseases and much more.

To observe the work of ICC in these remote neglected places; to watch the joy of parents as they see their sick children being treated by a medical professional; to see the gratitude of people who know that without organizations like ICC they would suffer and perhaps even die, is very gratifying. My final emotions were satisfaction and gratitude. Satisfaction that we are making great progress, and gratitude for people like you who care enough to support the work of ICC, and even though you are far away, are willing to be the healing hands of Jesus Christ to these precious people.

May God bless you,
Peter Montgomery,
National Director, ICC Canada



10-year-old Argenis suffers from Cerebral Palsy but has made great strides as part of an ICC rehabilitation program.



statistics recorded on their chart and are

NEWSLINES

What A Difference One Child Can Make!

Kara Russell, a 3rd grader from Lima, Ohio started raising money for Grace Children's Hospital when she was in pre-school. Although she was too young to attend the ICC sponsored Vacation Bible School at the West Ohio Annual Conference that year, she still showed up on the final day of VBS to make her donation. Since then, Kara has not only attended Vacation Bible School each June, but has also increased and surpassed her previous fundraising achievements.

For the past two years Kara has made and sold Christmas ornaments to benefit the children at Grace Children's Hospital.

Kara spends her free time making foam ornaments at an 8-foot craft table her parents set up for her in the family's basement. Once the ornaments are finished – Kara estimates she made over 300 this year – she sells them at local craft fairs or churches. Kara charges \$1 per ornament, but often gets a much more generous donation from her customers. Kara shared that a really nice man from her home church – Forest Park United Methodist Church – bought pizza for a meeting and asked that instead of paying him back that the money be donated to her project. Another gentleman bought 40 ornaments to give his employees at their annual Christmas party.

Earlier this fall, while selling some items at a garage sale, Kara had the opportunity to share the ICC story with a local pastor who was purchasing items for his granddaughter. He was so moved by Kara's passion for Haiti that he invited her to visit Trinity United Methodist Church to present a Mission Moment on Grace Children's Hospital. Kara – a born public speaker – did a great job representing the children of Haiti. Between services Kara manned a craft table and received over \$300 in donations.

Kara is already looking forward to attending Vacation Bible School at Lakeside in June 2009. She really enjoys learning about the children ICC serves and participating in the fun activities and crafts. But, most of all, Kara is excited about turning in her biggest donation yet. Kara has already raised \$668 and there are still six months until the next West Ohio Annual Conference!

ICC uses our Child to Child mission materials for Vacation Bible School at the West Ohio Conference. If you are searching for mission materials for your local VBS, Sunday school, children's sermon or after-school program please log on to www.intlchildcare.org and download your free copy of the Child to Child curriculum today! ●



Photos by Linda Russell



Grace! is published quarterly for friends of International Child Care. ICC is a Christian health agency working in Haiti and the Dominican Republic to change conditions which make people sick, hungry, unemployed and afraid.

ICC depends on individuals, churches, and donor agencies for the financial means to serve. A response card and envelope are enclosed for your contributions. Your gift will be received for income tax purposes.

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