

Haiti and Here

At the last Diocesan Council meeting, the Organizing for Mission team from EDEO presented a proposal called Haiti and Here that (1) supported the Rebuilding Our Church in Haiti program of the Episcopal Church and (2) proposed a diocesan-wide project to be done by all the parishes in the diocese. As you know, the Port Au Prince area in Haiti was severely damaged in an earthquake on January 12, 2010. The diocesan-wide project would be discerned by a group of twelve representatives from each of the six convocations in the diocese (two representatives per convocation), and the project would be taken to Diocesan Council for presentation to Convention this fall.

These projects will provide our diocese an opportunity to become more missional at a diocesan level both internationally and locally. They will give us an opportunity to work together outside the walls and borders of our parishes, and truly be God's hands in the world. Most of the parishes in our diocese are involved in some way in their local communities; taking part in these programs will be taking the next step in intentionally loving our neighbor.

The goal of the Rebuilding Our Church in Haiti project is to raise \$10 million. The church's response to Haiti's request for assistance through ERD has been very good. However, ERD cannot rebuild a church; it can only provide other types of relief. Hence, the need for the project. The OFM team's goal is to kick off the fund raising program during the Easter season. For information on how your parish can help and get involved, please see the website, www.episcopalchurch.org/haitiappeal. All the information you could possibly need to run a campaign in your church is there. We encourage you to get involved! We can help rebuild this church one brick at a time. The Haitians need our help.

At this time, the diocesan-wide project is undefined, and we need volunteers to work as a team to discern what it is. This project is the 'Here' part of Haiti and Here. Half of the money collected in the fund raising program will go to funding the diocesan project. So money should not be an issue. A couple of examples of projects that have been bandied around are the construction of a Habitat home and the refurbishing of the church property in Vale. The Vale congregation folded a year ago, and the property is being given to the Baptists in Vale. It would be wonderful if EDEO could give it to them in excellent condition. There is work to be done. These are only examples of what we could do. It will be up to the team to discern the project.

So, please give these proposals a lot of prayer and thought, and please sign up to participate. We need names of people who might be interested in leading the parish Rebuilding program, and people who would be willing to work on the discernment team. The OFM team and EDEO leadership cannot do these projects without your support.

Remembering that we are truly God's hands in the world, His peace to you all,

The Reverend Deacon Roger Fairfield