



providing food, education, housing, medical care and jobs

If not us, then who?

If not now, then when?

November 1, 2008

Dear Co-laborers,

I hope this correspondence finds you well and prospering. Even with all that is going on in our world to distract us and pull us in a myriad of directions, we find that the work of everyday life goes on in its own quiet and relentless way. We have been through an election of historic proportion (and length) and we find ourselves on the other side still facing the issues of life both great and small. Some people stand on the world stage where they hope to make an impact for the better on a global scale --- most of us are in places of lesser public stature, yet we also press on in our effort to make the world a better place than it was when we found it. There are still hungry people living in a land devoid of natural resources. There are parents who love their children as much as we love ours, but cannot provide the most basic of needs for them. There are entire communities without clean water to drink, medicine to share, plumbing or electricity to lighten the load of daily living. There are children who are destined to live the same life of privation that their parents lived unless they can find a way to understand and enter into unknown territories like the market place, commerce, manufacturing, business, politics and international finance. Without education, they are condemned to languish in a world, their world, of hopelessness and poverty.

It has been said, "Give a man a fish and he will eat today. Teach a man how to fish and he will eat everyday." Education gives a child the tools he or she needs to grow into a world where competition is possible. It equips them to join the ranks of those who can see the vision of a better world and enter the fight to make the vision a reality. They may not live under the international spotlight as a president or prime minister, but certainly they can stand in a place of lesser international stature (like the rest of us) as an entrepreneur, teacher, doctor, nurse, author, manufacturer, activist, or any of a thousand professions which improve the human experience. They can make their world better if they are given a chance. Someone needs to "teach them to fish."

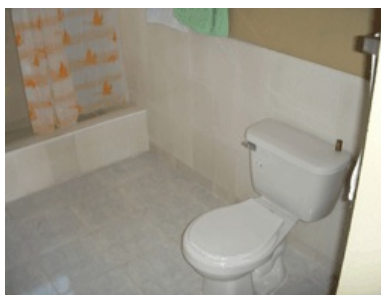
That's where you and I come in. No one may ever know what you and I are doing on this world stage, but believe me, my friends, this is where the job gets done. It's here in the lives of the children where the future is built. Here the world is changed --- one child at a time. The child who survives and grows to be an adult because his or her village had clean water is the one who changes his/her world. It's the child who ate nutritious food and survives to become the doctor who saves thousands and inspires more. It's the child who experiences practical compassion who survives and grows to be an adult who is concerned for those around him. It's the child who can read and write, add and subtract, study chemistry, read good literature, and has caring role models who will grow up to reshape his/her society. And, yes, it's the child who develops a strong spiritual foundation in his/her youth who will have the mettle to face the overwhelming odds and still get the job done. My friends, it is a good time to be alive a good time to look past tomorrow a good time to be in the fight against all that which kills and brings despair. I am so thankful to be in the struggle with people like you who can see the need, can identify the enemy, can roll up your sleeves and get the job done. Some of us may not live to see the fruit of the seeds we plant today, or see the lives we have helped save turn into productive ones, but that's what vision is all about --- knowing what has yet to be seen.

Toward that end we continue the work of bringing education, food, medical care, jobs and hope to the people of Haiti. The most recent obstacle overcome is the completion of a school building in Pont Sonde where quality education in a clean and safe environment did not previously exist. The school for boys and girls (Institution Mixte Louis Pierrot) - picture following - is the latest addition to the schools built by supporters of Practical Compassion.

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One-hundred-sixty children are now enrolled and attending school here where they are being educated by qualified teachers. Their grasp of language, math, history, and so on is being dramatically and persistently improved. Last year most of our students who took the mandated government proficiency tests passed with flying colors. That is an enormous achievement. (In Haiti, if students do not pass a standardized test after 6th, 9th, 11th, and 12th grades, they are not permitted to continue with their education.)

The building currently has eight classrooms and one general use room which now serves as the headmaster's office and administration center. It has a rest facility with a flushing toilet (what a relief !) and a sink with running water to wash one's hands. This is a beautiful sight to all of us who for years have been visiting Haiti without the benefit of such luxuries. Those long walks up the hillside to find a place suitable for answering nature's call are a thing of the past.



Many of the children have never actually seen a flushing toilet before. Oh, the marvels of modern science! There are more facilities around the back of the school where the toilets (complete with toilet seats) are serviced by a large cesspool. There are six stalls back there --- three for the boys and three for the girls.

It is a two-story capable building which only has one story finished. The first floor has two rows of four classrooms separated by a central hallway. We will share more about the second floor plans when the time comes to begin work on that construction stage. Each classroom has student desks, a chalkboard and a small table (desk) for the teacher. There are electrical outlets in each room. Public electricity is rarely available, but we have installed a generator to supply the minimal electrical needs. We hope to put fans in the classrooms as soon as more funds become available. The temperature in the classrooms can climb to more than 115 degrees. (Welcome to life in the tropics.) Those fans will be a much appreciated addition for the students and teachers alike.

The west side of the building (shown right) has four classrooms which open to the outside, while the east side of the building's classrooms open to the corridor. You can see remnants of construction supplies in the background, stacked against another building. The classrooms have two electric lights each. That is sufficient since night classes will not be held. In Haiti, night time usually has little in the way of organized activities other than church services. When the sun goes down, all is dark --- no electricity, remember? Street lights? What are they? Early to bed and early to rise is the motto here. Life revolves around the sun's schedule.



Furniture for the classrooms is primitive by western standards, but state of the art for Haiti. Here we see the chairs for the little ones and some teachers' tables awaiting classroom assignment. The Pre-Kindergarten students don't have desks per se because their routine is a little more active than would be easily accommodated by desks. (See next picture.)



In Haiti, when a child is financially able to attend a school it is customary for that child to begin at age three or four. However, many do not have the chance to start until later - even much later. We have seen people in first grade who are fourteen years old. One lady we know is in 10th grade and she is 28 years old --- not at Pont Sonde, but at a school in Cite Soliel. In Haiti, an education is a prized thing and one gets what education one can when one can get it. These children are very pleased to be in school. They regard their education as a genuine treasure, and they work hard at it. There are many who long to go to school, but they simply cannot afford it. That was the situation for most of the students at the Pont Sonde school. However, thanks to the sponsorships you are providing, they can attend school and get a quality education.

One of the teachers, Ronald (pronounced Wo-nel) stands in his new classroom a week before classes commence. He is proud to be working in such an environment and eager for classes to begin.

The desks were made by the teachers and some men from the local village under the direction and tutelage of one of our Board members, Renaud deVitry. (See the summer of 08 update.)

There are still more desks needed, more chalkboards, too. But, at least there are sufficient to begin classes. We hope to provide more materials for additional desk assembly over the course of the next nine months.

Additional books and school supplies will be needed as well. Our website soon will be listing specific items for potential donors to underwrite. However, our webmaster is not a full time web designer and we are not at the top of his schedule. So, we have listed some of the specific needs in our updates. (See last month's update and below.)

This update has already gotten too long, so enough for now. We will be heading to Haiti again in January, and we will get more current pictures then. If you wish to send something with us for your sponsored child, please remember that it must be small and very light. We are limited to 50 pounds per suitcase and one suitcase per person. Please see that your letters, gifts, pictures and/or remembrances are delivered to us prior to the end of this year. Such gifts are not required or expected really, but some sponsors have requested that we provide this service for them. We are certainly pleased to do so.



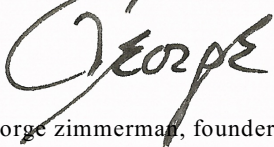
Speaking of sponsorships, some of our sponsors have not sent their child support for this year. If you are intending to continue with your sponsorship, please accept our sincere thanks and the thanks of your child. However, please send your support monthly, quarterly, by semester or annually now. If it has slipped your mind, please accept this friendly reminder as just the friendly reminder it is intended to be. If you are intending to discontinue your sponsorship, please let us know that so we can try to find another sponsor for your child.

Would you please share your copy of this update with someone who might join us in the fight to save the children?

Also, while we are housekeeping, if you are receiving this update in hardcopy via postal service and have access to e-mail, please contact us at info@PracticalCompassion.org and provide us with your current e-mail address. We can save money and trees by using e-mail instead of postal services. If you are receiving this update by e-mail, please consider forwarding it to your friends, colleagues and relatives along with your encouragement to join us in the fight against the lethal poverty in Haiti. We long to see this horror end in our lifetime. You can help even more by helping us get the word out. Thank you.

Again, let me thank you for your gracious, generous and persistent support in this battle for life. Without you, none of this would be happening. Together we are going to change Haiti, and maybe the world in some small way. Be that as it may, we will definitely change the lives of many people for the better. Together, we are building a better tomorrow. For this we are genuinely thankful. We will be in touch again soon. Until then, may God bless you for caring enough to save a child.

Your servant,



george zimmerman, founder

[Practical Compassion](http://www.PracticalCompassion.org)

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"Each man has one voice, one life, one time in which to live, and One Creator to help him use all three wisely."

-- george zimmerman

Reprinted from last month's update:

There are still child sponsorships available, and special needs which need underwriting as well. Check out our website at www.PracticalCompassion.org for more details as we hope it will be updated very soon. There you will find some of these ongoing needs:

- Teacher sponsorships: pays a teacher's salary for one year. Cost: \$700 to \$1,000 / year
- Student sponsorships: pays for education, books, uniform and one meal each school day. Cost: \$300 / year
- Dig a well to provide clean water for a whole community. Cost: \$5,000.
- Add a room to the school: Cost: \$8,000.
- Sponsor a cook for the school feeding program. Cost: \$ 400 / year
- Furnish a classroom with desks, chalkboards, etc. Cost: \$1,200
- School supporter: pays for plates, utensils, cups, petrol for generator, classroom supplies. Cost: ~ \$1,000 / year
- Medical Clinic (semi-annual): pays for worm medication and medical care for the community by a stateside physician. Cost: ~ \$1,000.
- Of course, undesigned contributions are very welcome indeed!
- And on, and on, and on, and on . . .

By the way, does your employer have a matching gifts program? We will likely be eligible to participate as we are recognized by the IRS as tax exempt under the heading of a charitable / humanitarian / educational organization.