

Amended Press Statement

On the Side of Angels

St. Francis Xavier Parishioners Rally to Support Local Humanitarian Group

Narrowsburg, NY – On February 19th, parishioners and members of the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) committee of St. Francis Xavier Church listened intently as Stuart Hirsch and Mike Lovelace of Archangel Airborne reported on their latest humanitarian trip to Haiti made possible, in part, through the JPIC’s “Change for Change” donation.

Archangel Airborne is a local not-for-profit organization whose mission is to “provide medical, logistical and consultative support to areas in need...” One such area is Haiti. Two years after the devastating earthquake ravaged Haiti killing nearly a quarter of a million, injuring hundreds of thousands and leaving more than a million people homeless, the need for support continues.

By combining flight and medical expertise along with an effective implementation strategy that delivers the assistance where needed, Archangel Airborne is able to provide medical supplies and equipment directly to impoverished areas of Haiti including to L’Hôpital Immaculée Conception and to rural clinics in the villages of Gigot and Île à Vache.

The group, which relies on donations to accomplish its mission, welcomed the support from St. Francis. According to CEO and Archangel Airborne founder Stuart Hirsch, the JPIC contribution was much appreciated and put to good use, “The kindness and generosity of the St. Francis parishioners has helped us tremendously and allowed us to transport clinicians and supplies to rural areas of Haiti that are in dire need.”

Under the leadership of Father William Scully, O.F.M., who also attended the presentation, parishioners at St. Francis have embraced the Franciscan principles of promoting human dignity, caring for those in need and being of service to others. Through the work of the JPIC committee, the parish has the opportunity to support programs that put faith into action.

Mr. Hirsch pointed out that especially in these tough economic times when so many people are concerned about where their contributions go, accountability is important to Archangel Airborne and assured that donations go to cover the cost of fuel and flight expenses to Haiti. All volunteers pay their own way and donate their own expertise and time. Haitian volunteers then assist Archangel Airborne on the ground to get the supplies and equipment to the people most in need.

“Knowing that our Change for Change contribution of \$1027.00 went directly to people in need and that this local group has been able to help so many people is heart-warming,” said Connie Moser, St. Francis JPIC Coordinator. “This is a group of dedicated people with critical skills that Haitians need right now.”

And, that need is great. Still reeling from the 2010 earthquake, Haiti is now coping with an outbreak of cholera—the first in at least 100 years according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control. Cholera, a bacterial disease that can cause diarrhea and dehydration, is most often spread through the ingestion of contaminated food or drinking water. Haiti’s poor public health and living conditions has left many vulnerable.

Despite the danger, the group's commitment to bring hope and healing to Haiti is unwavering. "Our next mission is scheduled for May," said Archangel Airborne's Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Mike Lovelace, "and this time along with bringing medical personnel and supplies, we will be conducting EMS [emergency medical services] training for villages."

Ms. Moser noted, "We were honored to have played a small role in helping Archangel Airborne assist the people of Haiti. Their compassion is inspirational to us all and we encourage others to donate to this worthy cause as well."

To learn more about Archangel Airborne including how you can make a donation go to www.archangelairborne.org. For more information about the St. Francis JPIC committee, visit www.stfranciscare4creation.org.