



ST. SETON AND ST. ROCK

OFFERING PART OF OUR LENTEN PRAYERS, SACRIFICIES AND ALMS FOR OUR BROTHER'S AND SISTER'S IN ST. ROCK PARISH



DEAR SISTERS AND BROTHERS IN CHRIST,

Each year we are invited to enter into the season of lent for our own spiritual renewal by participating in the practices of prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

Who have you chosen to pray for; fast for or give alms to? I am always grateful when others remember me in prayer. I look back at all the sacrifices my parents made for my brother and I. Over the years I have made donations to the poor via St. Vincent de Paul and other charities. During Lent, who hasn't used the Catholic Relief Service Rice Bowl for alms?

This year may I invite you to consider making our brothers and sister at St. Rock parish, a focus of part of your Lenten practice by praying for the many needs of the people as they struggle with the issues of poverty, injustice, the lack of health care and so many other difficulties. Fr. Romuald told me the children walk to school, some 20 minutes but many walk from one to two hours one way and have nothing to eat until they return home. So when we fast and abstain and our tummy grumbles a bit, let us remember their hunger is daily and not just during Lent. If part of your Lenten practice includes giving alms, may I ask you to consider giving some of your alms to our sister parish of St. Rock. The alms box is in our church.

Blessed Lent, Fr Doug

Saint Roch Parish of Grosse Roche: A Profile

1. Introduction

St Rock was made an independent parish in 1993. From the beginning, the new parish has been conferred to the Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (Missionhurst Fathers). Two Missionhurst Fathers are appointed there. Rev. Fr. Romuald Pierre from Haiti is the pastor and Fr. Adrian Louie Atonducan from the Philippines comes to assist the pastor.



2. Geography

The territory of the parish comprises an area approximately two and a half miles square. It is composed of 54 communities. The population is about 15,000 inhabitants, 40% are Catholic. In addition to the main parish of St. Rock, Fr. Romuald is responsible for two mission parishes: Corosse and Carive. Corosse, like Grouse-Roche (means: Big Rock), is a big community with its own church and rectory. Fr. Romuald and Fr. Adrian take turns going there for a visit once a month. To reach there, they must walk for three hours, that is, in good weather conditions. There is no way to go there by car, bicycle, or motor cycle. Carive is like a offshoot



of Grosse-Roche. The priests go there every two weeks to visit. It can only be reached by walking and takes 45 minutes.

3. Health and Water Supply

There is only one center for health care in Grosse-Roche. It is a small dispensary managed by a team: one nurse and two assistantes. They have very little in

the way of medicines. They focus more on community health with vaccines. They take care of some common illnesses like asthma, parasites, malaria, typhoid fever, and even cholera.

They get their running water from a catch basin. In addition to that, Grosse-Roche is surrounded by three rivers. However, the population drinks directly from the water without treatment. The situation is far more difficult for the community in Corosse, as there are no rivers close to the village.

4. Education

The parish of St. Rock has a Catholic School in Grosse-Roche which serves 250 children in grades one to six. In the village there is a public grade school and middle school but no high school. The children walk from 20 minutes up to 2 1/2 hours to get to school. The Catholic mission church in Corosee, can not afford a Catholic school. However,



Corosee does have one public and two other Christian elementary schools. St. Rock parish struggles to provide school supplies for the children and to keep teachers

at the parish school. The average Haitian can only earn one dollar a day. Parishioners can only pay their teachers \$55.00 a month. The public school teachers receive three to four times that amount. The only vocational education offered at the parish school is to learn sewing and cooking.



5. Daily Economic Activities

Agriculture and animal-raising are the principle activities in Grosse-Roche. There are some people who find their means of income by cutting trees to make

charcoal and wood. Because of that, deforestation is what anyone can easily observe in the area. Women are above all engaged in small commercial activities such as buying and selling small goods. There are also some important associations such as: GADRU: they offer formation on agro-ecology; AFAG, OFPG: women's associations, which help them to improve their economic and familial situations; OPG, MPG: men's associations, which help them to perform managing gardens and encourages them to actively participate in political and social affairs.



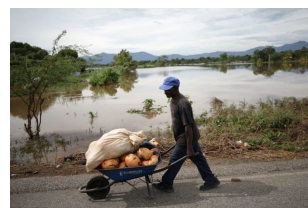
6. Transportation and Communication

The parish is high up in the mountains, in an isolated zone of the North-East department of Haiti.



Grosse-Roche is surrounded by mountains. The village is located at the top of the mountain where the road comes to a dead end. The community has no access to electricity, tele-

phone and very limited location that provide access to a cell signal. It takes four hours driving the only parish car (which is the only car in the village), to reach Fort Liberte, the seat of the Diocese. Cap-Haitien is just as far away and is the nearest community that can provide serious medical attention and that offers a source for needed purchases. There are no means of public transportation except for those that would offer a motorcycle ride, or those with a donkey.



The Pastoral Council of St. Rock parish with our Mission Team.



St. Seton and St. Rock, Grosse Roche, Haiti

Sister Parishes in Christ

St. Seton: 509 W Division Rd. Valparaiso, In 46385, - 219 464 1624



Dear Friends of the Poor,

We are so very grateful that you are considering making a donation to St Rock parish in Haiti. There are number of ways you can help us support the people of St Rock parish. We would ask you to lift them up in prayer each day, as they face many challenges. Secondly, if you would like to help them in a material way, please consider making a donation to support their many needs. You can either send a check made out to our church: St Seton and mark the memo of your check: for “ St Rock”, or you can make the check out to the Diocese of Gary and mark the memo “St Rock/ Haiti”. On our website: seseton.com, you could make an electronic donation. On our home page scroll down and click on the “We Share/Online Giving” and follow the prompts to make your donation to St Rock parish in Haiti.

The parish needs donations for school supplies for the children and the teachers. The community struggles paying the salaries of their teachers and has difficulty teacher retention. The parish can only pay their teachers



\$55.00 per month when the public schools pay four times that. Their school tries to serve 250 kids that walk from 20 minutes to 2 ½ hours one way; the children go without food all day, either eating before they go to school or having to wait

till they walk home. The parish would like to offer those who are undernourished some food during the school day.

The people of the village of Grosse Roche and St Rock parish are desperately in need of medical supplies. The village is without a doctor and the only nurse limited medicines for the people. Your donations will make it possible for the parish to subsidize those who can not pay for their own medicines. The pastor's car is the only one in the village, and it is used for emergencies and the nearest doctor is over 4hrs away.



The people need help maintaining this vehicle which also serves as the village ambulance. There is no electricity, phone service or running water for 15,000 people in the village of Grosse-Roche where St Rock church is located.

Most of the families are subsistence farmers. In their region of Haiti, there are no cash crops to produce fair trade products. They are poor and receive food aid from Food for the Poor. Our donations will make it possible for families to improve their food production and animal husbandry.



The village has only one antiquated pump used to draw water up from a river into a communal cistern. The

pump breaks down frequently. Villagers need funds to repair or replace this important pieces of equipment, and often turn to St Rock parish for financial help. The local government does not even maintain the road, and the people have to go with shovels, hoes and wheel barrows to try and make repairs by hand. There is only one road up the mountain that is essential to maintain.

The parish school teaches cooking and sewing as a vocational program but needs resources for materials and the treadle sewing machines. The people of St Rock have many needs but those for their children, providing a school, having access to food, medicine, and safe water are some of their major priorities. The have many pressing needs. Like any church or community priorities change in the face of dire poverty. Your donation will help improve life immensely.



When we receive donations, we contact Fr Romuald and tell him to look for a wire of money to his parish. The funds get sent to the city of Fort Liberte. As St Rock parishes uses our donations, Fr Romuald will let us know how the funds are being used. As “Sister Parishes” we are developing our working and praying relationship and are pledged to create our mutual covenant for twinning. On behalf of the parishioners of St. Seton, thanks you for joining us in supporting our brothers and sisters in the parish of St Rock, Grosse Roche, Haiti.

Fr Doug Mayer and the members of the St Seton/St Rock Ministry.