

Meditations of the heart:

Bruce from SD and I once agreed those who feel the most convicted by the reality of poverty are most often ones who have eyes of the heart that see the pain without being shown the pictures. I remind all, these blurbs are only the meditations of my heart, shared, because I have no answers, but believe in a God present and transforming this world.

Yesterday, directors from the remaining 7 schools went to the bank in Anse à Galets to get money to pay teachers one month of the 6 months salary owed them. Frustrated teachers say they will not accept one month. Schools continue to teach students whose families have paid no tuition since school began in October. Emergency money of \$25,000.00 sent to Petit Guave Circuit was to be divided, we're told, with La Gonave. One month for 70 teachers is \$4,163.00US, with no administrative cost, they say.

Two to four meals a month have been fed children since October. Joe helped one director figure costs per meal at \$1.16 per meal. The amount does not balance with food purchased to feed nearly 300 students. When the wind blows, money seems to evaporate! Most children are skinny, hungry, happy, with evidence of malnutrition and parasite infestation.

Kathia, a bright young woman, too late for Med. school exams, is attending university nursing school which costs \$1500.00 US per year for 5 years. She plans to deliver babies so many won't die in unattended births. There are no scholarships available for students like her. Good luck.

Louis and Lodi, are trying to begin a business of transporting sea food from fishermen on sud lagonave to ti-Guave. They need to fix up a good boat and buy fuel and fish. A retailer will provide igloos and a small motor as a start up loan. Louis is a teacher and mariner; Lodi sells us lobster, trying to put together the money to start the business needed by local fishermen.

The majority of the 57% of children who attend school only attend through 6th grade. They must pass a national test at the end of the 6th year. Only 13% of students have books so most will fail the test. Many will not take the year over. We purchased books and asked they be given to teachers who can reuse them year after year so students have a chance to pass the exam. We still wait.

We meet this Sunday with people from several communities to discuss a "real" community clinic for sud lagonave. To succeed, it will have to be a cooperative effort of many normally competitive, working in partnership with one another and partnership with sponsors. It will require planning and maintenance, openness, honesty, compassion and creativity. Yeah, right.

Work on the wells has begun and that is another co-operative effort, yet to unfold. Few understood Jesus' temple tantrum but followed without understanding the issues. Many believed, through him and with him, God was present and transforming the world. With little understanding we believe transformation is possible where the moon sets at 4:30 am, large and orange and reflected in the sea.

Shirley, mas 10, 2009, sud lagonave. blogs at <http://gbgmlagonave.blogspot.com>