

Speak to me, that I may hear you, giving me courage for the difficult places;
Determination for challenging tasks.
I ask just your grace that is sufficient for every need,
so no matter how hard the way, how challenging the hour,
how dark the sky,
I will be enabled to overcome.

Peter Marshall

In the night I stood at the window watching the moon play hide and seek with dark and blustery clouds as the wind cleared the desks. Expecting rain in buckets, eventually I stepped "out back" into half moon light that dimmed my flashlight. Light in a dark place to many called, "loveless."

As we close out this last week in preparation for the first real "down time" in six months, there is a tension within. The emotional "need" to see and be with family so strong yet the sense of abandonment of our neighbors who share so much of their lives with us caps our excitement.

We have closed the clinic for now. Hope for World Vision support gave way when left to the La Gonave director. Government support ended before we came. The Circuit Superintendent cited problems with WV and asked it be closed. We leave the old, young and poor to better supplied clinics but 6 miles away. The clinic will be on our "to do list" for our return as we seek support.

We will be transporting some school directors to Anse a Galet on Saturday to purchase food to feed for 3 days in the schools. That is three days more than we were told could or would happen so we continue to encourage all to support the UMCOR feeding program for remote areas of Haiti.

Food on La Gonave and all Haiti, continues limited and costly. Most don't look like National Geographic camp refugees, but nearly 80% have evidence of low iron reserves and malnutrition; dry skin, significantly underweight and hair discolored tan or red. Leaders are considering ways to purchase locally and provide at lower cost to the poorest. Most think a miracle happened with the food distribution.

If miracles can happen with food we hope to see more "loaves and fishes" as we meet with Haiti Outreach to plan the water project. As GBGM funds "grew" for food, we pray they will not only repair the windmill at Dent Griern and drill a well to the west, but repair cisterns destroyed in the storms.

Those who know Haiti know "challenge" is a way of life; Christian ethic is redefined; and, truth is the question Pilate asked Jesus. Those who know Haitians know they are passionate, filled with grace, music and all the foibles of people everywhere. I pray we may see the challenge as a means of grace and the bright moon of Haiti as a light that helps to overcome the darkness of poverty.

Pastor Shirley, La Gonave, Haiti, ven cinc novem, 2008. Thinking "home."