

Hope for Today Outreach



“Remember the Poor”—Galatians 2:10

June 2016 Newsletter/Report

God's glory Revealed in Port-Margot: June Mission Trip 2016

In the past two weeks (June 4-20, 2016), my wife Katia and I (Dr. Joseph) went to Port-Margot for our second mission trip this year. The purpose of the mission trip was twofold (1) to teach a class on "Hermeneutics: How to Teach and Study the Bible"—to pastors and church leaders, and (2) to work on the logistics for the theological seminary (Hope for Today Theological Seminary, HTTS) we're in the process of starting in Port-Margot. The June mission trip was full of expectations, surprises, and paradoxes; arguably, it was one of the most intensive activities Hope for Today Outreach has undertaken as a ministry in the past year and a half in Haiti. We fought many spiritual battles and were attacked by the enemy at every moment during the trip. Because the sovereign Lord has commissioned us at HTO to go and make disciples of all nations and peoples, especially in Port-Margot, Haiti, once again, he has proven himself to be faithful and our Rock, Shelter, and Safe and Hiding Place. Praise be to his glorious name!

In the June 2016 newsletter and report, we would like provide an account of what God has done through us during our mission trip to Haiti.



Point of Beginning!

Katia and I landed in Port-au-Prince on Saturday, June 4; hence, our missionary journey began!

On Sunday, We visited a local church in Tabarre with Stanley Julme, my brother-in-law. It was wonderful to worship the Lord with this group of devoted Christians. I (Dr. Joseph) attended a conference in the next two days (Monday & Tuesday) in Port-au-Prince. On Wednesday, we headed for Jacmel to visit a good family of ours, Pierre St. Louis and his wife Lordphine, and to witness what the Lord is doing through their ministry there. Pierre and I attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. While he was working on his Masters of Divinity, I was completing an advanced degree in New Testament Studies (Th.M.) at SWBTS. Two years ago, Pierre, his wife, and their three beautiful children relocated to Haiti to serve as permanent missionaries in Jacmel. Pierre is the founder of Future Generation International Missions. Pierre pastors a local church there, and he and his wife Lorphine are in charge of a girl orphanage in the beautiful city of Jacmel. It was wonderful to see and fellowship with them, hear from them about the vision God has given them for the people of Jacmel, and finally, to witness God's amazing works through their collaboration and ministry. In our conversation with the St Louis, we were both encouraged and comforted by the fellowship of love, divine blessing, and friendship. We invite you to continue praying for the St Louis family, their ministry and personal needs in Jacmel.

God's glorious majesty through the splendid nature and giant mountains in Jacmel was breathtaking. We are compelled to share with you some of these memorable pictures of various mountainous scenes and backgrounds:



We headed back to Port-au-Prince on the same day (In fact, it was at night). On Friday morning (June 11), we took the earliest bus to Cap-Haitien—"Okap," as the Haitians say it--the 900 AM trip. After a six hour driving, we arrived safely in the historic city of Okap. On Saturday morning, we woke up very early (6:00 AM); we packed up our stuff and drove to Port-Margot, our missionary zone and ultimate destination. If the roads were good, we could have made it to Port-Margot in one hour; nonetheless, it took us two hours to get there.

Interestingly, on our way to Port-Margot, we stopped at a gas station to buy some gas. In Haiti, the driver does not put the fuel in the tank, a hired attendant is responsible to provide the service. Accidentally, the gas attendant put in the wrong fuel in the car: she filled up the tank with Diesel. The car wouldn't start afterwards—as the driver and I (Dr. Joseph) attempted all the tricks to get it moving. We were not successful! We left the gas station around 3:26 PM; it was about 8:00 AM when we got there to put the gas. The mechanic had to pull out the gas tank and the gas filter so he could drain out the wrong fuel from the reservoir. He also had to clean the gas tank effectively. He and his team spent about 2 to 3 hours trying to lower down the tank. When they were through, they spent another hour or so to put it back the way it was before. Unfortunately, the car wouldn't start after these gentlemen have done all these works. They decided to put the tank down one more time and checked to see what went wrong in the process. Then, they put it back in its original position. By the time they were done with the job, it was already 3:26 PM. Katia, the driver, and I were both exhausted after this long period of waiting and anticipation. It could have been worst; we could have lost the transmission. God was in control and leading our steps!

After the job was done, the young lady who has put the wrong fuel in the car has asked us to give her a ride home because she did not have the money to catch the bus. On our way to her house, she informed us that she was a Christian and that instead of dropping her at home, she asked to drop her at her church so she could attend choir rehearsal. It was close to 7:00 PM when we finally arrived in Port-Margot. Can you imagine both the tiredness and the joy of being on mission with God? That's the paradox of being a missionary!

Preaching on Sunday (Sunday: June 12)

We arrived in Port-Margot on Saturday night; on the same day, Pastor Nicodeme Pierre-Louis ("Pastor Nico"), the lead pastor of our partner-church, l'Église Wesleyenne de Mont-Pisgah, has confirmed with me that I would be the preacher for the Sunday morning service. Knowing the routine in Haiti, before I left for Haiti, I was already prepared a sermon to preach on that Sunday. Therefore, I let the Spirit of God guide my thought-process and thinking, and used me to lift up Christ and edify the people of God through the ministry of preaching. I delivered the Word of God bearing the sermon title "The Imperative of Proclaiming the Resurrection of Christ in Mission and Evangelism," with a focus on 1 Corinthians 15: 1-5, and Romans 10: 9-17. Church attendance on that Sunday morning surpassed the usual number. Interestingly, immediately after my preaching, Pastor Nico has also asked if I could bring the evening message. I graciously accepted the invitation. In the night sermon, I continued with the same theme, with a particular focus on being a missionary church. Please continue praying for the people of God at the Église Mont-Pisgah for their needs—both spiritual and material—are great. God has placed this church as a light in the community.



Hermeneutics Class: How to Teach and Study the Bible (Monday: June 13)

Usually, HTO's trainings for pastors and church leaders in Port Margot involve a large number of people—last December 2015, we provided training to about 400 ministers for a seminar on the book of Romans (Part I), and 300 people were in attendance in our March training 2016 (Part 2). For this special training on how to teach and study the Bible, which was held on Monday, only 96 church leaders attended, representing about 12 churches in the Region (Generally, in Haiti, it is good to always plan ahead of time; however, it does not mean things will go well as one has planned). Two days before the event, Pastor Nico has informed me that few people will attend the conference, as it was that time of the year that some of these pastors and ministers were administering final exams; some of them work as school teachers and administrators. By the way, 25 individuals who were in attendance signed up to attend Hope for Today Theological Seminary (HTTS). In our previous teaching seminar in March, about 27 individuals have signed up and demonstrated interest to receive a biblical-centered theological education. Glory be to God! With God's grace, provision, and guidance, we anticipate to begin offering classes at the Certificate level in January 2017. We are currently negotiating with the owner to lease us the home for HTTS to find its home in the city Port-Margot!



Dr. Joseph: “Overall, it was one of the most joyful experiences I had the privilege to share with these engaging and enthusiastic men and women of God, as I attempted to teach them some fundamental principles on biblical hermeneutics. The Q & A moment was exhilarating and thought-provoking. Real Questions! Real Answers! I have learned a lot of important things about the local churches and ministries from my conversations with these individuals.”

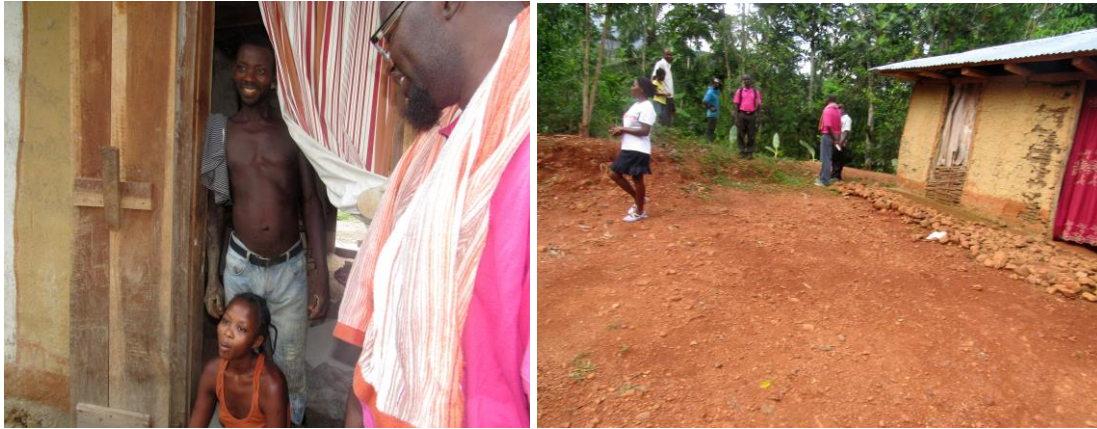




What should one next do after teaching an exciting course on biblical hermeneutics?

Door-to-Door Evangelism in Terre Rouge (Tuesday: June 14)

The next step for the HTO team was for us to explore the evangelistic aspect of the mission trip. After Dr. Joseph has preached two powerful and instructive sermons on the art of evangelism and the intersection of Christian mission, evangelism, and the resurrection of Christ, the next inevitable step was to do some practice in the streets. Hence, a group of passionate Christians from Mont-Pisgah accompanied me, Katia, and Pastor Nico to Terre Rouge. We were divided in two separate teams or groups. Terre Rouge (“Red Land”) is a mountainous area and one of the most isolated and ungodly places in Corail, Port-Margot. It is one also of the largest communities in the Corail-Vigoureux area. Over 100 families live there in various “lakou,” compounds. In our last mission trips in December 2015, and March 2016, we attempted to visit there; I (Dr. Joseph) personally longed to visit Terre Rouge in order to share the good news of Christ and forge friendship with the people of Terre Rouge. We were prevented in both occasions. Only the great Lord knows the reason! Although, we couldn’t make it there in our March visit, in April this year, we were able to send off homecare items for 100 families. In addition, in the September 2015 trip, we supplied backpacks and school supplies to several disadvantaged students and families of Terre Rouge. We pray these deeds of kindness and compassion would increase.



The partner-church (Mont-Pisgah) has appointed a community leader and an evangelistic team to minister to the people of Terre Rouge. According to Pastor Nico and the church leader-in-charge of that Region, no one in this community has a relationship with Christ. The Church has been involved in evangelistic outreach in Terre Rouge for a long time, and such a time as this, God has called us HTO to partner with the church to continue reaching out to these individuals and bring the light of the Gospel of Christ to them.



Together, we participated in street evangelism in various neighborhoods and knocked on 52 homes in Terre Rouge. We prayed in every home we visited and stopped; we talked to the people, listened to their personal needs, and established new friendship with them. ***When presenting the Gospel to the people of Terre Rouge, the common response from them was that at the moment, they were not ready to accept the Gospel and make peace with God through Christ. They also stated that we cannot go to church because we do not have any clothes.*** Please continue to pray for the people in Terre Rouge so God would soften their hearts toward repentance and salvific faith in Christ. Also, pray that God would supply their material needs.

In the midst of the obstacles and difficulties we encountered in and along the way to Port-Margot, God's faithfulness was constant and his care and love for the people of Port-Margot and toward us was uplifting and transformative. God's glory was indeed revealed in our encounters,

in the various lives he had touched through us and the activities we undertook for the sake of his name, renown, and glory.

Prayer Requests and Needs

Please consider praying for the following needs of Hope for Today Outreach

- For God's name, his fame and glory to be known and spread in the city of Port-Margot, and that the people there would turn to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ our Lord;
- For more ministry partners and collaborators (see Matthew 9:37);
- For financial support for Hope for Today Outreach;
- For student enrollment, teachers (both residential and visiting professors), and financial resources for Hope for Today Theological seminary;
- For our next mission trip to Port-Margot;
- Please do not cease to pray for the board and leadership of Hope for Today Outreach;
- School Supplies for the new academic year that begins in September, 2016-2017;
- Donations: Clothes, Shoes, and Homecare items.

In Christ,
Rev. Dr. Celucien L. Joseph
President
Hope for Today Outreach (HTO)
P.O. Box 7353
Port Saint Lucie, FL 34985
772-985-0696
customers@hopefortodayoutreach.org
<https://hopefortodayoutreach.org>