

Meetings and Encounters

March 21, 2012



(First Row) THP Board Members and community gather to celebrate time well served by those Board Members whose term has ended and the renewal of fresh faces of those joining. (Second Row) Monsignor Mancini directs the Gregorian Choir at the Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul in Providence, RI last Sunday. (Third Row) Parishioners from longtime supporting parish St. Thomas the Apostle in Crystal Lake, IL visit Louverture Cleary - the parishes second visit to LCS in two years.

Much of the past week has been filled with meetings, talks and Volunteer interviews. Wednesday and Thursday, Nick Carter (our Volunteer who is a third-year medical student that is spending a year in Haiti before returning to Brown University to finish medical school) and I gave talks in Chicago and Boston. We have done four talks for Brown Alumni around the country – we have one more to go on May 26th in Providence.

Friday and Saturday, we had the Board of Directors' Annual Meeting. It was a well-attended meeting, which comprised of sadness and joy. As their term comes to an end, we are sad to see Patrick Brun, Aimée Maier, Kevin Schuyler and Jon Stull leave the Board, but we are happy to have Kurt Daviscourt, Mary Cooney, Mark Bamford, Betsy Bowman, Jim Kavney, Susan Prince, Dr. Steven Shackford, Steven Keppel, Mimi Marquet and Jay Murphy joining the team. Tim Scordato, who has served as the Office Manager for Community Development, is also leaving

soon. It was great to have the opportunity to celebrate the coming and going of so many wonderful people. Of course, those going remarked that they do not plan to go far or be gone for long from THP!

Sunday, Monsignor Mancini and the Gregorian Choir put on a concert to benefit THP – this is the second benefit concert Monsignor has done for THP. The afternoon concert included musical responses to the spoken reflections on each of the 14 Stations of the Cross. I had the privilege of reading the text – written by Pope Benedict XVI – for the reflections. The music was amazing and the Pope’s reflections were spiritually and intellectually challenging.

Looking back, what amazes me about the past week’s meetings and gatherings was how each event had at its center an encounter with the complex reality of our mission and the circumstances in which we work. I have copied below part of Pope Benedict XVI’s reflection and prayer from the eighth station, Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem, as an example.

Hearing Jesus reproach the women of Jerusalem who follow him and weep for him ought to make us reflect. How should we understand his words? Are they not directed at a piety which is purely sentimental, one which fails to lead to conversion and living faith? It is no use to lament the sufferings of this world if our life goes on as usual...

Can it be that, despite all our expressions of consternation in the face of evil and innocent suffering, we are all too prepared to trivialize the mystery of evil? ...

Yet as we contemplate the sufferings of the Son, we see more clearly the seriousness of sin, and how it needs to be fully atoned if it is to be overcome.

Lord, to the weeping women you spoke of repentance and the Day of Judgment, when all of us will stand before your face: before you, the Judge of the world. You call us to leave behind the trivialization of evil, which salves our consciences and allows us to carry on as before. You show us the seriousness of our responsibility, the danger of our being found guilty and without excuse on the Day of Judgment. Grant that we may not simply walk at your side, with nothing to offer other than compassionate words.

Peace, Patrick

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Elizabeth Cross

Director of Community Development

The Haitian Project, Inc.
(815) 505-1287

P.O. Box 6891
Providence, RI 02940

“What you receive as gift, you must give as gift.”
“Se gratis nou resevwa, Se gratis tou pou nou bay.”

---Matthew 10:8