

**Church of the Nativity's  
OPERATION STARFISH® NEWSLETTER  
February, 2009**

Dear Friends of *Operation Starfish®*.

The following excerpt from Psalm 1 is painted in Kréyol on the interior wall of a house in Nativity Village at Prolongé, Haiti ...

Blessed is the man  
who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked  
or stand in the way of sinners  
or sit in the seat of mockers.

But his delight is in the law of the LORD,  
and on his law he meditates day and night.

He is like a tree planted by streams of water,  
which yields its fruit in season  
and whose leaf does not wither.  
Whatever he does prospers.

### **NATIVITY VILLAGE V ANNOUNCED**

“Nativity Church helps people across the street and around the world,” Fr. Dick Martin often says. “From the construction of a handicapped ramp for a wheelchair-bound child in the neighborhood, to the funding of an annual youth camp in Africa, the people of Nativity step up to meet the needs of others, wherever they find them.”

One of Nativity's largest mission efforts over the last 10 years has been Operation Starfish®, our ministry to the people of Haiti. This year we will begin development of our fifth “Nativity Village” project – a combination of housing, sanitation, drinking water and micro-enterprise opportunity at a site just east of Cap-Haitien, on the north coast of Haiti.

The village of Caracol lies along the Atlantic coast between Cap-Haitien and Fort Liberté. Here several hundred families live in mud huts with no sanitation and no clean drinking water. Life expectancy is low, due to malnutrition and disease. The only work available is fishing in the shallow waters inside the reef. Using rowboats and



skiffs with rags for sails, men try to find the small juvenile fish that are trying to mature before heading to deeper water. They don't catch much, and what they do catch should really be allowed to grow into adult reproducing fish.



Nativity Village at Caracol will include a 30-acre farm, with mechanical irrigation. The pump pictured at left is similar to one that will be installed at our farm. Nativity's farm (site shown at right) will provide living wage jobs to draw men away from over fishing the juvenile fish population in the bay. It will also



provide locally-grown food to alleviate the severe malnutrition in this area. And it will become a training facility for agricultural and business skills.

Lent 2009 will provide an opportunity for parishioners and friends to support the development of Nativity Village at Caracol, our 5<sup>th</sup> Nativity Village project in Haiti. The Starfish Basket will be available, beginning Ash Wednesday, February 25, 2009.

## **OPERATION STARFISH® UPDATE**

Jim McDaniel and Delane Bailey-Herd spent the week of January 12<sup>th</sup> in Haiti, visiting Nativity Village sites and meeting with Food For the Poor's Haiti staff. Here's an update...

**Nativity Village at Merger** (our 1<sup>st</sup> development project, near Port-au-Prince) – 300 laying hens have grown to the size where they can be transferred to Nativity's new chicken farm, the small business component of Nativity Village I. Fr. Printemps reports that the elementary school tuition program is working well and the 10-room school is full.

**Nativity Village at Prolongé** (our 2<sup>nd</sup> development, near Cap-Haitien) – the community is now over 400 houses, with lots of plantings around each house, especially banana trees. Jim and Delane met with Fr. Duken, Dr. Maklin, and the staff of St. Anthony Clinic to review operations and budget. The doctor is on site one day a week and sees 40-50 patients a day. The nurse provides health education and minor treatment 5 days a week. This is the first time most of the people in this area have had access to any kind of health care. The sewing co-op has about 18 students and they are producing table linens and learning garment design. Fr. Duken hopes to start a school uniform business and he has begun a culinary vocational training program at the Nativity Village Vocational Training Center.

**Nativity Fishing Village at Petit Anse** – Queen Snapper continues to be the primary type of fish being caught. They are a beautiful red color with huge eyes. The fish wholesale/retail shop will be adding a take-out business of fish soups this spring.

**Nativity Tilapia Farm at Petit Anse**– Five ponds are in full operation with a windmill-driven well and pump system. A fruit tree nursery and chicken coop have been added to the project. The nursery is supplying trees for a large reforestation project.

**Nativity Green Tree Project at Cap-Haitien** – Funding to plant 2,800 fruit trees was provided to Operation Starfish® by the Matthew 25 Foundation. Food For The Poor added funding for another 2,200 trees, allowing Fr. Duken and his teams of school children to plant 5,000 trees in December and January. These banana, breadfruit, mango, coconut and citrus trees will reforest areas stripped bare for charcoal, while alleviating the serious malnutrition in the area.

**Nativity Fishing Village at Madras** – Additional houses have been built and a community center is being planned. The fishermen hosted a lunch for Jim and Delane during their visit. One fisherman was disabled after a shark attack cut through tendons and bone in both ankles and lower legs. He is healing, but won't walk again and Jim has arranged for him, his wife and 4 children to get a new house.

**Nativity Village at El Corté** (our 3<sup>rd</sup> development, along the Dominican Republic border) – Fr. Martin dedicated this village in November, 2008. Food For The Poor is now working on providing fruit trees and goats to assist with the serious food shortage here.

**Nativity Village at Lozandier** (our 4<sup>th</sup> development, on the south coast of Haiti) – Just 8 houses remain to be built. An inauguration and blessing will be scheduled later this spring or early summer. This will be our next mission trip. If you are interested in traveling to Haiti with us, contact us at [jim@starfishmission.org](mailto:jim@starfishmission.org).

**Nativity Village at Caracol** (our 5<sup>th</sup> development, near Cap-Haitien – A site was selected for our 2009 Operation Starfish® campaign. It will include 80 houses, sanitation, water wells and a 30-acre irrigated farm. The land is fertile and flat. We hope to move fishermen who are now over fishing the shallow waters into more steady work as farmers, with a living wage. Corn, beans and other crops will offset commodities that are costly to ship by sea and alleviate the hunger in this area.

For more information, or a fact sheet on Operation Starfish®, contact [jim@starfishmission.org](mailto:jim@starfishmission.org) or go to [www.starfishmission.org](http://www.starfishmission.org). For information on Food For The Poor, go to [www.foodforthe poor.org](http://www.foodforthe poor.org).

## **ONE PENNY AT A TIME, YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!**

How often do you go to Google or Yahoo! to do an internet search? Do you realize that these search engines generate billions of dollars in advertising revenue? Well now there is a way to direct a small amount from every search toward your favorite charity. Powered by Yahoo!, the new search engine [www.GoodSearch.com](http://www.GoodSearch.com) will split 50% of its ad revenue with non-profits. This works out to about one penny per search.

We have listed Nativity's Operation Starfish as a benefiting charity. All you have to do is go to [www.GoodSearch.com](http://www.GoodSearch.com); find the "Who Do You GoodSearch For?" Box; type "Operation Starfish"; and start searching. After you do this the first time, *Operation Starfish* will automatically become your default charity. It's easy to change, however, if you prefer that another good cause receive your search pennies. For example, our friends at **Food For The Poor** are also listed.

If you have any questions, please let us know. Meanwhile, good searching!!!

## **FEBRUARY PRAYER REQUESTS**

Our readers have submitted the following prayer requests for this month:

† For Fr. Jean Printemps and Fr. Duken Augustin, and those they serve in Haiti, and for Fr. Keith O'Hare and Fr. Chris Murphy, and those they serve in the Dominican Republic, that God grant all of them strength, courage and the resources they need to continue their mission work;

† For our friends, Bishop David A. Zubik of Pittsburgh, Bishop David R. Choby of Nashville, and Fr. Charles Sheehy of Boston;

† For continuing healing and peace for the family of Mrs. Georgette Martin;

† For Fr. Daniel Ache and those he serves in Cameroon, that God bless him and his people with encouragement;

† For individuals who are hurting, families that are divided, and nations at war, may the peace of Christ be felt by all those who struggle;

† For all our friends at Food For The Poor, and for all those who work here and abroad to alleviate suffering;

† For the people of Haiti, who struggle against all odds to get back on their feet and to bring their land back to life;

For these and all our intentions, hear us, Oh Lord...

## **HAITIAN WISDOM**

“Early every morning we rise to the ‘Haitian Philharmonic,’ the barking of dogs, the crowing of chickens, the braying of donkeys and the grunts of pigs. They sing in unison for the glory of God.”

Msgr. Louis Kebreau  
Archbishop of Cap-Haitien

## **CLOSING THOUGHT...**

Our continuing success with Operation Starfish® calls to mind the powerful message of Mark 8:2-9:

*“Jesus said to His disciples: ‘My heart is moved with pity for the crowd...’ He took seven loaves and a few small fish, blessed them and distributed them. About 4,000 people ate their fill.”*

**One person at a time, we are indeed making a difference in the lives of the poor.**

*NEW SUBSCRIPTION?* If you have a friend who would like to receive this newsletter, go to [www.starfishmission.org](http://www.starfishmission.org) to sign up, or send a note to Operation Starfish, Church of the Nativity, 6400 Nativity Lane, Burke, VA 22015.

*CANCEL YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?* If you no longer wish to receive OPERATION STARFISH NEWSLETTER, send an email to [jim@starfishmission.org](mailto:jim@starfishmission.org) or send a note to the address above.

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Edited this month by Jim McDaniel ([jim@starfishmission.org](mailto:jim@starfishmission.org))

### **OPERATION STARFISH: MAKING A DIFFERENCE, ONE PERSON AT A TIME**

*As a young boy walked the beach at dawn, he noticed an old man ahead of him picking up starfish and tossing them into the sea. Catching up with the man, the boy asked why he was doing this. The old man explained to the boy that the stranded starfish would die if left in the morning sun.*

*“But the beach goes on for miles and there are millions of starfish,” exclaimed the boy. “How can your effort make any difference?”*

*The old man looked at the starfish in his hand and then threw it safely into the waves. He turned to the boy and said, “It made a difference to that one.”*

--Based on the writing of Loren Eiseley