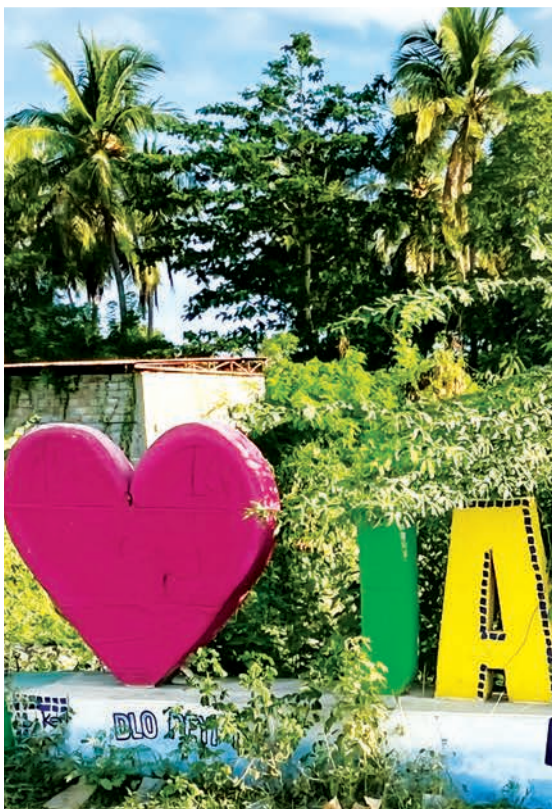


Felician Mission: Haiti is sponsored by the Felician Sisters of North America through Our Lady of Hope Province to live our commitment to justice and peace and to raise the dignity of the human person, especially women and children, in the whole world.

Mission: Haiti



Hope

Pilgrimage of

"Pilgrimage of Hope" is the central theme of the Catholic Church's 2025 Jubilee Year, a special year of reconciliation and renewal declared by the late Pope Francis. It is also the 150th Anniversary of the Felician Sisters in North America.

The initiative invites all to become active "Pilgrims of Hope" by undertaking journeys—physical or spiritual—to strengthen our faith, foster reconciliation with God and others and cultivate care for creation amidst global challenges such as war, injustice and the climate crisis. What better timing for God to open the way for our sisters to return to *Felician Mission: Haiti in Jacmel?*

Message from Sr. Marilyn Minter

God opened the door for us to return and to encounter the experience that **"hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us."** (Romans 5:5)

It was indeed a pilgrimage to get back to Jacmel from Miami: two airplanes followed by a five-hour ride to our mission in order to bypass Port-au-Prince and areas of gang activity. When we arrived in Jacmel, my heart swelled as joy sang in my soul: "Hope does not disappoint." I never gave up hope that we would return and neither had our Haitian brothers and sisters. Even though we had been physically absent for two years and eight months, everyone said, "We knew you would not leave us; we knew you would come back." "Hope did not disappoint."

The mission looked beautiful on the outside and the sights and sounds of mission life were uplifting. Although many repairs needed to be done, this did not diminish the joy of the Lord, which I experienced wherever I went and with whomever I met. There was joy in the streets, the market, the church and most of all, as I walked amidst the poverty in which the people live. The living conditions of the Haitian people are worsening. Food is scarce; the city has not provided electricity for the past three years;

and housing has become very overcrowded due to the many displaced persons who had to leave Port-au-Prince seeking safety.

We had worked hard over the years to empower and sustain our staff at *Felician Mission: Haiti* and we could see how this continued even in our physical absence. Although we ran the mission virtually and activities continued, everyone we met said it was not the same without our presence in Jacmel. I knew this was because of the spiritual renewal of the world that Mother Angela always sought with her sisters, co-partners and those she served. We can empower and sustain, but it is the spiritual renewal of the soul that finds a home and allows love to abound.

The gate, our front door to the mission, has many people coming through— young children, now teenagers, as well as many new faces who are hungry, sick and desiring education. I hear the call to listen, encounter, discern and respond to the needs of the times. But I also know I do not do this alone. I walk the journey of faith and hope with my Felician Sisters and with all of you who make hope possible through your accompaniment and support to a people in need. Together, we can show that hope does not disappoint. **It is so good to be home. ■**

REFLECTIONS

Sr. Mary Inga Borko

“The Truth Will Set You Free”

John 8:31-32

Returning to Jacmel after two years and eight months of being absent made me ask myself an important question: **What should be my priority at this time?** I knew there would be many activities awaiting us as soon as we entered the gate of the mission. After a time of prayer and reflection, I received my response: it should be evangelization!

anything to feed their children, or fear of being unable to send them to school. It was a deeper kind of fear.

Asking about people we knew, I learned that some had died and their relatives did not know the cause. They had not seen a doctor and were never diagnosed. A little 8-year-old boy who used to come to our mission died after just a 24-hour fever.

Many of the sicknesses and deaths are believed by local people to be caused by voodoo. Marcelina got sick after going to the market, where someone reportedly poured white powder on her, according to her sister. Not fully understanding, I went to Jerry, a teacher at the Catholic school, to ask why the people believe in practices like this. He began by telling me a story of his mother, who he said had also been poisoned with white powder by voodoo practitioners and suffered for a long time. Hearing this, I realized I would not receive a rational explanation from him.

Gabriel, our gardener, asked to borrow money because his girlfriend, who had become very sick, needed to be taken to the Boko (voodoo priest) to undo a curse that she believes was put on her. He said doctors cannot help her. She suffers from chest pains that drain all her energy.

Fear imposed by voodoo beliefs also prevails among those who are Catholic, who have received all the sacraments and practice their faith. Belwva, our long-time worker, asked me for incense. I was surprised and asked if it was for his son, who will soon become a deacon and works in a parish. He responded that it was for himself. He explained that for two days, Met Kalfu (evil spirits) had been visiting his neighborhood and he feared they would come to him.

Two young women who live at our mission refused to stay in a small house where another worker had lived

previously, because when she left, they found two chairs positioned as voodoo practitioners do when leaving a curse. They believed the curse remained in the house and feared that sickness or misfortune could affect them if they stayed there.

At that moment, a verse from John came to my mind: “The truth will set you free.” Clearly, our work in Haiti is not finished. These young women, well-educated and practicing their Catholic faith, were terrified when I mentioned that they had to stay in that house. Finally, another place was found for them.

It was Pope St. John Paul II who understood this well, reminding us that all cultures need the light and truth of the Gospel to be transformed by God’s grace, offering freedom and guidance toward God. How much I agree with him at this moment! **Yes, only Jesus Christ and His Gospel can set us free. Yes, evangelization must be my focus.** ■

Sr. Mary Julitta Kurek

Stitching Hope in Haiti

The sewing school continued to operate even throughout our absence.

For almost three years, we connected with the sewing school via Zoom. We began each lesson with prayer. We couldn’t be with our students physically, so we wanted to give them the hope that God’s Word brings. We also wanted them to feel, even if only a little, that we hadn’t abandoned them—that we cared about them and truly wanted to return.

We finally returned in July, while our graduates were busy sewing school uniforms. They had to sew uniforms

for about 100 students. Each of these young people who graduated from our sewing school is a story in itself. Each comes from a very poor family and dreams of a better life. Now that I’m back in Haiti, I have the opportunity to get to know them better and see their sewing skills grow day by day. We still have work to do, but **I see that many of our students take their acquired skills seriously, because it truly opens the door to a better life for them.** But that’s not all—they really enjoy sewing! Through sewing, we practice not only manual skills but also patience—especially when we don’t manage to sew something exactly as we wanted.

And it’s not only the students who continue to learn—I do too. Recently, a seminarian who will be ordained a deacon this year asked us for deacon’s stoles. I promised I would sew him four different-colored stoles—one for each season of the liturgical year. It was a new challenge for me, as I’d never sewn anything like this before—and I did it! Each new project brings new lessons that I can pass along to my students.

Life in Haiti brings new challenges every day—not just in sewing, but in everything we do. Yet through it all, I find joy, purpose and deep love for this place and its people. ■



For Felician Sisters, nothing is more important than the spiritual renewal of the world. I believe this, but at the same time, it is not easy to make it happen. From the first day after our return, we were surrounded by people requesting food, clothes, formula for children, schooling and medication—yet only one person asked for preparation for the sacraments.

Listening to so many stories of people coming to our mission, one topic was especially worrisome for me and confirmed the focus I had chosen as I prepared to return to Haiti. Watching and listening each day, I discovered that **people are deeply immersed in fear.** It was not just fear of gangs that could come to Jacmel, or fear of not having



Felician Mission: Haiti—House of Bread

In 2022, the dream of a bakery and café took shape on the grounds of the Pastoral Center in Jacmel. The “House of Bread” remains alive within us, thanks to Dr. Bonnett, a friend and benefactor who helped make it possible. The equipment is ready to be sent and we are waiting for the right time to ship the ovens and other materials needed to run the bakery.

This dream is becoming more of a reality as we recently visited the property and buildings. The land right now is covered in bushes, grass and vines growing everywhere. The inside is filled with dirt and debris covering the tile floors. But once again, we are filled with hope that the dream is still alive—to provide bread for the people and employment for women. **Stay tuned, for hope does not disappoint.** ■



Transforming Lives Through Education

“A child without education is like a bird without wings.”
(Tibetan proverb)

Global education aid cuts threaten to push **6 million more children** out of school by 2026. In Haiti, there are also many other terrifying reasons for the decline of education.

In 2025, Haiti’s education system is in a deep crisis because of escalating armed gang violence, widespread displacement and long-standing political and economic instability. In January 2025 alone, armed groups destroyed 47 schools in Haiti’s capital. With close to 300 schools destroyed in 2024, attacks on education are growing, leaving hundreds of thousands of children without a place to learn. For many children and teenagers, education is a last hope that provides a sense of purpose and meaning in their lives. Without school, life can feel senseless. Right now, this hope is at risk. UNICEF estimates that one in seven children in Haiti is currently out of school and almost one million more are at risk of dropping out.

Education is one of the best tools to empower people. Each year, we help about 100 students attend school, providing support in many ways. This year, the number of requests for help has doubled. The support we provide—minimal compared to the scale of needs in the country—changes the lives of every child we can sponsor.

Johnny, a 15-year-old boy, did not pass last year because his mother could not pay the final semester of school fees. He spends most of his days and nights outside the home, and his mother worries that he might join a gang if given the opportunity. By attending school and having hope for a better future, **Johnny has the potential to become someone who can transform his country.**

UNICEF warns that recruitment of children into gangs is surging; 30%—50% of gang members are children, some as young as 8 years old.

There is a 6-year-old boy named Sonic who will not be able to start school this year. He is from Port-au-Prince and his mother sent him to distant relatives in Jacmel, who are extremely poor and cannot afford an education for him. Out of desperation, his mother moved him from a gang-controlled area of Port-au-Prince to save his life.

James and Berlin lost their mother last year after a few months of undiagnosed health issues. Since her death, both had to stop going to school, as she was their only source of support.

Felician Mission: Haiti tries to respond to these and many other requests for help in attending school. Besides paying tuition, the sisters provide children with uniforms made in the mission sewing school, backpacks, school supplies and often shoes and undergarments. We invite you to be a missionary in the way that you can and desire—for example, by helping send Sonic, Johnny or James and Berlin to school and in doing so, **changing the face of the world.** ■



English Lessons, Lifelong Lessons

Snapshot of the Haiti English Volunteer Tutoring Program

Sisters Inga, Julitta and Marilyn returned to Haiti this past summer, facing many challenges, including unreliable internet and electricity—both of which are essential to supporting the online English Language program and computer lab. In the last few months, the sisters have prioritized stabilizing these utilities, allowing the program to operate more smoothly and with fewer interruptions.

Cheryl Hufnagel, Program Outreach Coordinator, has seen firsthand how life-changing the tutoring program is. She has been working with Haitian student Francesca Soirin over Zoom since 2024. They practice vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar to help Francesca improve her English conversation skills. They also use tools such as Google Translate to bridge English and French, helping to overcome the language barrier. Francesca was able to share with Cheryl how much she loves learning to sew at the mission and making school uniforms for students returning to school this fall.

Cheryl says, **“Tutoring is a learning process for everyone. It can be intimidating at first, but with patience and practice, barriers can be overcome, leading to a rewarding experience for both tutor and student.”**



For more information about the Haiti English Tutoring program, please visit our website at felician.org/haiti-remote-tutor. ■



EDUCATION IN Haiti

Literacy Rate

- **Adult:** Approximately **83%** of Haitians aged 15 and above are literate, with a slight gender disparity favoring women (83.4%) over men (82.6%). *Health in the Americas*
- **Youth (Ages 15–24):** About **61.7%** for both genders combined, with a higher rate for females (65.3%) compared to males (58.3%). *UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning*

School Enrollment

- **Primary School:** Approximately **57%** of children enroll in primary school. *freehaiti.org* Nearly **60%** drop out before completing primary education. *Wikipedia*
- **Secondary School:** Only about **20%** of students proceed to secondary school. *Help for Haiti*
- **Advanced Degrees:** Less than **1%** of Haiti’s young people pursue higher education. *Wikipedia*



EDUCATION CRISIS IN Haiti

Schools Continue to Close Amid Crisis

- As of January 2025, there were **959** schools shuttered across Haiti, up by 40% since mid-2024. *Global Education Cluster*
- Over **900** schools are reported closed nationwide, a more than 20% increase compared to 2023. *UNICEF*

Massive Dropout Concern from Ministry of Education

- The Education Minister warned that from over a million enrolled students, only about **188,000** reach 9th grade, citing strikes, poverty, instability and lack of support. *HaitiLibre.com*

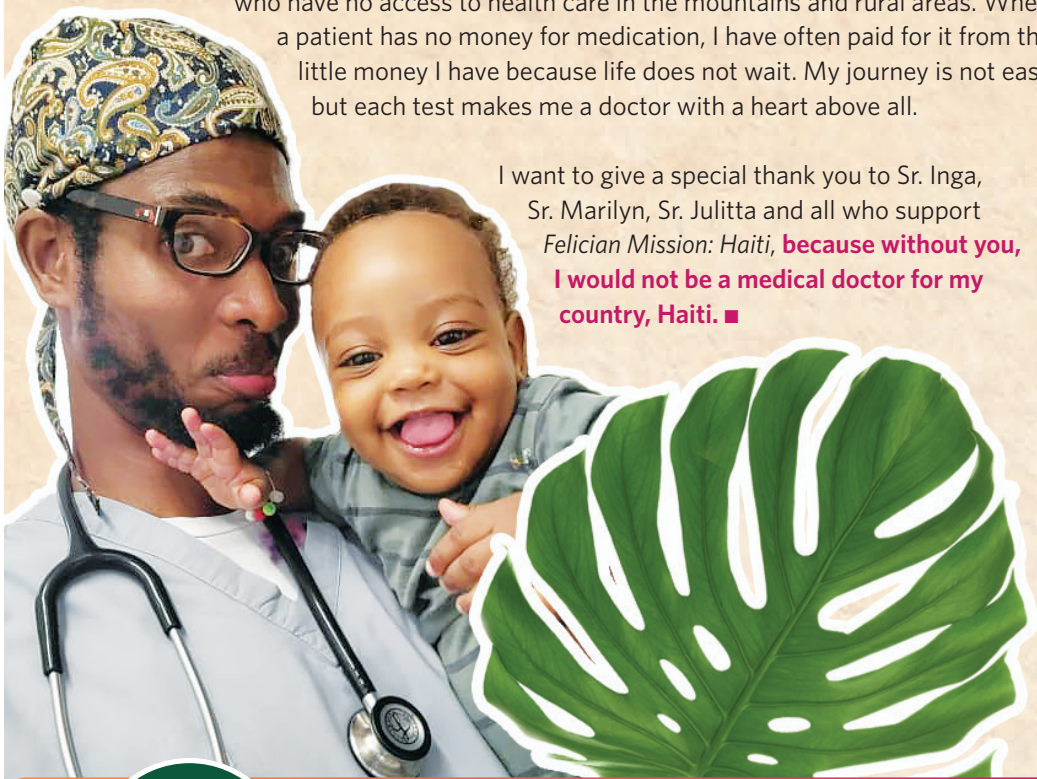
Healing with Heart in Haiti

I am Dr. Louis Tchéry, and I am approaching the end of my social service year at the Sacré-Coeur Hospital in Thiotte, Haiti. It has been an enriching year, full of learning, but also very stressful. I had the chance to treat thousands of patients, give them hope and help restore their health.

The people I serve often have little or no money to buy the medications prescribed to them. Sometimes their health problems exceed our skills and there is no nearby hospital because Jacmel or Port-au-Prince are difficult to reach via inaccessible roads and transportation costs are prohibitive. My biggest challenge is that in each situation, I must use all my medical knowledge to treat and care for my patients.

I love the work I do with the poorest of the poor. I believe that everyone has the right to good health care. This is why my dream is to return to Jacmel to integrate my skills with the Mother Angela Mobile Clinic and help the most vulnerable—those who have no access to health care in the mountains and rural areas. When a patient has no money for medication, I have often paid for it from the little money I have because life does not wait. My journey is not easy, but each test makes me a doctor with a heart above all.

I want to give a special thank you to Sr. Inga, Sr. Marilyn, Sr. Julitta and all who support *Felician Mission: Haiti*, **because without you, I would not be a medical doctor for my country, Haiti.** ■



“Pray, Hope and Don’t Worry”

You may have heard the phrase “Pray, Hope and Don’t Worry,” words attributed to the Capuchin Saint Padre Pio. These words certainly become a reality for the Mother Angela Mobile Clinic, which is now in its 12th year of serving the poor in need of health care in the Diocese of Jacmel. We have been blessed with the same team over the years—men and women who embrace the charism and core values of the Felician Sisters.

In Haiti, it is a continual challenge as we meet various obstacles in running a mobile clinic. We have dedicated doctors, a nurse, a pharmacist and a driver who believe in this mission to serve the poorest of the poor. Rural medicine refers to accessible, community-focused healthcare services delivered to people in remote areas. It often faces challenges like geographic isolation. **Mobile clinics are an important means to improve rural primary care, bridging geographical gaps and increasing access to physicians and health care teams. This approach is essential for serving where the need is greatest.**

For the past three years, this call has been especially challenging for the Mother Angela Clinic, but with dedicated partners, we continue to serve 28 chapel sites in need of healthcare. Due to road closures, travel can be difficult, but the team always finds another way to show up and meet the community’s needs. The number of patients has increased over the years due to other facilities closing, lack of aid and the growing number of displaced people from Port-au-Prince coming to the Diocese of Jacmel. Despite these challenges, the Mother Angela Clinic has continued its service.



The increase in patient care means an increased need for medications. This is when we remember to “Pray, hope and don’t worry.” As the years progressed and the situation in the country deteriorated, traveling to Port-au-Prince for medications was no longer an option. God showed us new ways to obtain the medications we needed. Our connections with the Carmelite Sisters in Santo Domingo have been a great gift in securing supplies. Medications are brought from the Dominican Republic to the border of Haiti and each time we make a purchase, we pray for safety and success during the exchange.

The last time we bought medication, we faced a new challenge: the border of the Dominican Republic was now closed to Haitians crossing. The driver for the Carmelite Sisters on the Haitian side was not allowed to cross the border to pick up our medications. We did not know what to do, so we prayed. Then we remembered our contact with the Salesian Sisters at the border. We made the call and the sisters were ready and willing to help.

We prayed and hoped that the sisters would be able to cross the border and return to Haiti safely. We began to pray the Chaplet of Mercy as they traveled. We kept thinking of Padre Pio’s words: “Pray, hope and don’t worry.” When we finished our prayers, we received the message that they were safe in Haiti and ready for the medications to be picked up by our team. Within days, the medications were in the Mother Angela Clinic’s Pharmacy.

This is just one of the many ways God has shown that the Mother Angela Clinic is called to Jacmel—to serve where the need is greatest, bringing healthcare to rural communities in need of primary care. Because of your support, we continue this journey of hope, bringing care to those who sometimes feel abandoned and displaced. With your help, we will continue to provide accessible, community-focused healthcare services to the Haitian people in rural areas. ■



HEALTHCARE IN *Haiti*

As of 2023, the average life expectancy in Haiti is approximately **64.94** years.

Leading Causes of Mortality

Cause	Mortality Rate (per 100,000)
Ischemic Heart Disease	107.5
Stroke	122.6
Cholera	High during outbreaks
HIV/AIDS	Significant impact
Violence (Homicides, Accidents)	97.7
Maternal Mortality	350 per 100,000 live births
Under-Five Mortality	5,500

These statistics underscore the multifaceted health challenges Haiti faces, necessitating comprehensive public health strategies to address both chronic and infectious diseases, as well as to improve maternal and child health outcomes.

“The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy.” — Psalm 126:3

Dear Friends,

With grateful hearts, we share this Impact Report as a testament to the many ways God continues to make a way for our Haitian brothers and sisters. Your prayers, your presence and your faithful accompaniment bring joy and hope each day to the community we serve through *Felician Mission: Haiti*.

We are humbled by your partnership and deeply thankful for all the ways you help sustain this mission of love, mercy and possibility. Truly, the Lord has done great things for us—and you are part of those blessings.

With joy and gratitude,
 Sister Marilyn Minter, CSSF
 Sister Mary Inga Borko, CSSF
 Sister Mary Julitta Kurek, CSSF

