

ADVENTIST
MISSION

YOUTH AND ADULT
MAGAZINE

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INTER-AMERICAN DIVISION








featuring:

SHAKEN, BUT STILL STANDING | OUT OF THE ASHES


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On the Cover: A man forced from his home by the earthquake and living in a tent on the campus of the Adventist university near Port-au-Prince, Haiti, contemplates his future.

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 = stories of special interest to teens

*Because Thirteenth Sabbath falls on December 25, we suggest that it be celebrated the week before, on December 18.

Dear Sabbath School Leader,

This quarter is unprecedented in the history of mission offerings. For the past nearly 50 years the divisions have received the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering in a rotating order. However, following the earthquake in Haiti in January of this year, news of the tremendous destruction prompted church leaders to ask the West-Central Africa Division, which was to receive the offering, to step aside and allow our church family to help the believers rebuild their churches and other buildings that were severely damaged or destroyed in the earthquake. West-Central Africa will be featured third quarter 2011 instead.

The Challenges

The Inter-American Division is made up of the countries of Central America, the four northernmost countries of South America, and the islands of the Caribbean. One of these islands, Hispaniola, is home to the Dominican Republic and Haiti.

Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere and one of the poorest in the world. Yet the 330,000 Adventists

in Haiti give more offerings per tithe dollar than any other country or union field in the Inter-American Division. Their poverty makes them yearn for heaven, and they're in a hurry to get there and take as many as possible with them.

On January 12, 2010, an earthquake measuring 7.0 on the Richter scale rocked central and southern Haiti, including the capital city, Port-au-Prince. The quake destroyed or severely damaged homes, schools, businesses, and government offices; it killed more than 200,000 people. Thousands more were injured, and up to a million lost their homes and everything they owned. The government immediately ordered residents in the quake-affected area out of buildings until the buildings could be examined and declared safe. Suddenly a major portion of the capital city area was homeless.

The earthquake destroyed or severely damaged 115 Adventist churches—one fourth of the Adventist churches in the nation. In addition, several schools and the church headquarters building suffered major damage. Losing a church in Haiti is a catastrophe, for the church is the heart of the community of believers. Often churches have more than one service to accommodate the many who want to come and worship. It takes years for believers to amass the funds to build even a simple church, and a loss of this magnitude will cripple the outreach efforts of our believers for years unless we can help them rebuild.

Yours for the kingdom,



Charlotte Ishkanian
Editor, *Mission*

OPPORTUNITIES

This quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help

- rebuild or repair some of the 115 churches that were destroyed or severely damaged
- rebuild the women's dormitory and repair the men's dormitory on the campus of Haiti Adventist University
- provide funds to help children buy school uniforms, shoes, and textbooks so they can return to school.



SHAKEN, BUT STILL STANDING



October 2 | Israel Leito

Haiti is the poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere. Even in normal times life in Haiti is a challenge. But the earthquake that hit Haiti in January caused unimaginable destruction, killing more than 200,000 people; destroying more than 250,000 homes, schools, churches, businesses, and government offices; and leaving millions with no means of earning a livelihood.

A Strong Presence

The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Haiti numbers more than 335,000. Their hope lies in the soon coming of Jesus. Although Haiti's Adventist believers are among the poorest in the world, they contribute a larger percentage of mission offerings compared to tithe than any other union in the Inter-American Division.

Disaster No Stranger

Haiti is used to dealing with natural disasters. It lies in the Caribbean hurricane belt, where nearly every year it is hit with one or more destructive hurricanes. The torrential rains often cause massive mudslides and floods

that take lives and destroy what little property people have.

However, this earthquake has been the most devastating natural event to hit Haiti this generation. Its epicenter was near the capital city of Port-au-Prince, where roughly one third of Haiti's population is concentrated. The destruction forced virtually everyone out of their homes and into the streets.

But in the moments and days following the disaster Haitian Adventists rallied to help their neighbors, providing open spaces on which to stay, and even sharing food they purchased with their own meager funds.

Out of the Ashes

Thousands of Haitian Adventists lost almost everything, including their means of livelihood. But they have turned their attention to helping others. We can be proud of what our Haitian brothers and sisters are doing for God in their devastated country. And with the help of hundreds of Adventists—trained doctors, nurses, and rescue teams—who have come to Haiti to use their skills to bring healing, comfort, and hope, this country, though shaken, will stand again.

In the weeks to come you will hear stories of faith, of sacrifice, and of the spirit of evangelism that characterize the Haitian believers. These stories are a small window through which we can see the extraordinary faith of the believers in Haiti, a people working to prepare others for the Lord's return.

Our Adventist brothers and sisters in Haiti are good examples of living the Christ-like life. They trust the Lord absolutely and are committed to following His lead and unselfishly serving others, even in the midst of a terrible natural catastrophe.

Busy Working

Immediately after the earthquake hit, one church elder visited every member of his congregation to learn their fate. Another congregation whose church was severely damaged pooled their resources to provide shelter, food, and comfort on the church grounds. Still another congregation gathered at the site of their destroyed church and removed rubble by hand so that they could worship there on Sabbath. They

have only a tarp to protect them from the tropical sun and the heavy seasonal rains. They sit on a few pews they were able to rescue from the rubble of their once lovely church. But they worship together and invite their neighbors to join them.

The Adventist university, which stands in a hard-hit region of the city, became a shelter for as many as 20,000 people who couldn't return to their homes. And Adventists are seeing that their new neighbors have as many opportunities as possible to hear the reason for their faith, even during times of despair.

Our Part

Our Thirteenth Sabbath Offering this quarter will help lift up the hands of the believers in Haiti. It will help rebuild some of the more than 100 churches that were destroyed or seriously damaged in the earthquake. Our gifts will help further the work in a nation in which Adventists are known as a people of faith.

The Lord is strengthening His people as they pick up the pieces of their lives and move on. He is giving them unprecedented opportunities to share their faith. All they want from the world church is the assurance of our help and support in this trying time.

They are committed to continue filling the country with the truth as we know it. Start planning now to give an extraordinary gift on December 26 to help rebuild the infrastructure of the church in Haiti. 🌍

FAST FACTS

- Haiti is an independent country in the Caribbean Sea. It shares the island of Hispaniola with the Dominican Republic.
- Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere and one of the poorest in the world.
- Much of Haiti is mountainous, but about 40 percent of the land has been cleared for crops. After 200 years of farming, the soil is depleted.

Israel Leito
President, Inter-American Division of
Seventh-day Adventists



SHELTER IN THE STORM



October 9 | Jean Josue Pierre

In the wake of the earthquake that shattered parts of Haiti, the Adventist university became the temporary home of more than 10,000 people.

On January 12, 2010, some 700 students at Haitian Adventist University were gathered in the school's auditorium for chapel services. Suddenly the building shook as the magnitude 7.0 earthquake rocked the region, killing more than 200,000 people and injuring thousands more. Not a single student worshipping in that building was seriously injured, thanks to the quality construction of the university building and God's protecting hand.

Government officials, fearing aftershocks, ordered everyone out of their homes and public buildings. People fled to any open space they could find.

The Adventist radio station on the university campus was one of only two or three that remained on the air, broadcasting emergency information during the critical hours following the earthquake. During this time cell phones were useless, but news was crucial. The Adventist station broadcast updates, medical information, and emergency

announcements for days following the earthquake. It played uplifting programming and messages of hope. And for Adventists across the affected area, the radio station became their church on Sabbath morning.

Order From Chaos

More than 10,000 people flooded onto the campus of the Adventist university seeking safety and shelter. University staff members laid out a tent city on the campus, creating order from the chaos of displaced people. ADRA® (Adventist Development and Relief Agency) provided food, tarps, and hygiene kits to the displaced persons. In addition they dug latrines, built showers, and installed a water purifier to provide safe drinking water for the small city that rose on the university campus.

Next door at the Adventist hospital, Loma Linda University provided medical personnel who served more than 6,000 patients in the first month following the earthquake.

Sharing the Good News

Charles Ernst, French language teacher at Haitian Adventist University,

and his colleagues held campus worship services three times a day. The services were broadcast over a public address system donated by a church member. The messages were as refreshing as cold water to thirsting souls.

January, when the earthquake hit, is traditionally the time for Adventist churches in Haiti to hold evangelistic services. So four days after the quake, the university began evangelistic meetings on the school's soccer field. And people came. More than ever they wanted to hear the Word of God. The approximately 6,000 Adventists living on the campus prayed with their new neighbors and encouraged them to put their trust in God.

What's Next?

Two months after the earthquake, people still live in tents. Even when people are permitted to return to their homes, thousands won't have homes to

return to. ADRA will continue to care for the people. They are distributing large quantities of beans, rice, and other staples, providing safe drinking water, and seeing that hygiene in camps is maintained to prevent the spread of disease.

As soon as the government gives permission for schools to reopen, the Adventist university plans to resume classes even though about 40 percent of the campus buildings were damaged. The women's dormitory must be rebuilt, and the school's classrooms need repair. Maranatha Volunteers International has provided some large classroom tents so students can resume their studies while plans are laid to construct permanent buildings.

A year before the earthquake, the university opened a cement block-making factory on campus that can make enough cement blocks to build three houses every day. The industry was not damaged during the earthquake and will put the university in a prime position to provide blocks to help rebuild the campus and the city.

Haitian Adventist University's staff and students are doing what they can to bring hope to the people of Haiti. By helping their neighbors, and sharing food, medicine, and shelter, they are spreading the love of Jesus through words and deeds. They are making a lasting impact in their community and in the nation of Haiti. 🌍

Jean Josue Pierre, president of Haitian Adventist University; Charles Ernst, French teacher at the university; and Saint-Louis Pierre, education and publishing director for the Haitian Union, contributed to this report.

FAST FACTS

- Haitian Adventist University is located in a suburb of Port-au-Prince, an area especially hard-hit by the earthquake.
- The university had an enrollment of about 750 students at the time of the earthquake. It focuses on training for service, with schools of theology, education, and nursing.
- Plans are in place to reopen the university as soon as the government has relocated the displaced persons on the campus to more permanent housing.



H A I T I



FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

October 16 | Evanose Beauville

My name is Evanose [EH-vah-noze]. I am the school nurse on the campus of the Adventist university in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. I was trained for emergencies, but I faced the greatest challenge of my life in the hours and days following the terrible earthquake earlier this year.

When the earthquake rocked the Port-au-Prince region of southern Haiti, I was giving nursing students at the university a practical test just as the building began to shake.

“Get out!” I shouted. Students ran past me outside. I shooed them away from the building as the ground continued to shake beneath us.

In the first minutes after the earthquake hit, we had no idea how serious the earthquake was. Before long we saw men and women making their way toward the nearby Adventist hospital. Some were bleeding; others needed help to walk; still others were carried. But soon the less-seriously injured returned with reports that the hospital was overwhelmed with life-threatening injuries, and those with less-serious injuries were being turned away. They asked me for help.

The university treasurer turned to me. “You’re a nurse,” he said. “Use whatever medical supplies we have on campus; do whatever you can to help these people.”

Making Do

I set up a first aid station under a large mango tree on campus, and people lined up for help. Within minutes the medicine and supplies were gone. Students and staff members offered to help and were sent in search of anything we could use. They begged for sheets that we could tear into strips to use as bandages. We used shoelaces as tourniquets and cut tree branches to hold IV bottles. I taught anyone who was willing to learn how to care for open wounds and treat broken bones. And we just kept going. Still we were overwhelmed by the flood of the injured.

Four pregnant women went into labor and gave birth. We managed to save two of the babies, but we lacked the resources to save the others. We worked around the clock for several days with only a few minutes’ sleep here and there. Three days later the first of many doctors and nurses arrived at the hospital and on campus to help us.

Serious Cases

Many of the cases I had to treat were far too serious for a nurse to care for. They should have been seen by doctors, but no doctors were available. In fact, the hospital was sending people to me for care.

A teenage girl came to me in tears. She had lost three fingers on her left hand. Her parents had wrapped her hand in a cloth, but the bleeding had continued and her hand had become infected. She had a high fever. I washed her hand in homemade antiseptic and soaked it for an hour. Then I removed the dead skin and infection and applied an antibiotic cream to the wound. I had no more sterile bandages, so I used clean bandages made from a sheet to keep the wounds clean. As I worked I prayed. I knew that while I was doing the best I could, the girl could still die. After four hours the girl's fever went down and stayed down. Even now, a month after the earthquake, she returns every day to have her bandage changed and her hand checked for infection.

Help at Last

While help arrived quickly from ADRA, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico, it took several days before medical personnel and supplies reached Haiti in sufficient quantity to ease the critical shortage. Teams from ADRA, Loma Linda University, and many other church-related groups arrived to help, and I was able to send the most-seriously injured to the hospital for proper care.

I continue to serve as nurse on the campus, which is now home to more than 10,000 temporary residents. Most are housed in tents until more

permanent arrangements can be made.

I can't imagine how many people would have died if the Adventist Church hadn't been here for the people of Haiti. While ADRA continues to provide food and emergency supplies, medical teams from Loma Linda University and other Adventist hospitals around the world are helping to meet the need for medical care at every level.

I thank God for the Adventist university, where I received my training under a demanding nurse who wouldn't accept anything but my best. She prepared me to serve in such a time as this.

Your mission offerings continue to support the Adventist hospital, the Adventist university, and other outreach entities in Haiti that have meant the difference between life and death for hundreds, perhaps thousands, of people who have suffered so much during and after the earthquake this year. Thank you! 🌍

FAST FACTS

- Haiti, the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, suffers great losses from hurricanes and tropical storms. A series of such storms battered Haiti in 2008, leaving 800,000 people homeless. Floods and mudslides often accompany these storms because the land has been stripped of most of its vegetation. Homes built of concrete blocks and cement roofs to protect against such storms crumbled when the earthquake hit.
- About one third of Haiti's 9 million people live in and around Port-au-Prince, which was the epicenter of the devastating earthquake.



SAVED TO TELL OTHERS

October 23 | Iney and Maguey Laguerre

[Ask three people—a narrator and a married couple—to present this first-person report.]

Narrator: Iney [EE-nay] and Maguey [mah-GEE] are active members of one of dozens of congregations in the capital city of Port-au-Prince. They love sharing God's love with others.

When the earthquake struck on January 12, 2010, their lives were changed, but their desire to continue sharing God's love remains steadfast. Their story is typical of thousands of Adventist Christians who lived through one of the worst disasters to strike a single country in the past century.

Iney [man]: I had just dismissed my last class of the day at the public university where I work. The students and I gathered our books and prepared to leave the classroom when suddenly the building shook. The ceiling crashed down on us, and the floor gave way beneath our feet. Huge chunks of cement fell on us. Then I lost consciousness.

Maguey [woman]: I was on my way home from work when the earth shook violently, nearly knocking me down. A thunderous crash followed, and dust

rose so thick that it choked me. As the ground shuddered again I could hear desperate screams for help.

Iney: When I came to, I could hear voices crying around me. When I tried to move, pain tore through my leg. I was trapped under a beam. Then I heard other voices from outside. Someone was coming to rescue us. The pinhole of dust-filled light grew larger and brighter, and soon rescuers broke through. Someone cleared the rubble around me and lifted the beam from my leg. They helped me out of the crumbled building. They carried me to a car and drove me to a hospital. But the grounds were packed with injured people, so my rescuers inched through the clogged streets to another hospital. But it, too, was overflowing with patients and had no doctors to see me.

For six hours my friends drove from hospital to hospital looking for help. At last they reached the Adventist hospital, where I was admitted. The few doctors and nurses who were on duty had far more serious cases than mine. So I waited. I knew that my leg was broken

in two places and two fingers on my right hand were crushed.

Maguey: Phone lines were dead, and I couldn't reach Iney. I hurried home, hoping that I'd find him there. But the house was empty. I paced and prayed. I didn't know what else to do. The phone lines weren't working.

Several hours later, two church members came to tell me that they had seen Iney at the Adventist hospital. He was alive but seriously injured. I grabbed a few things and hurried to the hospital, 30 minutes' walk from our home.

Just before midnight I found my husband lying on a stretcher under a large tree outside of the hospital. The hospital had survived the earthquake, but with the threat of aftershocks, everyone stayed outside. The few medical personnel who had made it to the hospital after the earthquake were moving among the patients lying on the ground.

Iney: I was in terrible pain, and the hospital had run out of medicine. I was so happy to see that my wife was there and unhurt.

Maguey: I gave Iney some water to drink. I knew that without medical help he would die. I never stopped praying, and I refused to leave his side.

When a doctor was finally able to treat Iney, he said that his leg and two of his fingers needed to be amputated. I watched as my husband was carried to a temporary surgical tent that had been set up outside of the hospital.

Iney: It was hard to lose my leg and my fingers, but I'm grateful to be alive.

I think of my students who died in the classroom that afternoon. I thank God for another chance to serve Him, another opportunity to tell others about the God I love.

My wife and I have planted one church that has grown to several hundred members. We want to continue planting more churches. We want everything we do to be for the glory of God.

Narrator: This quarter our Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help our brothers and sisters in Haiti rebuild the churches damaged or destroyed in the earthquake earlier this year and help them continue sharing their faith with others as they have done so faithfully in the past. Please consider giving an extra-large offering on December 26, a gift to Jesus and to His children in Haiti. 🌐

MISSION POST

- About 80 percent of Haitians are Catholic. Most are nominal Christians, and many combine their belief system with African vodun, or voodoo, a form of spirit worship.
- Seventh-day Adventists are the largest single Protestant denomination in Haiti with some 320,000 members. That's one member for every 30 people, or 3 percent of the population.
- Adventists operate the 70-bed Haiti Adventist Hospital in Port-au-Prince. During the first month after the earthquake this hospital served more than 6,000 patients.



Now Is the Accepted Time

October 30 | Yves Joseph

[Ask a man to present this first-person report.]

I'm an accountant in a construction firm. I was working with Ronald, a colleague, when the earthquake hit Haiti on January 12. The earth heaved, and the building shuddered. Ronald dashed toward the door as the concrete ceiling crumbled, but I wasn't fast enough. Huge pieces of concrete trapped me in a coffin-sized space. I knew that at any moment the weight might shift and crush me.

Urgent Prayer

"Ronald, can you hear me?" I shouted.

"Yes," he replied. "A pillar fell on me. I can't move."

"Let's pray," I called back to him. Ronald was not a Christian, but I wanted him to know that God was with us. "Dear God," I prayed aloud so Ronald could hear, "thank You for saving our lives. Please be with us and send someone to get us out of here."

Ronald prayed next. "Lord, forgive me," he said, his voice filled with pain. "I am ready to follow You. Please, save me."

Inside my concrete box I felt God's peace, and I prayed that Ronald did too.

Calling for Help

No one knows we are here, I thought. I reached for my phone and texted my wife, the local church elder, and some colleagues to let them know two of us were alive but trapped in the building. My wife called me back. It was so comforting to hear her voice. Then the phone line went dead.

I knew that people would come and try to rescue us. I knew that church members were praying for us. I couldn't hear anything, but Ronald was nearer to the door. "I hear someone singing," he said.

Inside my concrete prison I could hear only occasional noises and Ronald's moans. Evening passed into night, and waiting grew harder. My mouth was as dry as sandpaper, and I longed for some water.

"I'm going to die," Ronald moaned from time to time.

Have Faith!

"Have faith!" I begged Ronald. "God will help us." I prayed aloud many times during the night, as much for Ronald's sake as for my own.

Sometime during the night I fell asleep and was awakened by Ronald's cries or moans. When I awoke and realized that he had been silent for a while, I called out to him.

"We didn't die when the building fell," I'd say. "That means that God has a plan for us. Let's ask God what he wants us to know now." I'd pray then, and sometimes I'd hear Ronald say amen.

I prayed silently as well, asking God to give me wisdom when I spoke to Ronald. I felt impressed to ask Ronald to pray again with me. "If you pray with all your faith, God will hear and answer," I said. Then I prayed, "Lord, forgive us our trespasses and accept us as your children."

"God, if You get me out of here," Ronald added, "I'll give the rest of my life to You."

I could see nothing from my box, but I knew it must be daylight. Then I heard Ronald's voice. "I'm here! I can see you. Please get me out of here!"

My pulse quickened with hope, though his voice worried me. Ronald sounded weak.

I waited in my small space, listening for every sound. Time hung heavy, and I hardly dared to breathe for fear of missing a noise, a call, that told me rescue was near.

Rescued!

Then I heard shouts. The rescuers had reached Ronald! He groaned as they lifted the pillars from his body. Then the rescuers called to me, and I answered, guiding them as they found my crypt and began drilling through. When at last the dust exploded into my tiny space and I saw dim light outside, I untangled my cramped limbs and

walked from the rubble.

I asked my rescuers about Ronald, and one of them pointed to a car where a doctor was leaning over the back seat. I hurried to the car and took Ronald's hand. "Don't forget your promise to God," I said.

"Yes, I remember," he whispered.

My wife and fellow church members crowded around me, praising God for our rescue. Our city lay in ruins, but our spirits were renewed. Slowly we made our way toward my home.

Hope Deferred

The next day I learned that Ronald had died from his injuries. I offered what hope I could to those gathered for his funeral. I recounted our last hours together, the hope Ronald had that God, who longs to save each of us, had heard Ronald's prayers.

I'm glad God used me to lead Ronald to Jesus. I know that one day I'll see him again—the same day we'll both meet our Jesus face-to-face. 🌍

FAST FACTS

- Haiti has little industry. Most Haitians struggle for survival on a daily basis. About 65 percent of the people live in poverty—a figure that increases to 80 percent in rural areas.
- While education is free and compulsory for children ages 6 to 11, many children cannot attend school due to the cost of school uniforms, textbooks, and supplies, and the availability of a school or teachers. About half the adult population can read or write at least some.



THE CHURCH ON THE ROCK

November 6 | Etienne, Venique, and friend

As the earth heaved beneath her feet, 21-year-old Etienne [eh-TYEN], a young woman from rural Haiti, stumbled out of the crumbling house and made her way into the rubble-strewn street. For the moment she was safe, but she was homeless.

Etienne knows what “homeless” means. Two years earlier her village was devastated by floods. Her brother urged her to move to Port-au-Prince and stay with a family he knew.

Etienne learned that her host family were Seventh-day Adventists. She wasn’t interested in their religion, but, because she was a guest in their home, she attended church and special meetings with them on occasion. But religion wasn’t important to her—until the earthquake destroyed everything she had.

She gathered her wits and thought, *I’m homeless, but I’m alive*. Etienne heard that a nearby Adventist church, built on a large rock outcropping, was sheltering those made homeless by the earthquake. Early the next morning she made her way to the church.

At the gate Etienne half expected to be turned away. After all, she wasn’t an Adventist. She didn’t even like

Adventists. But the deacon smiled and welcomed her. Then he showed her to a space under a tarp where she could stay. She found a cardboard box and opened it to make a bed. Someone offered her food, and she took it eagerly. No help had arrived in the country yet, and no food trucks had come bearing relief supplies. Etienne realized that the church members had pooled their own meager resources and prepared a simple meal of beans and rice for those who now called the church grounds home. They asked for nothing in return.

Sharing Hope

The next day word spread that the evangelistic meetings that had been interrupted by the earthquake would resume that evening. *God is calling me*, Etienne thought. *I’ll go, and this time I’ll listen*.

Etienne joined others who had taken shelter in the churchyard. And hundreds more entered the gates of the church grounds for the meeting. Before the earthquake, the 2,000-member church had been filled with people attending the evangelistic meetings. More than half were not Adventists,

and some 250 or so had already asked to prepare for baptism. Some wondered whether the people would return after the disaster. But they came.

Because the church had sustained damage and aftershocks still rumbled through the area, the people sat on the ground for the service.

The speaker was Venique [veh-NEEK], a young laywoman who had found the Adventist faith several years earlier when God sent her a dream and a neighbor to invite her to attend similar meetings in another part of Haiti. Since then she has preached for dozens of evangelistic meetings across Haiti.*

Venique arrived at the church grounds praising God that so many had come to continue attending the meetings. She refused to think about the crumpled school building where she had once taught, and turned her focus to ministering to hungry souls.

Another Chance

As Etienne listened to Venique speak, she realized that she had heard this woman before. The first time she had

attended out of a sense of duty and had ignored the invitation to accept Jesus as her Savior. This time would be different.

“I knew that God was giving me a second chance to accept His love and salvation. I knew God wanted me to follow Him.” That night Etienne surrendered her life to God and asked to be baptized.

Evangelistic Opportunity

Adventist churches throughout Haiti traditionally hold evangelistic meetings in January. The majority of these meetings are conducted by laypersons such as Venique. Although the meetings were interrupted by the earthquake, most churches continued their programs as soon as they could. And people came.

On church-owned properties where people fled for shelter, special worship programs were broadcast two or three times a day in addition to evangelistic meetings in the evenings. The displaced persons living on these sites have expressed appreciation for the spiritual messages that bring them peace and hope in the midst of turmoil.

God is working through His people in Haiti to bring others closer to Him. Our mission offering this quarter will help rebuild some of the 55 churches that were destroyed in the earthquake in January of this year. Another 60 were moderately to severely damaged, and the Adventist university needs to repair or rebuild its dormitories. It will take a record-breaking offering to meet the needs in Haiti, but God will bless as we work together in this time of extreme need. 🌍

MISSION POST

- Adventists in Haiti are a people of faith. Every January most Adventist churches hold evangelistic meetings for two or three weeks. A significant number of these evangelistic series are led by laypersons, such as Venique, or theology students from the university.
- Members actively seek to help those less fortunate in their community. Following the earthquake many congregations pooled their food and money to provide basic meals for those living on their campuses and in their neighborhood.

*See Venique's conversion story at www.AdventistMission.org. Click on "Stories and News," and then "Mission Stories." Click on "God's Gentle Voice."



OUT OF THE ASHES



November 13 | Sebastien

Eight-year-old Sebastien's life has not been easy. He never knew his father, and his mother died when he was 7. He lived with his grandmother in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. On January 12, 2010, he and his grandmother were visiting a friend when the earth shook violently. The walls crumbled, and the floor above fell in, trapping them under tons of debris.

Searching for Life

Sebastien's aunt made sure her own four children were safe, and then she rushed to the house where Sebastien and his grandmother lived. Nothing remained but a pile of rubble. Someone told the aunt that no one inside had survived. Sebastien's aunt wept for her mother and her nephew.

Two days later a neighbor was passing by and heard a voice coming from the rubble. He stopped and listened. Someone was alive under the pile of stones and concrete! It was a child. It was Sebastien.

"Are you alone?" the man asked.

"My grandmother and my friend are here too," Sebastien said. "But they're not moving. I think they may be dead.

My leg is stuck under some rocks, and I can't pull it out."

"Hold on!" the man said. "We'll get you out." Several men began removing rubble in an attempt to reach the boy. But progress was slow.

Sebastien's aunt learned that her nephew was alive but trapped in the rubble. She rushed to the scene and found the men working feverishly to reach Sebastien, but they couldn't reach him before the sun set on the second day. The men had to stop digging. Sebastien begged for someone to stay with him. He didn't want to be left alone.

Freed at Last

Early the next morning two men worked their way into the rubble to free the boy. But after a while one man emerged. "There's not enough room for two people in there," he said. Hours later the second man stumbled out of the ruins carrying Sebastien in his arms. His aunt rushed to his side.

The nearest hospital couldn't provide the care Sebastien needed, so his aunt took him to Haiti Adventist Hospital. There doctors determined that his leg was too badly injured. It had to be

amputated to save his life.

When Sebastien woke up and saw that his leg was missing, he asked to be taken to church so the pastor could pray for him so his leg would grow back.

Tent Home

Sebastien and his aunt moved into a tent on the grounds of the hospital in what doctors labeled the post-op section. There doctors, nurses, and physical therapists—volunteers from several different organizations and many different countries—monitored Sebastien’s progress. He was given crutches and was taught how to live with one leg.

A month after the earthquake, it seems that Sebastien is adjusting well. The only time he isn’t wearing his warm

smile is during his frequent dressing changes or when he talks about the earthquake. He keeps busy playing card games with his new friends on the hospital grounds and talking with the medical staff. And he’s an eager subject for a photo and will try to coax the photographer into letting him take a few pictures too.

Uncertain Future

Living in the camp in front of the hospital is a constant reminder that the future is not certain. For now, Sebastien’s aunt takes care of him, but she isn’t sure how she can give Sebastien the care he needs and provide for her own four children too. She lost her own house and everything she owned in the earthquake, and there are no jobs and no money to buy basic necessities.

Sebastien’s future may be uncertain, but he has a family who loves him and lots of aid organizations that are working with the thousands of people who, like Sebastien, have lost an arm or a leg in the earthquake. But the earthquake has made one thing certain for Sebastien. When he grows up, he wants to be a doctor.

Our mission offerings support the Adventist hospital in Haiti and the teams of medical personnel that have kept the hospital operating during this crisis. And our Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help rebuild the infrastructure of the church in Haiti. Thank you for your ongoing support of mission around the world. 🌍

Michael Wolcott is a video production specialist at Loma Linda University in Loma Linda, California.

MISSION POST

- Haiti Adventist Hospital was established in 1978 by a missionary doctor. A Thirteenth Sabbath Offering in 1977 helped fund the construction of the facility.
- The hospital was well built and suffered only minor damage during the earthquake that hit the area where the hospital, college, and several churches are located.
- Loma Linda University Medical School partners with Haiti Adventist Hospital to help provide equipment and medicines as well as volunteers to operate the hospital. Because of this arrangement, Loma Linda was able to get volunteers to the hospital within a few days after the earthquake.



A THOUSAND HELPING HANDS

November 20 | Loma Linda University Medical team

Our vehicle slowly wove its way through the rubble-strewn streets of Port-au-Prince, Haiti. It had been a month since the earthquake, and much of the rubble still lay where it had fallen. What had once been two- or three-story buildings looked more like sloping and cracked parking lots. Other buildings looked as if someone had poured white bread cubes in a pile.

ADRA's Ministries

A line of women inched along a street in the midday sun. Some held a newspaper or a piece of cardboard to shield their heads from the intense midday sun. They shuffled forward in a line that stretched at least a mile. At the front of the line a sign on a gate in a wall said "ADRA." These women had come for rice and beans that ADRA®, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency, was distributing.

The campus of Haitian Adventist University looked more like a camp meeting than a university. To escape the heat, families huddled under bright-blue tarps that were tied to poles or trees with rope. More than 10,000

people were living on the campus since the earthquake.

Quickly the university staff organized the displaced people into units. ADRA supplied the families with hygiene kits, tarps, and food rations. With the help of public health experts from Loma Linda University, ADRA built temporary showers and dug latrines; they installed a huge water purification system to provide the entire camp with safe drinking water; and they oversaw routine medical care on the campus.

Haiti Adventist Hospital

Next door to the university, Haiti Adventist Hospital had survived the earthquake with little damage. Tents filled virtually every foot of land around the hospital. The tents were the "ward rooms" for patients who needed long-term care. Many patients had lost arms, legs, or fingers as a result of the earthquake. Trained medical personnel from a dozen different countries worked with Loma Linda University to assure that patients received the best care possible under the circumstances.

In the month following the earthquake more than 6,000 patients were treated at this 70-bed hospital.

Loma Linda University has sent hundreds of medical personnel to the hospital.

Gustavo [goo-STAH-voh] and Bien [bee-EHN] are nurses from the Dominican Republic. They spent a week working the 12-hour night shift in the hospital's emergency room. Often they stayed longer until someone came to relieve them. "We just prayed for strength, and God gave it," Bien said.

"The doctors we worked with from Loma Linda were awesome," Gustavo said. "They worked long hours and got their hands dirty to do whatever it took to help people. They were fabulous."

Virtually every group coming to serve in the hospital brings medical supplies with them to resupply the hospital. "If we hadn't had this medicine, people would have died. And knowing that

we helped makes all our discomfort worthwhile," Gustavo added. "I was most impressed by the sheer number of trained medical personnel who came to work. Many took time from their work and their families and paid their own way to come to Haiti just to help."

We Can Be Proud

Our church was on the ground in Haiti when the earthquake struck. ADRA was here, as was the hospital, and many other outreach ministries were in place and ready to do what they could to help others. Our Haitian members lost much in the earthquake, but they stepped up and helped others with food or a tent or a blanket. I saw hope in the eyes of people who have little to hope for in this world. I saw Adventists living in the temporary camps share their hope of eternity with their new neighbors in the tent next door.

On December 18* part of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help the people of Haiti rebuild. Some 55 churches were destroyed, and another 60 were seriously damaged. Several Adventist elementary and secondary schools were damaged or destroyed, and the Haitian Union headquarters was seriously damaged. The Adventist university will have to repair the damaged men's dormitory and rebuild the women's dormitory. The task is overwhelming, but we can help. Through our special offerings and our prayers, we can hold up the hands of our Haitian brothers and sisters. That's the way God's people work. 🌍

*Because the actual thirteenth Sabbath is December 25, your church may choose to celebrate Thirteenth Sabbath a week earlier.

MISSION POST

- Donations to ADRA's effort in Haiti have surpassed US\$3.5 million. These funds have helped thousands and have saved countless lives. This Thirteenth Sabbath, December 18, it's our turn as Adventists to help our brothers and sisters rebuild their churches, schools, and headquarters in Haiti.
- For several years Loma Linda University (LLU) in California, USA, has partnered with Haiti Adventist Hospital to share expertise and equipment. When the earthquake hit, LLU quickly mobilized medical teams and a continuing flow of medicines and medical supplies to the beleaguered hospital.



FORTUNE-TELLER TO FAITHFUL FOLLOWER



November 27 | Enos Adelson

Enos [EE-nohs] sat across a small table from the woman. He watched her eyes move across the cards lying in front of her. The words she mumbled made no sense to him, and the movements of her hands and fingers seemed hypnotic. Finally she looked at him. “Your future.” She paused. Enos waited anxiously for the next words. “You will work hard, have a family, and prosper.”

Enos held his breath, hoping that she would add to her pronouncement. But she had no more to say. Disappointed, he sat back and sighed. *Nothing. She told me nothing I didn't already know.* He stood up, pulled some money from his wallet, and gave it to her. She smiled as she took the money. “Come again, come again,” she said.

Enos walked out into the bright Haitian sunlight. As he made his way home, he mumbled, “Work, family, prosper. No answers to my questions. Nothing to tell me what my future really holds.”

Enchanted by Magic

Enos had grown up in a Christian family, but he had not accepted Jesus

as his Savior. In high school he had become enchanted with fortune-telling and witchcraft. He began to view magic as another avenue to God rather than a tool of Satan. He studied magic and witchcraft and learned to cast spells that would release people from evil spells that had been cast on them. He convinced himself that his power was from God, not the devil. He even

FAST FACTS

- About 95 percent of Haiti's population are of African descent. The remaining 5 percent are mulattoes, mixed European and African. Since independence in 1804 the mulattoes have traditionally made up the ruling elite and control most of the country's wealth.
- Haiti has a high population density (number of people per square kilometer or square mile), but the majority of its population continue to survive by farming small plots of land, where the soil is worn out. As a result, many suffer from malnutrition.

carried a Bible with him, along with his book of magic, and he addressed his prayers to God as well as to Beelzebub.

Startling Dreams

Enos finished school and married. He had become a well-known magician. One night he dreamed that a man dressed in white offered him a Bible. “I have a Bible,” Enos told the man. “Why do I want another one?”

The man in his dream answered, “I want you to do my work.”

Enos was puzzled by the dream, and soon he forgot it. But a few weeks later he had the same dream. Still he didn’t know what the dream meant.

Enos didn’t tell his wife about the dreams, but the next day she invited him to attend evangelistic meetings with her. Enos decided to go. He attended the meetings, and he agreed that what the church taught was the truth, but he didn’t make a decision for Christ. When he admitted to the pastor that he was a magician, the pastor didn’t seem surprised. He simply told him, “Let’s pray that God will show you what He wants you to do about your life and your eternal future.”

When he had another dream, Enos realized that the Man in white must be God. For the first time in years he prayed to God alone. He felt peace fill his heart.

Testing the Spirit

Enos wanted to be sure that it was God calling him, and not Satan. He asked God for a sign. “God,” he challenged, “if You want me to become

Your disciple, I don’t want to wear the same clothes I’ve worn as a magician. Please send me the money to buy new clothes.” Several people owed Enos money, but none had repaid even part of their debt.

Three days later a man repaid a large debt he owed Enos. “I’m going to town to buy some new clothes,” he told his wife. “Then on the way back I’m going to ask the pastor to baptize me!”

When the church board questioned Enos about his work with magic, Enos told them that God had called him out of magic and set his feet on the path of light. He was determined to follow Christ.

Lay Preacher

Enos found work as a salesman, but he dedicates several weeks a year to God to serve as a lay preacher, holding evangelistic meetings in churches throughout Haiti. He loves to tell how God delivered him from Satan’s snares and how God is blessing him and his family. Although he earns far less now than he did when he was involved in magic and witchcraft, his life is so much better now. God has blessed Enos’s efforts with hundreds of decisions for Christ.

Adventist laypeople in Haiti, both men and women, join pastors to hold hundreds of evangelistic series every year. In 2005 part of our Thirteenth Sabbath Offering helped build two evangelistic centers in which to train lay workers in Haiti such as Enos to become more effective tools in God’s hands. 🌐



FOLLOWING GOD ALL THE WAY



December 4 | Yvon Aristil

Yvon [EE-vawn] sat in church, but his mind was far from the service. *God, I have attended this church all my life, he prayed, but I'm not certain that this is where You dwell. If You want me somewhere else, please show me and I will obey.*

Yvon lives in Haiti. His mother died when he was still young, and his father traveled a lot. Yvon stayed with his uncle when his father was away. During the difficult months after his mother's death, Yvon found comfort in his faith. Jesus became his close and faithful friend. But his family's church didn't meet his spiritual needs. *Surely, Yvon thought, God has people somewhere who put Jesus and the Bible first.*

New Truths

One day a friend of Yvon's came to visit. He was an Adventist. Yvon peppered his friend with questions. He had been told that Adventists were a cult, but, as his friend answered his questions, Yvon wondered whether his family was wrong about Adventists. When Yvon asked what the fourth commandment meant, his friend read

from the Bible texts that explained the Sabbath. Yvon was amazed he had never seen this commandment so clearly before.

That night Yvon couldn't sleep. God's words "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God" rang in his mind. Yvon knew that if he obeyed the commandment his family would be angry. But how could he deny such a clear Bible truth? Yvon decided to visit an Adventist church and see for himself whether these people obeyed God's commandments.

A Step of Faith

On Saturday Yvon made his way to the Adventist church. The people welcomed him and shared the Sabbath School lesson with him. The pastor talked about Jesus as if He were his personal friend. Yvon's heart soared. *Could these people be God's true church?* he wondered. *Is this church the answer to my prayers?*

At the end of the sermon, the pastor invited those who wanted to stand up for Jesus to walk to the front of the church. Yvon hesitated. What would his

uncle do if he knew Yvon had visited an Adventist church? Should he stand up for Jesus? Or should he wait a while? Would God expect him to give up his home and his education to follow Him?

The pastor repeated his call, and this time Yvon stood and walked forward. His knees felt like jelly, but the closer he got to the front, the more confident he was that God was answering his prayer and helping him find a church where Jesus dwells.

But when Yvon's uncle learned that Yvon was attending the Adventist church, he became angry. "If you insist on attending that church, I will not pay your school fees or buy you food," his uncle said. Yvon tried to explain to his uncle that he was only trying to follow God's will. His uncle allowed him to remain in the house, but he had nothing more than a bed.

Yvon continued to attend the Adventist church, where he felt peace

and where the pastor's sermons fed him spiritually. But the rest of the week was not so easy. Yvon prayed for a way to continue his studies, and eventually his aunt agreed to help him.

Answer to Prayer

Yvon graduated from high school and planned to study theology at the Adventist university in Haiti. But his family urged him to study medicine and offered to pay his school fees. But they made it clear that they would not support him if he insisted on studying theology. Yvon prayed about his decision and enrolled at the Adventist university in faith that God would provide help. The first semester passed, and Yvon had no sponsor. He kept praying. He knew that God had called him and would make a way for him.

Yvon continued to pray for his family as well as his finances. One day Yvon received a letter from his uncle. "I have been studying the Sabbath, and I believe you are right; the Adventists do preach the truth." But Yvon's uncle was a pastor in another church, and he wasn't ready to change denominations and lose his career. Nevertheless, Yvon was encouraged at God's leading in his life.

One day Yvon's brother told him that he would help Yvon pay his school fees. It was still a financial struggle, but Yvon completed his studies and became a pastor. He speaks with confidence that "He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion" (Philippians 1:6, NIV).

Haitian Adventist University, which is supported by your mission offerings, continues to educate men and women for service to God. 🌍

FAST FACTS

- Haiti has more than 320,000 Seventh-day Adventists. This makes Haiti the largest French/Creole-speaking church region in the world. It continues to grow, primarily because laypersons actively share their faith with others.
- Thousands of parents, both Adventist and non-Adventist, look to our schools to provide quality education and a nurturing environment for their children. Many of our schools were seriously damaged or destroyed in the earthquake.



DIVINE APPOINTMENT



December 11 | Pedro

Dad,” Pedro’s son, Beyckelo [behKEH-loh], said. “Why was the church outing cancelled? I wanted to go swimming today. Could we go anyway, Dad?” the boy pleaded.

“I was looking forward to going too,” Pedro said. “So let’s go!” Mother decided to stay home, so Pedro and his son prepared a lunch and then got on their *moto* (motor scooter). On their way to the river Pedro decided to stop at his friend Luis’s home and invite the family to join them.

“I’m sorry I can’t go,” Luis said. “But maybe my friend José would like to go with you,” Luis offered as he nodded toward his friend nearby. “José needs a friend right now, and a day at the river might be good for him,” Luis added.

Luis introduced Pedro to José, and Pedro invited the man to join them at the river. José nodded his interest and offered to drive Pedro and his son in his pickup. Pedro waved goodbye to Luis and climbed into the pickup after his son.

A Swim and a Talk

When they arrived at the river, Beyckelo raced to the river and splashed in while Pedro and José walked leisurely

to the river’s edge and slid into the water. Pedro kept an eye on his son as the three relaxed in the cooling water. After a while José left the river and sat in the sun to dry off while Pedro and Beyckelo played a game in the water.

When Pedro looked toward shore, he

FAST FACTS

- The Dominican Republic shares the island of Hispaniola with Haiti. While Haitians speak French or Creole (a mixture of French and African languages), Dominicans speak Spanish.
- While not as poor as Haitians, Dominicans still suffer many consequences of poverty, unemployment, and political instability. Fertile land helps this country rise above the abject poverty of its neighbor, Haiti.
- The government has instituted laws forbidding the cutting down of forests. This forward-thinking plan has helped prevent some of the disastrous floods and droughts that Haiti has suffered.

noticed that José looked sad. Pedro told his son that he was going to go talk to José and warned Beyckelo to stay near shore. Then Pedro sloshed toward the shore and up on the bank. He dried off with his towel and then spread it on the ground near José. “You look troubled,” Pedro said, hoping that José would open up to him.

“I guess I am,” José answered as he stared across the river. “I did something I shouldn’t have, and my wife kicked me out of the house,” he began.

“Did you tell Luis about this?” Pedro asked.

“No,” José answered. “I had just stopped to say goodbye when you came. You see,” José hesitated and seemed to struggle with his words, “I planned to kill myself this afternoon.”

Pedro was shocked at José’s revelation and wasn’t sure what to say.

“I don’t know why I am telling you all this,” José said. “I don’t even know you. But I can tell that you’re a Christian, and I feel that I can talk to you.”

Praying for Wisdom

Pedro listened and prayed for wisdom as José talked about his problems and his plan to commit suicide. He even offered to show Pedro the rope he planned to use later that day to end his life.

“I think God had a hand in our meeting today,” Pedro said. “If the church outing hadn’t been cancelled, I wouldn’t have gone to Luis’s home today.” Pedro paused a moment and then added, “I know that God has a plan for your life, José. You just need to find out what that plan is.”

The two men talked together until Beyckelo joined them. Pedro explained

that José wanted to find God’s help with some serious problems and asked his son to join the two men in prayer, asking that José would experience God’s presence and love in his life. The three knelt and prayed together. When they finished, José smiled. While his problems hadn’t gone away, he knew he didn’t have to deal with them alone.

“I can’t believe that a few hours ago we had never met,” José said. “But you cared about me enough to listen to my problems and to pray with me. You’ve helped me believe that God really does have a plan for my life.”

God-ordained Encounter

As afternoon slipped toward evening, the three drove back to Luis’s house. When Luis saw José’s face he knew something good had happened. Pedro nudged José, who told Luis what had happened at the river.

“You looked so troubled when you came here this morning,” Luis said. “I’ve been praying for you all day. I’m glad that you could talk to Pedro. Please know that if you ever need to talk, I’m here for you!”

“It was a God-ordained encounter,” Pedro said. “I’m glad God brought us together.”

José smiled as he climbed into his pickup and waved goodbye. It was evident that he was a different man than he had been that morning. Pedro smiled back, thankful that God had used him to offer the Water of Life to a thirsty soul.

Our mission offerings helped train Pedro to be a lay evangelist in the Dominican Republic. Thank you for helping to reach others through your offerings. 🌍



EVERYBODY'S GRANDPA



December 25* | Carlos Matos

Carlos knelt near the circle that the children had drawn on the ground. His aging knees cracked as he shifted his weight. “Good job!” Carlos cheered as one child knocked a marble out of the circle. Carlos continued watching and cheering each player.

Then it was Rico’s [REE-kohs] turn. The youngster studied the marbles carefully. Then he turned and held out his shooter. “*Abuelo* [ah-BWEH-loh, grandfather] Carlos, will you shoot for me?” Carlos looked at the other children for permission to shoot for Rico. They nodded and made room for him. Carefully Carlos positioned his hand and flicked Rico’s shooter into the circle, scattering several of the smaller marbles and knocking one out of the circle. Rico’s shooter stopped inside the circle.

“Nice shot!” one of the boys said in admiration. Carlos smiled and moved aside so Rico could take his next turn.

Adopted Abuelo

Carlos’s own children are grown, and his grandchildren don’t live nearby. So Carlos has adopted the neighborhood children as his grandchildren. He spends time with them, listens to their

problems, helps them, and laughs with them. He visits their homes and gets to know their parents, too. Everywhere he goes he carries his well-worn Bible.

The neighborhood is poor, and many things other children take for granted, such as new clothes and school supplies, these children don’t have. Some children weren’t going to school because their parents couldn’t afford the basics to send them. Carlos didn’t have much money either, but he was determined to find a way to meet their needs. He started with prayer.

“God prompted me to visit businesses and ask for school supplies for the children,” he says. “Then God told me to ask for money to buy shoes and other things the families need. I filled my empty garage with whatever God sent my way. Soon I had boxes of pens, notebooks, and backpacks for the children.”

As word spread of Carlos’s new mission, parents welcomed him into their home. He offered to study God’s Word with them, and many accepted. The children joined the studies, and even when a parent stopped studying with Carlos, the children asked to continue. And that was OK with Carlos, for God

has given him a heart for children.

Ellie and Elizabeth

Ellie and Elizabeth sat at the worn kitchen table. They sat forward on their chairs, their eyes eager. Carlos asked them questions about the Bible study they had just completed, and the girls competed to be the first to answer. It was obvious that the girls didn't consider studying the Bible as work. They loved it! And Carlos clearly does, too.

He invited the sisters to attend church and join the local Pathfinder Club. He made sure to include the girls' parents in the invitation and hoped that the girls would be able to attend. He knew that their parents appreciated the school supplies, but would they let the girls attend a church they didn't know?

Ellie and Elizabeth's parents gave their permission, and the girls attended church and Pathfinders. Before long the girls joined the pastor's Bible study

class. But the pastor quickly realized that these girls were already prepared for baptism. When their parents gave their consent, the girls were baptized. Their father took the day off from work to attend the baptism, but his work doesn't allow him every Sabbath off. However, he encourages his wife to attend church with the girls, and she's attending evangelistic meetings. The girls look forward to the day when their family will worship God together, right next to Abuelo Carlos.

Everybody's Abuelo

Currently more than 20 children consider Carlos their abuelo. He treats them as he does his own grandchildren, taking them on trips to the botanical gardens, to the river, and anywhere that will refresh their spirits and enrich their lives. He still plays marbles and other games with them, and of course he studies the Bible with them and invites them to learn more about God by attending church. He continues to collect and give out school supplies and encourages the children to study hard. Ultimately he hopes his efforts will help lead them to Jesus.

"I guess I'm just a senior kid at heart," he says, a broad smile breaking across his weathered face. "God has given me a mission field, and it's the kids," he says. "Jesus tells us, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these' [Matthew 19:14, NIV]. I'm just doing what God has told me to do."

Our mission offerings help train laypersons such as Carlos to lead others to Jesus. Thank you for sharing that mission. 🌍

MISSION POST

- The Dominican Republic has more than 260,000 Adventists, or one Adventist for every 43 people.
- Adventists in the Dominican Republic, as in much of the Inter-American Division, place great emphasis on lay evangelism. The active involvement of every member in some form of outreach explains the rapid growth and record-breaking membership in this part of the world.
- The Inter-American Division has more than 3.2 million members, an average of one Adventist for every 83 people. This is the highest ratio of any division in the world church.

THIRTEENTH SABBATH PROGRAM

OPENING SONG	“O Come, All Ye Faithful” <i>The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal</i> , No. 132
WELCOME	Superintendent or Sabbath School teacher
PRAYER	
PROGRAM	“A Lasting Gift”
OFFERING	While the offering is being taken, ask the children to sing one or more of the songs in Creole or French that they have learned this quarter.
CLOSING SONG	“Give of Your Best to the Master,” <i>The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal</i> , No. 572
CLOSING PRAYER	

A Lasting Gift

Participants: Four speakers—a narrator and two speakers, plus a junior-aged child to represent the children’s project. If your group is small, two reporters can present alternating reports. *[Note: participants do not need to memorize their parts, but they should be familiar enough with the material that they do not have to read everything from the script. Practice so that participants can feel comfortable adding inflection where appropriate.]*

Props: A map of the Inter-American Division and of Haiti. (Scan the map on the back page of the quarterly and project it onto a screen, or download the map at www.AdventistMission.org. Photos also are available on the website. Click on “Resources,” “Resources for Leaders,” “Thirteenth Sabbath Projects,” and then on the current quarter.

Speaker 1: It’s Christmastime, a time when we remember the greatest gift ever given to humanity: Jesus. For most of us, this is a time of joy, a time for families and friends to gather, a time to worship and adore God for His wonderful gift to us.

In Haiti this year, thousands of Adventist believers don’t have a church in which to praise God. Since the earthquake that devastated parts of the country almost a year ago, believers have been worshipping under trees, under tarps, or wherever they can.

Today we can make a difference—a huge difference—in the lives and ministry of our brothers and sisters in Haiti. Today we can show them in a tangible way how much we care for them. Let’s meet some Adventist believers and hear their stories.

Speaker 2 [A man]: My name is Iney [ee-NAY]. My wife and I are teachers in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, but our greatest passion is sharing God’s love with others. We love giving Bible studies. We’ve planted one church that now has 300 members, and we hope to plant another.

I lost my leg and some fingers because of the earthquake, but God has seen fit to save my life. I’m learning to walk with crutches now, and soon I hope to go back to work. But the university where I taught was destroyed, so I don’t know whether I will have a job when I’m ready.

Life is uncertain for us right now, but our faith is strong. We know that God won’t forsake us; He has a plan for our lives. We are eager to begin holding Bible studies again with the people we were studying with before the earthquake.

Narrator: Many churches suffered severe damage, and 55 were completely destroyed. At some church sites members have removed the debris with their bare hands so that they can worship on the land where their church once stood and be ready when it’s time to rebuild. That’s the kind of faith people in Haiti have—a faith that goes to work when things look hopeless.

Speaker 3 [a woman]: I’m Venique

[veh-NEEK]. I’m an ordinary member of the Adventist Church. But God has called me and many others to be lay preachers. I love to preach God’s love to people who are thirsty for words of faith. In January of this year I was asked to speak at a series of evangelistic meetings in a church with 2,000 members in Port-au-Prince. The church sits on a rocky outcropping, so I call it the church on the rock.

The meetings were going well and the church was packed. More than half of the people who came were not Adventists.

We were preparing to go to the church for the evening meeting when the earthquake struck. People had to flee their homes, so my children and I found a place on the street to stay. People were lost and crying. I realized how severe the earthquake had been and realized that there would be no meeting at the church that night. I saw that the people surrounding me needed hope, so I preached to them. For two days I preached to them.

Then I learned that the church was planning to restart its evangelistic meetings, so my family and I went to the church. We found it filled with people sleeping under tents. Some had managed to bring mattresses from their homes, but others slept on cardboard on the hard rock.

When the people learned that the meetings would continue, they were glad. We couldn’t meet inside the church because it had received some damage to the roof, and the government wouldn’t let people gather in damaged

buildings. So we met outside.

I repeated some of the messages I had already given because I knew that some people who were staying on the church grounds hadn't heard them. People were so open to the gospel. Many had requested baptism before the earthquake, and they stood firm in their decisions in spite of the turmoil they were living in.

In Haiti our problem isn't bringing people to Christ. It's providing places of worship. Many of our churches have more than one service just to accommodate the people who want to come and spend time with God. And now with so many churches destroyed, it will be twice as difficult to serve the people. But we're not discouraged.

Narrator: Finally, we want you to know that we haven't forgotten our children. The special children's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering project this quarter will be presented by _____ [*name of boy or girl presenting*].

Child: We had a nice church. It was big, and whenever we had worship the church was full. In fact, we had more than one worship service just so everyone could come. I wanted to be on

time for Sabbath School so I could get a good seat!

[*Look down as if sad.*] My church was destroyed in the earthquake. [*Look happier.*] But we still have a church. We worship every Sabbath under a big tarp. Sometimes when it rains, the tarp leaks, and we have to move to the side to stay dry, but we still come. We still sing the same songs, hear great sermons, and listen to our teachers tell us Bible stories.

We have a church; it just doesn't have a building to meet in.

If you help us, we can build our church again. And once again we will have a children's Sabbath School class in which we can sing as loudly as we want and not disturb the adults. The children have saved money all quarter to give today so that the children in Haiti can have a Sabbath School room in our new church.

Narrator: We have heard the challenge. Now it's our opportunity to share with our believers in Haiti the burden of rebuilding the church there. Think of your Thirteenth Sabbath Offering today as a gift to Jesus.

[*Offering*]

LEADER'S RESOURCES

For more information on the culture and history of Haiti, look in the travel section of a local library or online. Type "Haiti" into your search engine.

Visit our website for additional photos, recipes, language pages, puzzles, and other activities that you can download and print to make mission more fun for children. Go to www.AdventistMission.org. Click on "Resources" and "Children's Activities" in the pop-up menu. Go to fourth quarter and select the activity you want.

Adventist Mission DVD is a free video that features stories from the featured countries as well as the worldwide mission of the Adventist Church. Ask your Sabbath School superintendent to make you a copy of it. Or go online at www.AdventistMission.org to download one of the DVD programs.

Embassies and Tourism Offices sometimes can provide interesting information on their country. In North America, contact:

The Embassy of Haiti, 2311 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20008-2802. Phone: 202-332-4090; website: www.Haiti.org.

The Embassy of the Dominican Republic, 1715 22nd Street, NW, Washington DC 20008. Phone: 202-332-6280; e-mail: embassy@us.serex.gov.do; website: www.domrep.org.

Remind members that the ongoing work of the world church depends on the weekly Sabbath School mission offerings. On the twelfth Sabbath, report on mission giving during the quarter. Explain that one quarter of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering is dedicated to the special projects featured this quarter. The remaining three quarters goes into the world mission fund with the weekly mission offerings.

Because this quarter the last Sabbath of the year falls on December 25, feel free to move your special Thirteenth Sabbath promotion to December 18. Encourage church members to give their Thirteenth Sabbath Offering in a tithe envelope clearly marked "Thirteenth Sabbath Offering" so that the church's treasurer will know how to credit it.

FUTURE THIRTEENTH SABBATH PROJECTS

First quarter 2011 will feature the Southern Asia Division. Special projects include:

- classroom blocks for three Adventist high schools in Kerala, Maharashtra, and Tamil Nadu
- One church in each of the eight sections (unions) and fields.

Second quarter 2011 will feature the Euro-Asia Division, with special projects in Siberia and Azerbaijan.

ADVENTIST MISSION

FOURTH QUARTER 2010 INTER-AMERICAN DIVISION

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INTER-AMERICAN DIVISION

ATLANTIC OCEAN



UNIONS	CHURCHES	MEMBERSHIP	POPULATION
Belize	75	33,364	329,000
Caribbean	589	211,244	3,682,006
Central Mexican	171	67,243	36,752,233
Colombian	1,169	275,272	45,065,000
Cuban	273	29,533	11,225,000
Dominican	618	260,805	10,090,000
French Antilles-Guiana	135	29,362	1,077,000
Guatemala	693	211,069	14,027,000
Haitian	473	335,751	9,242,000
Inter-Oceanic Mexican	964	162,162	27,358,656
Mid-Central American	1,045	421,138	14,805,000
North Mexican	487	120,304	36,083,612
Puerto Rican	296	37,114	3,971,000
South Central American	652	260,050	13,632,000
South Mexican	1,032	288,847	9,415,499
Venezuela-Antilles	814	219,980	28,636,994
West Indies	678	269,620	3,136,000
TOTALS	10,145	3,232,946	268,528,000

June 30, 2009

PROJECT:

- 1 Help rebuild or repair churches and dormitories at the Adventist university that were damaged or destroyed in the 2010 earthquake.
- 2 CHILDREN'S PROJECT: Help provide children with school uniforms, shoes, and textbooks as they return to school.

