

On November 10, 2008, I set out on my first Mission Trip to Haiti flying from Ft. Lauderdale, FL to Port au Prince. As I flew over Haiti for the first time in my life, I was so affected by the beauty of the mountains, greener y, and the Caribbean. One would actually think they were flying to a tropical paradise, rather than the poorest country in the entire world.

My brother, Richard Felmey, and his wife, Beverly, live in Montrouis, Haiti where they founded the Feed My Sheep (FMS) Ministry. I was on the journey of my life as we traveled from Port au Prince to Montrouis, with mountains to the East and the exquisite Caribbean to the West. The journey was long, bumpy, and dusty. The scenery was likened to the Garden of Eden filled with God's beauty beyond belief. As we drove through several villages, we saw Haitians bathing in ditches, carrying heavy loads upon their heads, chasing our Trooper begging for money, and the lack of sanitation unlike anything I had ever witnessed, as roadside garbage dumps are the norm in Haiti.

A white woman with blonde hair is an oddity to the Haitians. Many smile and wave, the little children shout, "Blah" (for white), and others stare a hole through your entire being. An automobile filled with missionaries and a Haitian Mission Director, Roland, creates much curiosity to these loving and spiritual people.

We arrived at the FMS mission compound by sunset over the Caribbean, a beautiful sight. The compound is walled in, with a gate, a security team, and a big black dog, named Lucky. Richard and Beverly have lived among a sector of Montrouis (over 40,000 people) for over 10 years. They are dearly loved, protected, and sought after for attention, affection, God's healing, God's Word, and God's loving hand. Immediately surrounding the compound are many villagers. They laugh a lot, they love our Lord, and they are the happiest people I have ever encountered in my lifetime. Though they have nothing, they have everything, because they love our Lord and they know He loves them.

The only VooDoo witch in this sector has converted to Christianity. She attends prayer meetings regularly and loves not only her fellow villagers, but also our Lord. She hugged my neck and in English said, "God bless you", to which I replied, "Jesi remi ou, or Jesus loves you".

When you go on a mission trip to FMS Ministry in Montrouis, you really don't have any idea what to expect. You hope to be able to spread God's love in a totally poverty-stricken country and help in some way to make a difference. I can honestly tell you that you will never feel more loved, more accepted and cherished as a child of God, than you will in Haiti. These loving and happy people appreciate everything you come to do with them, including coloring in a coloring book filled with Bible stories, tutoring them in basic addition and subtraction, teaching them a few words in English as you learn Creole from them, just holding their hands, giving them food and nourishing their souls with God's overwhelming love for them. Their prayer meetings and church services are remarkable. They know Bible verses and hymns by heart and they worship with all of their hearts and souls for hours at a time.

My church, Northeast Presbyterian (NEPC) in St. Petersburg, FL, sent \$500 with me to purchase rice for the masses as multiple hurricanes had just devastated Haiti and people are starving. FMS Ministry purchased 750 pounds of rice with the money sent from (NEPC) and fed thousands during my mission trip. We attended many church services and prayer meetings where we distributed rice to the hungry.

Feed My Sheep Ministry does so much for so many that it's mind-boggling while you're there. Children are sponsored for \$25 per month in the mission school, which provides uniforms, books, tuition and supplies. The school services grades 1-12. The children are taught Bible Study, mathematics, science, social studies, English and reading. All of the students are sponsored and fed and for many, that's the only meal they receive each day. Churches sponsor the lunch program at \$175/mo. which feeds 410 children, one day per week, each month. My church, NEPC, will be sponsoring the lunch program, one day per week, per month beginning in January, 2009.

At the mission compound, you will willingly do without the comforts of home, yet you will feel so blessed. Everyone you encounter will amaze you. The Mission Vocational Center, near the FMS Ministry Compound, where visiting missionaries bunk, teaches trades, provides for a free clinic manned by Dr. Bolte, and Wednesday night prayer meetings. A team of missionaries from PA will arrive on January 3, 2009 to put a roof on the Vocational Center. Teams work on diverse construction projects from churches, to the school, to homes destroyed by hurricanes, to wells for drinking water and holes in the ground used as toilets, to witnessing, tutoring, taking food to the orphanage, and providing Bible school for children. God has given us all different talents, which are welcomed, needed, and appreciated in Montrouis.

From the moment I was commissioned by my church, Northeast Presbyterian in St. Petersburg, FL, the day before my departure, I had a sense of peace and God's protection. I felt God's love and encouragement throughout this mission trip. I never felt threatened or unsafe. Our interpreters, Roland, the Haitian FMS Mission Director, and Gary, the Haitian FMS Head of Security were always there for us. They worked diligently as our connection to the Haitians and helped us bring God's Word and love to them. These are good men with a strong love for God, their families, and their people.

I can honestly write that this trip has changed my life. No Christian could ever go to Haiti and not be changed forever. I have appreciated my country more since my return, all of God's blessings, and the many things, such as basic food, air conditioning, a stove, a refrigerator, safe drinking water, indoor plumbing, a bathtub or shower with hot water, and the list goes on and on. We truly are so very blessed in the United States of America.

I would encourage churches to send teams to witness to the Haitians, share God's love and gifts with the Haitians, and to make this journey of a lifetime. Furthermore, as a former elementary and middle school teacher, as well as a public school dean, I would encourage churches and parents to send teens on a mission trip to Montrouis. Our children need to understand the many blessings they have and share their many talents and blessings with the villagers of Montrouis. This would prove to be an experience they would never forget and a new appreciation for all the blessings of God they have in their lives.

I was happy to get home, but I can't wait to go back. My church will be sending a team in 2009. My husband and I plan to be a part of that team. We pray that we can share God's love and our talents and gifts with these special people as a part of the Feed My Sheep Ministry.

In Christ's Love,
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