

# PONTIFICAL MISSION SOCIETIES

## A Face of Hope to Haiti

**By Sandy Bertini**

Pontifical Mission Societies Coordinator

When disaster struck Haiti this year, the Arlington Diocese's Pontifical Mission Societies were quick to respond. After holding a prayer service for victims and support workers affected by the earthquake, the Societies sent funds to cover immediate as well as long-lasting needs of the Haitians. Here is a "thank you" we received. We share this with you, the parishioners of the Arlington Diocese, because it is through your donations to us that we are able to accomplish such wonderful work in Haiti:

"Dear Fr. Pat (Father Patrick Posey is the Diocesan Director for the Pontifical Mission Societies of the Arlington Diocese),

Your contribution and your deep concern for the victims of the earthquake in Haiti have been beyond any expectation I had when asking for financial assistance. Your wonderful response propelled me into action to fill the list of medicines and badly needed supplies requested by our contacts in St. Damien's Children's Hospital in Haiti. I just want you to know what a blessing it has been to be able to go out immediately and get whatever has been requested in the aftermath of the tragedy. A communication and transportation system was quickly organized following the earthquake. Buses and trucks from the Dominican Republic, filled with requested supplies and medicines, left every other day to travel overland to Haiti.

On the return trip, they carry those patients who will go to specialized hospitals. Our first patient, an elderly woman, Rose, arrived in a wheelchair. She is a blind diabetic who had been ten days without dialysis. Doctors here were able to stabilize her and begin treatment. Some of the more serious cases came over by helicopter. I met two children suffering from leukemia and lymphoma and took them to our Children's hospital where they are receiving chemotherapy.



Smiling for the camera, a young Haitian girl finds delight in a pair of donated glasses.

On most mornings, I would get a call from NPH, an orphanage here, asking if we could get things like IV solutions, catheters, injection needles, sterile gowns for surgeons, anesthesia, analgesics, antibiotics, sedatives, suture materials and materials for casts, pressed cotton, and crutches (LOTS of crutches). Thanks to you, we could make their wish lists realities. It is only within the past week that we have begun to fill other types of requests. One sees the shift into long term planning for housing – using family-size tents. Every available tent in the DR was quickly bought up, so we are asking family and friends to buy them and ship them to us. We have also engaged friends to collect liquid infant formula as the water, now contaminated, presents a problem when trying to prepare formulas for the babies.

Many orphaned and abandoned children have been gathered into little camps in the capital city during the day to keep them together and out of harm's way. Feeding them is a challenge, but we have supplied them with thousands of portions of "Plumpy Nut", a highly fortified peanut butter mixture which once saved many in Africa. The camp director relies on this contribution to make hundreds of sandwiches.

This is but a small smattering of what we have been able to do in your name. We want you to know that your donation is very much appreciated and we daily remember you with love and gratitude. God bless you!"

People often ask us, "What are the Pontifical Mission Societies?" We answer, "We are the face of hope, of love and of God to those who need Him the most." We are the people of the diocese, sending care and comfort to Haiti. We ask for your continued prayers for Haitians, as well as for Chileans still suffering from the earthquake, and for the people of the Islands in the Pacific devastated by cyclones this past week. To all of you, from all of them, thank you, and God bless.



Italian technicians, bringing donated state-of-the-art prosthetics to Haiti, gave 10 children in two days a new life.



Hailing from Seattle, Washington, a team of pediatric orthopedic surgeons performed over 300 surgeries in one month.



In the aftermath of the earthquake, emergency medical treatment was administered in the courtyard of St. Damien Children's Hospital.

If you have been touched in some way to help the missions continue to help the poor, the lonely and those in need, please consider mailing a gift to:

The Society for  
**THE PROPAGATION  
OF THE FAITH**  
...a Pontifical Mission Society  
**Rev. Patrick Posey, 905 Park Avenue,  
Falls Church, VA 22046**

Enclosed is my gift for the Missions...

\$500  \$250  \$100  \$50  \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (other)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

