

Desolate images of Haiti spur determination



Tom Ecker

This child was fortunate enough to have been treated at Sister Isabel's clinic, which visitors said was among the cleanest and best-financed places they saw. While sick children are cared for, the staff teaches their mothers nutrition, sewing, reading and writing.

Retreat changes lives of Penfield parishioners

By Teresa A. Parsons

A child scooping water from a garbage-strewn gutter into a pitcher.

An old man's ulcerated leg, which continues to fester despite two years of treatment.

A children's prison where more than 350 youngsters live 150 to a room — some guilty of stealing, others only of being abandoned.

Streets crowded with people sitting, begging, waiting, trying to sell meager wares to others without the money to buy.

These are among the memories 11 parishioners from St. Joseph's, Penfield, brought back from a seven-day working retreat in Haiti.

When they left in April, their luggage was loaded with medical supplies and donations. Nevertheless, the visitors agreed that Haiti made a far greater impact on them than they did on Haiti.

Eating, for instance, has not been the same since then — excess and waste are repugnant.

A new respect for clean water remains with Donna Ecker, a member of the staff at Bethany House in Rochester.



Tom Ecker

This is Boston, but it's a long way from Massachusetts. Located in the capital city of Port-au-Prince, the legendary slum takes its name from inhabitants' dreams of a better life in the U.S. city.

"We ran out of water about twice a day ... and our accommodations were gorgeous compared to how most of the people live," she said.

Despite the overwhelming poverty and desolation, Donna Gmelin discovered unexpected hope and inspiration in the people who live and work in Haiti — People like Michael Geilenfeld, a young American who offers love and shelter to homeless boys; Sis-

ter Isabel, whose clinic treats sick children and educates their mothers; and Sister Elda, whose novitiate provides young women an alternative to life in the streets.

Their dedication ensured that retreatants returned determined rather than defeated.

"We feel a sense of responsibility to make people aware of this," Ecker said. "To ask, 'If we're all in this world together, what's our responsibility to one another?'"

AQUINAS INSTITUTE THEN AND NOW



Over the years Aquinas graduates have won their share of college scholarships and this year is no exception, according to Fr. Peter Etlinger, C.S.B., senior guidance counselor. Academic scholarships or New York State Regents Scholarships this year went to 32 seniors, about one-quarter of the Class of 1986. The financial assistance for seven outstanding scholars ranges from \$25.00 from the Margaret Carr Maplewood Association to one-half tuition at St. John Fisher, Notre Dame, Marquette, Chatham College and R.I.T.

Tracy Swetz, daughter of Thomas and Marlene Swetz, will be attending Notre Dame on a half-tuition scholarship. She also won a National Merit Scholarship to Duke and a scholarship to Texas A and M. Tracy hopes to pursue a career in medicine as a surgeon.

Jack Holt, son of Mary C. Holt, won an Empire State Scholarship of Excellence given to the top 1000 Regents Scholars in the state. He'll use his \$2,000 at R.I.T. where he also won an Alumni Scholarship. Jack hopes to be an astronautical engineer.

Susan Triassi, daughter of Michael and Victoria Triassi, won a partial scholarship to Marquette. She plans to study physical therapy.

St. John Fisher college has enrolled two Aquinas graduates on scholarship. David Philippone, whose parents are John and Eileen Philippone, won a President's Scholarship. He will pursue a career in law. Jeff Goldstone, son of William and Eunice Goldstone, earned an Admissions Scholarship, and he hopes to study for a career as a real estate investor.

Karla Cunningham, daughter of Margaret and Richard Springler, won a half-tuition scholarship to Chatham College in Erie, PA. She'll be taking pre-med courses.

Carl Scarpulla, son of Carl and Delores Scarpulla, will be applying his National Merit Scholarship to R.I.T. where he'll be studying law enforcement. Carl also won a scholarship to the University of Miami.

When asked which teachers best prepared them for these scholarships, the seven said that the entire faculty was responsible. Three of the students singled out Fr. John Ward, their math teacher, for his patience and the confidence he gave them. Three pointed to their English teachers, Fr. James Kelly and Mrs. Anita Tortorella. They appreciated the individual attention they gave them, plus the letters of recommendation they wrote. Two mentioned Mrs. Vilma Goetting, their AP Biology teacher, whom they admired for "her ability to get the point across."

These and other scholarship winners will be announced at the Commencement Exercises for Aquinas at 3:00 PM on Sunday, June 29 at the Auditorium Theater.

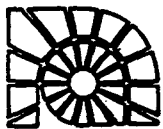
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