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Passionist Mission Haiti

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In Season and Out of Season

By Hugo, CP

A few months ago, I found Nopales here in Haiti. Nopales, a type of cactus, are part of the diet for most Mexicans. Nopales are delicious and nutritious. I was able to get some nopales and decided to learn how to grow them.

Nopales can only really thrive in dry climates. To make things worse, I got my nopales during the beginning of the rainy (Hurricane) season here in Haiti. I asked a few friends and watch a few tutorials and decided to plant them

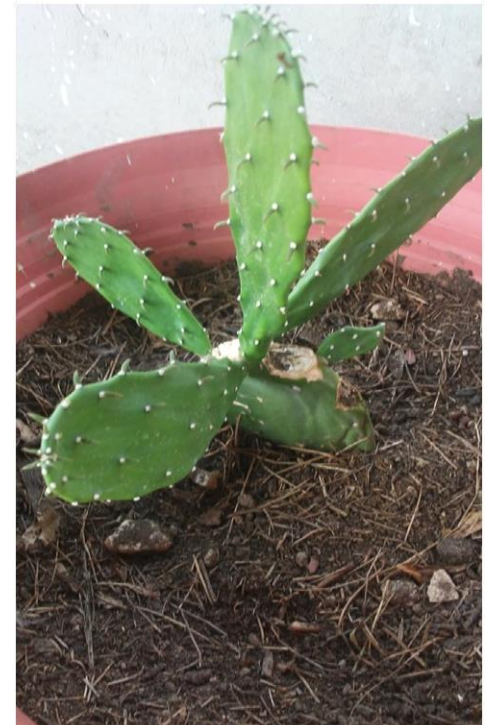
I was warned that due to the humidity and inappropriate weather my nopales may not make it.... Or that would have to provide extra care for them. Although out of season and with all the circumstances against us, I went for it! I had to find the right type of dirt, the right type of place for sunlight, and little to no-water

for them to begin to grow. I had a bad feeling about it. My gut was telling me that they would most likely rot due to too much water and not enough sunlight. I took extra care to grow my nopales and, more so, the risks to see it all fail.

Four months after I planted them, I must report that only one of the cactus died and the six others are growing. They are not growing as fast as I thought but they are slowly but surely gaining size. My little experiment with nopales is the story of my life and work here in Haiti.

Since September 2019, Haiti has been plagued with violence due to our political instability.

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My nopales are thriving. I cannot wait to prepare them for one of my meals.

In Season ... *(continued)*

The current government together with the oppositions has taken our country hostage. Monferrier Dorval, head of the bar association in the capital, Port-au-Prince, was killed after a radio interview where he spoke against the current situation of the government, who is basically in a dictatorial mode with no other powers for checks and balances.

During 2020, the country experienced rapid currency depreciation and rampant inflation. The American Dollar lost 40 percent of its value in the

Country. The price of Gasoline, Diesel, and basic food items were not lowered.

Also, Tropical Storm Laura hit Haiti. While Laura did not cause massive deaths, it hit close to home. A 29-year-old mother and physician was dragged by the torrents to her death. Unfortunately, Doctor Jessica drowned together with her baby boy no more than three miles from our home. Dr. Jessica had finished her internship at St. Damien's Children Hospital a year before her tragic death.

In these few days of 2021, we have seen social insecurity skyrocket. There were at least 40 kidnappings reported during the first weekend of this New Year.

At least two priests and a woman religious (all Haitians) were victims. Luckily, all of them have been released after paying hefty ransoms. On top of this, robberies are rampant. One of

our interns was robbed outside our gates as she was coming to teach in our Adult Academy.

Although I take all the necessary precautions, I feel afraid of being robbed or kidnaped. However, the thought of leaving Haiti has not crossed my mind. I do not feel emboldened, that is not who I am. I wrestle with my fear and try to overcome it every day. I feel a sense of duty to continue to be present to the dozen families we serve even if the circumstances seem so bleak. I have to take the risk to continue planting out of season. I just have to do it with more care for my life, the life of those we serve, and with deep reverence to life and its goodness, just like I have been doing with my nopales.



Barricades with burning tires are set up in strategic places of the Capital, Port-au-Prince as the oppositions demand the outing of the current government.

BR. DANIEL'S VISIT

During three months we had the blessing to receive Br. Daniel Guiveas, CP. Br. Daniel is doing a pastoral year. He joined us to complement our work and presence in Haiti.

Br. Daniel offered a course of English for the volunteers in our pastoral center. He was also involved in developing our murals.

The time went by very fast and Br. Daniel was a positive presence to work and to our community. We pray that the time Br. Daniel spent in Haiti helped him grow in his commitment and vocation as a Passionist.

Br. Daniel celebrated his 35th birthday with us in Haiti.



MISSION AND PROGRAMS



Young Women Support Group

Our young women from Kominote Rit-Naomi participated in a workshop to end violence against women in Haiti.



This mural is the fruit of the reflection of our young in our Little Stones Program. After they studied the violent context of our country they decided to put what they learned through art.

To love Haiti: You must love its culture, its people and land.

To NOT Kill Haiti: Is to construct, to protect and better the country.



Our young know how to serve

Before we painted our murals we decided to clean the area. The adjacent street to our property is known to be hot spots for robberies. Our witness for the peace began by us showing that we care for our spaces.

Our Passionist Mission in Haiti

Our Passionist presence as a mission officially began in 2015 in Port Au Prince Haiti. Through our journey here we have discerned how we are called to accompany and preach Christ Crucified with and to our Haitian brothers and sisters.

children are not in school because of lack of money. This prompted us to open a physical space for the community to carry out our initiatives. Hence, SPPHaiti. You can learn more about our work through our web page (www.spphaiti.com).

San Pastoral Pasyonis Haiti (SPPHaiti)

SPPHaiti is a project of the Passionist Community in Haiti.

Our vision is to become **MANY HANDS AND ONE-HEART** as we carry out our mission to create local alternatives to **SERVE, UPLIFT, and EMPOWER** our neighbors in Port-au-Prince.

OUR PROGRAMS 2020-2021

Pi Pre Fanmi (Prepared Families): This is our food solidarity program. Every month we share food with 100 vulnerable families. Each family is asked for a small donation. This donation is used to buy building materials to help some of these same families better their houses. So far, we have been able to fundraise enough money to continue this program until May 2020. We need \$3,000 USD a month to keep our program going.

This work began in 2017. Through relationship building with our neighbors, a few of their needs were addressed. We began helping people better the quality of their homes by sharing building materials with them. We also began to address the needs of the sick in the community. Through this work, other possibilities were addressed like the lack of toilets or latrines, easy access to water, and the fact that the majority of

Konbit Pierre Toussaint: This is a year-long internship for Haitian University Students. Through a monthly stipend, training, and community building these interns help our weekly Adult Academy and our Children's Program, Little Stones. Our Goal for 2021-2022,



Our New Normal

To ensure the wellbeing of all our children we have committed ourselves to healthy social distancing, wearing our face-covers and to the continual washing of our hands during our Little Stones Kids' Program



is to be able to have 10 interns to help us serve.

We need to fundraise \$1,500 USD per intern.

Little Stones Program: We strive to create a weekly space for our children (6 to 17 years old) through human and religious formation. We offer breakfast every week for over 100 children and for 25 adult volunteers. We need \$300 USD a week to keep our program going.

Akadey SPP: This is our Adult Academy for men and women learning basic academic skills. We serve 25 adults in different levels of knowledge. We also have a computer class. Our goal is to have 20 laptops to continue our service to our youth and adults (so far we have 7 laptops).

Menm Kontre (Lazed Hands): This initiative for entrepreneurs. After formation in basic business planning, 5 workshops, we seed \$400 USD for our participants to start or continue their business. We ask for a return of 25% of our seed money. So far we had 6 women go through our pilot program. Our goal for 2020-2021 is to work with 5 entrepreneurs.

Kay Sen Gabriel Ospitalite: Our hospitality house is an initiative that will begin in February 2021. We will open our Ex-seminarians' house for young women who are studying or working in our area. We have a safe and dignify space for at least 10 young women. We will offer a living space in exchange for 5 hours of work a week.

Konminote Rit-Naomi: This a support group for young women.

In the spirit of Ruth and Naomi, from the Bible, our young women help each other develop a dream and reach it for their life. Our commitment is to help these young women with scholarships to further their academic life.

Kominote Ebe-Nassi (from Slaves to Princes): This a support group for young men who are searching for masculinity that is life-giving for all. Our commitment is to help these young women with scholarships to further their academic life.



Support our Mission

For 300 years, The Passionists have provided ministry, hope, and support to those our Founder, *St. Paul of the Cross*, said are the “crucified” of today.

He wanted to keep the Passion of Christ *alive* in the words and actions of all Passionist Priests, Brothers, and those connected through their work with the Order.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

You can visit us at:

www.spphaiti.com

Instagram: @SPPHaiti

Please consider making a one-time or recurring gift to our Mission here in Haiti. A recurring gift goes a very long way to the ongoing support of our work.

You can find the opportunity to give via credit card on our safe and secure form through our Congregation’s website:

thepassionists.org/give/donate

The generosity of our few but faithful benefactors have allow us to support our friend Marthine.

Marthine is 30 something year-young, nurse and mother of 3 who is battling cancer since February 2020. We thank all of our benefactors for their support that has given Marthine a fighting chance.



Marthine and her children.