

January 14, 2010

Hello Friends,

After driving by night to Kennedy Airport January 12th, and flying to the Dominican Republic January 13th, Conan and I arrived to Haiti this morning in the helicopter of the President of the Dominican Republic. This ride was due to the reputation of NPH in the Dominican Republic, NPH Italy, a reputation enhanced in the DR by Andrea Bocelli not long ago.

Our first tasks were the medical evacuation of one of our American volunteers, the medical evacuation of one of our Cuban doctors and the evacuation of the body of one of our American visitors. The search still continues in the rubble for another missing American volunteer, Molly.

We also had 18 funerals today. One for John who works at our St Luke program. We miss John very much. He often stopped to at my door to tell me the milestone of his developing baby, which delighted him no end. John ran our computerized language lab. Another was for Johanne's mother. Joanne is one of the Directors of the St Luke program. All the others were of unknown people who were sadly rotting by the wayside.

Other sadnesses...the death of Immacula, our only physician assistant, who worked at our huge outpatient side of our hospital. The death of ALL but one of Joseph Ferdinand's brothers and sisters, the death of the husband of Jacqueline Gautier as he was visiting a school which fell and all the students (all died), the death of our ex-pequeno Wilfrid Altisme who was in his 5th year of seminary for priesthood. Other stories of deaths of people who are dear to us keep coming in.

We spent the rest of the time managing the countless people with serious and severe wounds, coming to our hospital. We are doing our best for them, under trees and in the parking lot with ever diminishing supplies. We will work throughout the night and beyond. No stores are open, no banks are open. Diesel is running out. Will be out in two days if we don't find a solution, which will mean no power at all. The hospital is without water since there is some broken line between the well and the water tower.

Structural damages to the hospital seem superficial at first glance, but about half the outer perimeter walls have fallen. The old hospital in Petionville is in ruins, and teams of workers, led by Ferel, and been digging for Molly non-stop around the clock.

**WE HAVE NO INTERNET. OUR PHONES DO NOT WORK. IF A CALL DOES GET THROUGH WE CAN'T HEAR OR BE HEARD.** Robin has internet access through a satellite. I asked her to send this message for me, and to read my emails and answer them as best she can for now.

Please continue to pray for us. We pray for you too.

Fr. Rick Frechette