

Food for the Poor Brings Hope to Millions

Among the many stories you will read on the website for *Food for the Poor*, a Christian relief organization that works in 17 countries throughout the Caribbean and Latin America, is that of a woman from Jamaica, Yanique.

In her story:

“Sometimes, I just feel like giving up on life,” Yanique cried. Every day she would wake up, desperately wondering how she would feed her little girls, especially 2-month-old Kaleela. Yanique had no money to buy food, and sadly knew that to feed her baby girl, she was going to have to beg for some juice.

The shack Yanique lived in in Jamaica was a tiny, decaying chicken coop. And when it rained, there was no escaping the water blowing into the coop and soaking everything, including the children and the bed. “Everywhere there is mud and water,” she said. As a result, her precious little girls were often sick. “Every time it rain, they get sick with colds,” Yanique said.

Through the loving compassion and kind generosity of donors, Yanique and her precious little girls sleep soundly each night on comfortable beds, in a safe, secure and dry Food For The Poor home.

Similar stories are shared by our parishioners who over the years have gone each year to Haiti and the Dominican Republic to help people in need, or by our youth who have done many service projects. I remember one year when I was at Holy Name of Jesus, youth in a summer program went into north Minneapolis just north of downtown. There was an elderly family there in the neighborhood they were helping out in, and they were afraid to even come to the door when they would knock. Over the course of the week though, as the youth did yard work for them, they would leave beverages for them, open the blinds, and by the end of the week opened the door and were conversing with them, no longer living in constant fear. Such is the power of hope.

Next weekend on August 20th and 21st, our parish will be welcoming Fr. Glen Baptiste, who works with Food for the Poor. As their title suggests, the organization helps with food and combating malnutrition, but this is just part of many things they do to help bring hope to Third World nations of the Caribbean and Latin America. Their vision is to link the church of the First World with that of the Third World. Churches, clergy and lay leaders all work together in their mission. Since 1982 when founded, they have provided nearly \$16 billion dollars in aid. They combat poverty through building homes as in Yanique’s story; they build schools, building, repairing and expanding 21 in just the first half of 2020 alone; they help provide safe drinking water, completing nearly 3,000 water projects over the last decade to give water and sanitation to hundreds of thousands of people in need; they help abandoned and orphaned children, supporting over 7,000 orphaned and abandoned children in 176 children’s homes, and work with 24 children’s homes in Haiti, 9 in El Salvador, 20 in Nicaragua and 45 in Honduras, and they also

help with medical care, bringing in pharmaceuticals and medical supplies and equipment to the countries they serve.

You can read more about *Food for the Poor* on their website, foodforthe poor.org, including reading more testimonials, their financial reports so you know where the money goes, and also more on their mission.

Because of the generosity of donors, this year Food for the Poor through June 30th had delivered over 71 million meals, built 747 homes, and provided 1,071 tractor-trailers of aid.

On the mission page of their website, you'll read: Food for the Poor "strives to reflect God's unconditional love. It's a sacrificial love that embraces all people regardless of race or religion. We believe that we can show His love by serving the "least of these" on this earth as Christ challenged us to do in Matthew 25. We pray that by God's grace, and with your support, we can continue to bring relief to the suffering and hope to the hopeless.

Each one of our gifts make such a big difference. Much like the boy who tossed one starfish back into the sea when thousands were washed up and the old man asked why he was bothering and he said "it makes a difference for this one," our actions of love have a similar impact. Mother Teresa couldn't get rid of the poverty in Calcutta let alone the world, but she would nonetheless smile and attend to the poor with compassion and love, so that they knew this unconditional love of God. Like thousands others joined her, so do we as we stand in solidarity with the poor through our actions of mercy.

Thank you for welcoming Fr. Glen next weekend and for your generosity in helping those in need.

God bless!
Fr. Paul