

St. Mark Church in Grange Hill, Westmoreland, Jamaica

BY FR. JOE HUND, O.F.M.

IN THE YEAR 1997 the Daughters of Divine Love, a community of Nigerian Sisters, were assigned in the town of Grange Hill and started evangelizing their neighbors and others in that town to become members of the Roman Catholic Church. In a very short time with the assistance of St. Joseph lay leaders, a Christian community was formed and began meeting and worshipping at a classroom at the Grange Hill Elementary School. This new community chose the name of St. Mark and planned one day to have their own church and proper place to worship. Over the years lay leaders were trained and the youth were organized and they carried on activities like any parish or church community.

A breakthrough for the St. Mark Community in reaching their dream to have their own church came when the Ministry of Education agreed to lease land next to the Grange Hill Primary School for a church. The lease is in the process of being formalized between the Diocese of Montego Bay and the Ministry.

With this new development, blue prints were prepared and submitted to the Westmoreland Parish Council and the council approved the construction of a church building at the Grange Hill site.

In 2005 a parish twinning covenant was signed between St. Monica-St. George and St. Joseph and its missions. At the first visit of the St. Monica-St. George Twinning Core Group to Jamaica, the members visited St. Mark Community which is a mission of St. Joseph. During that visit the need for constructing a church building in Grange Hill was revealed. Later it was decided by St. Monica-St. George to extend assistance to the St. Mark Community for the construction of their church building.

Funds for the building construction come from generous coin collection Sundays at St. Monica-St. George Church. Funds also are generated locally by St. Mark harvest dinners and St. Joseph concert fund raisers and coin collections. We are seeking



assistance from other funding organizations.

On April 2, 2006, church members gathered for the ground breaking ceremony officiated by Bishop Dufour at the Grange Hill construction site. Construction of the foundation started in May 2006 and continues as funds are made available. Some church members are volunteering their labor in clearing the land, digging the foundation and night watch duty.

Needless to write that the St. Mark Church members and DDL Sisters are thrilled to see the progress and thus the “soon come” realization of their dream to have their own church. They are very grateful for the assistance and support from their twin sister church St. Monica-St. George.

Construction of a church for St. Mark Community in Grange Hill, Jamaica, is underway. The church will be located near the Grange Hill Primary School.



Workmen and volunteers save on cost by manually mixing concrete for pouring into the foundation of the building.

My Stay in Cincinnati

BY CAMILLE GOULDBOURNE

This is my attempt at recollecting my time spent in Cincinnati last year October from the 13-18th. I arrived at the Friar's house where I would be staying with some of the girls who lived there and attending a retreat. Being that we had arrived in the nighttime I was yet to behold the beauty of the country which I saw when I awoke and looked through my window at the browns, reds, greens, yellows, gold of the trees and blue contrasting skies above them. Being one's first time seeing a squirrel I was frozen in one spot just watching this fluffy creature bounce from trees to cars and

smores, sing campfire songs and much more.

On another occasion we went canoeing and my team almost capsized (after going in circles for a while because I couldn't steer), trying to splash the others who were speeding past us on the lake. On the last day we went rock climbing. Needless to say I didn't climb (I was too busy trying to keep myself from freezing to death yet again). When we arrived back in town I was just in time for youth mass where I presented gifts. I learned of all I missed the food, the game and the parade! (I forgot in a while I would have lost all my teeth from eating candy had I gone, so everything happens for a reason!)

Luz took us shopping, picnicking in the park dedicated to Cincinnati and they had a lot of little pigs mounted all over. We also went to a museum where we learned about the Underground Railroad system to help free slaves and a whole lot more.

The experience was wonderful. The people were great and I miss them a lot (especially Luz's cat and the other cat I didn't get to see). I hope they enjoyed their stay here in Jamaica as I did in their country. It was really exceptional, wonderful and fun and kind! Thank you very much!



Camille Gouldbourne sits outside the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center.

taunting the hawks as they went along. I daren't move as I didn't want to startle them away. Then my drive came for me and I was off to the retreat.

We reached the retreat and I found that the air was very cold compared to home. The campsite was beautiful. We were divided into groups and given topics to discuss. We had a good time (I was even taught how to play football by Luke and his friends). We went camping where I learned to make and eat

Memories from Jamaica

BY LUZELIANA GUTMANN FUENTES

When I went to Jamaica last September as part of the Twinning Core Team, I was very excited to see a new land, new people. I was going south, but not to my country, Chile. I'm LuzEliaana Gutmann Fuentes; now I live here in Cincinnati with my husband and two daughters.

When Kathy McDonald first talked about the idea of twinning with another parish from a different part of the world, I became very interested in that concept. Because of my South American heritage, I knew from first-hand experience how much we need to learn about other cultures to minimize our stereotypes that we have as human beings based upon what we've heard, read, or seen from others. I had the great opportunity to travel to Jamaica to experience and explore this new possibility.

When I arrived in Jamaica, I immediately encountered wonderful people. It seemed that everyone provided great hospitality with a smile on their face; not just the new

friends from our sister parish, but all Jamaicans — in the market, on the streets, and in the schools.

Driving through the mountains of Jamaica, I was surprised to see that everyone appeared to know one another. As we passed motorists on their left (which was unusual enough for me) I noticed that even though there was barely room for two cars to pass, the drivers maintained their good spirit and smiled to those in the passing car. To me, it seemed like it would have been a good time to be angry with the speeding driver, but that wasn't the case in Jamaica.

It was great to see the small Catholic community so excited with the hope of building a new church. In reality, the Jamaican congregation already had

their established church; they were only missing the structure. Young and old, everybody wanted to say something about this new encounter. What better way to make lasting friendships from other peoples around the world than through this twinning project?



Gloria Daley (right) hosted LuzEliaana Gutmann Fuentes during her time in Jamaica.