



L'ARC-EN-CIEL

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Bulletin number 60



**“ Isolated, the help is lost but joined with others at the right time, it acts.”
(Johann Goethe)**

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SHARING AND SOLIDARITY

by Diane Mainville, secretary and Diane Ferland, volunteer

There are many people in fragile situations. We only have to open our eyes and our hearts to see that not everyone has the same opportunity.

Faced with this dilemma, solidarity and mutual support are a source of comfort and a magnificent tool for mutual aid to offer a moment of respite in the daily life of each and everyone.

This month, we present you with some testimonies of organizations or individuals who are part of those people for whom mutual aid remains a fundamental value and who have chosen to support the children/youth of La Maison l'Arc-en-Ciel infected/affected by HIV/AIDS, in photos and in words. However, being limited by space, we hope that our choice of photos will create a sense of global community and nourish the solidarity that unites us.



OUR GOALS

- Spiritual, moral, material and financial support to Maison l'Arc-en-Ciel, a Haitian NGO founded in 1996 in the suburbs of Port-au-Prince

OUR CONCRETE ACTIONS

- An annual fundraising campaign.
- Other annual fundraising activities such as bowling-a-thon, parish quests, etc...

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Claude Marineau, treasurer
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THE MAEC, A CHARITY HOUSE TO SUPPORT WITH MONEY AND PRAYERS!

by : Brother Fabien Landry, fms

For several months now, the pages of newspapers and the news on the radio and other information sectors, have been regularly describing the problems of all kinds that arise in Haiti, the " Pearl of the Antilles " as it is called, a nickname that is unfortunately not very justifiable in these more than difficult times that this community, with its friendly welcome and characteristic smile, is experiencing. It follows that La Maison l'Arc-en-Ciel in Port-au-Prince must also face this harsh reality and live through more than dark hours

Is it necessary to recall that in 1997, I was very impressed when my friend Alfred Rioux introduced me to Mrs. Danielle and Mr. Robert Pénette and their project of founding La Maison l'Arc-en-Ciel in Port-au-Prince, a home for young Haitians affected by AIDS.

What particularly struck me at the time was to discover a couple of well-off Quebecers with well-established professions deciding to leave their quiet well-being and stability to embark on an uncertain future in order to help a group of the most underprivileged young people on our planet and thus enable them, ultimately, to reintegrate into regular society.

Isn't it comforting to see, after 25 years of hard work, that a good number of these young people have become autonomous, now enjoy a normal existence, earn an honorable living, occupy a place of choice among their fellow citizens and even, in turn, bring a generous and appreciated help to those who follow them and who also benefit from this educational and social integration environment.

Of course, not everyone can travel to Haiti to participate directly in this magnificent project, but one can either provide significant financial support or offer personal prayers for those who are there on the ground to continue this United Nations Organisation recognized charity and ensure its resilience.

Even in my 93rd year, I continue to support as best I can this magnificent work that is La Maison l'Arc-en-Ciel in Haiti and I encourage my many friends and acquaintances to open their hearts and support these young people in need.

Fabien Landry fms

Who to write your check to:

For any amount of 25\$ and more and to obtain a receipt, please make your check payable to: **TERRE SANS FRONTIÈRES**, mentioning in the subject : For La Maison l'Arc-en-Ciel in Haiti.

For amounts less than or greater than 25\$ without a receipt please make your check payable to: **Fondation Maison l'Arc-en-Ciel d'Haïti** This way, we avoid the management fees of the donations required by Terre Sans Frontières.

Pierrette Maher and the Les Deux Aires Residence Choir: Solidarity toward the MAEC through music !

By Diane Ferland and Julie Benoit

For Pierrette Maher, it all started at the age of 16, when she was a boarder in Mont-Laurier. Music being an essential part of her life, she founded her first choir. Once she became a secondary language French teacher, singing was one of her favorite tools to teach French to immigrants.

Ms. Maher brought her passion with her when she moved to Les Deux Aires residence in Ahuntsic in 2020. In the fall of 2021, she set up an activity she named "The Musical Moment". These beautiful weekly meetings have even been described by one of the participants as a form of personal therapy.

One year later, in November 2022, it was time to celebrate this beautiful year of singing with a show for the residents and their loved ones. Thus, on November 26th, it was with a real pleasure that we attended their performance, witnessing the smiles on their faces and the sparks in their eyes.

To thank Stephane Deschamps, coordinator of the Foundation, for his voluntary involvement in the recording of this precious concert, the choir generously prepared leaflets to present La Maison l'Arc-en-Ciel and to collect donations. This is how the nice sum of \$300 was raised in less than 90 minutes!

We would like to thank the residents, parents and friends for their solidarity towards the children, as well as the staff of La Maison l'Arc-en-Ciel. In this period of extreme uncertainty, we are all inhabited by a feeling of helplessness. However, we still have the will to unite our forces to nourish this essential light for all of us!

*« Music gives a soul to our hearts and wings to our thoughts. »
Platon*





WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

By : Michel Ducharme, pastor



We came into contact with La Maison l'Arc-en-Ciel in 2019 and had the opportunity to welcome Danielle and Robert to our community to learn more about this humanitarian work. We were quickly challenged to provide support for this incredible mission. The work Danielle and Robert do, along with the entire team of volunteers, has touched us greatly. We are a church with a great missionary concern and we have also been established in Haiti for over 35 years (orphanage, nutrition program, child sponsorship). The vocation of La Maison l'Arc-en-Ciel is unique and exceptional.

The support and accompaniment of children infected/affected by AIDS in this wonderful foster home, is an essential need to show love and compassion to all these children who are often stigmatized and abandoned. This testimony is expressed through concrete and effective support and gives a glimmer of hope to all these children.

We are aware that the last few years have been more difficult and that the current situation in Haiti complicates the work of this mission, but after these 25 years of dedication, we believe and pray for the continuity and sustainability of this beautiful humanitarian work.

Highlights

November 2022

- Launch of the annual fundraising campaign.

April 2023

- Bowling-O-Thon (if possible).

Current Projects

- Dorval-Jean XXIII High school

June 30th 2023
Financial year end



SOLIDARITY TOWARD LA MAISON L'ARC-EN-CIEL SINCE 2014

By : Nick Hunsaker



I was introduced to MAEC in 2014 with a parish group and was instantly impressed by Danielle, Robert, and the entire staff's dedication to the children and teenagers residing at MAEC. The level of care provided to the children, as well as the focus on family atmosphere was unparalleled. I was especially interested in their drive to become self-sustainable via agricultural income-generating activities to ensure MAEC could continue to provide the critical services to the residents and reinstated young adults from years past. The entire staff treats the children of MAEC as their own, ensuring all needs are provided for and the children have the opportunity to truly flourish.

In 2018, I had the chance to take a trip to the north of Haiti with some of the staff, reinstated adults, and young adults who still reside at MAEC. It was truly a great opportunity to see that the care and compassion does not stop at the doors of MAEC, but the children and former residents are treated as family and provided chance for activities and travel to other parts of Haiti.

While things are difficult and near impossible to manage in Haiti due to the political crisis, MAEC's staff continues to provide for the children and do what they can to ensure that the services are not interrupted. Honey for Haiti stands in solidarity with the staff and children of Maison L'Arc-en-Ciel and hopes the services can continue to be provided for decades to come.