

BonSwa (Good Afternoon) from LaGonave,

Life is a daily struggle for some here in the village of Source au Phillipe (SAP).

There are three distinct sections in SAP: Albamonde, the poorest part of the village with ocean front property, Dwan, which is located in the center part of the village and Black Mountain, the eastern portion. The Methodist compound is located in Dwan of which we stay and are working on the Guest House. There are three types of employment for people who live in this community. They are fisherman, gardeners, and livestock owners.

Our day began with the water relay team. There is a cave located on the compound which has a natural spring at the bottom. Young local men pass the bucket from each other to the entrance then the team relays the buckets to a barrel. The water is used to make cement and stucco of which national workers are facing the guest house and constructing a wall out front to keep the goats from venturing in and up the stairs. We then changed from being a water relay to being "sand ants"--moving buckets of sand up the hill two by two. We helped move ingredients needed to mix cement.

One of the many exciting things about VIM trips is that you have the opportunity to work and interact with the local people. This truly is a lifetime experience that shows how God has truly made us all brothers and sisters, no matter where we live and the color of skin. The team project also allows workers an opportunity to earn much needed money to feed their families and for tuition of children.

Usually teams stay at the compound to play, interact, and work on fun projects with the children, today we broke the mold and went to the people: in the afternoon, we walked to Albamonde to show our love for the neighbors we have in SAP. The team and Joe Edgerton, long term VIM, strung beads, laughed, and painted toe and finger nails with bright colors with about thirty boys and girls. What an incredible experience to see the excitement and have the opportunity to bring light to the eyes of those children who are forgotten because of their social/class status.

It demonstrated to me that we are all equal in God's eyes!

Our team is definitely the best show in town for the week. By loving our neighbors, we bring hope, love, and grace!

Mother Teresa in No Greater Love expanded on meeting Jesus in our encounters especially with the poor. In every human encounter with another person we may become aware of Jesus and meet with him.

Thanks be to God for bringing us all to this place!!

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