Bishop Dale J. Melczek, Diocese of Gary and Deacon Duane Dedelow, Catholic Charities travel to sister diocese, Fort-Liberte’
Haiti

- Located Southeast of Cuba
- Island of Hispaniola
  1/3 Haiti, 2/3 Dominican Republic
- Area is slightly smaller than the state of Maryland
- Mostly rough & mountainous
- Lies in the middle of the hurricane belt – subject to severe storms June to October
People of Haiti

- Population 9,801,664
- 80 – 85% African descent
- 80% Roman Catholic
- French & Creole official languages
- Poorest country in Western Hemisphere
- Little to no employment
- Travel by foot, donkey carts, bicycles or motorcycle
Diocese of Fort Liberte’

- Diocese since January 31, 1991
- Located in the Northeast corner of Haiti
- Bishop Max Mesidor – the newly appointed bishop
- Diocese has 22 seminarians
- The priests of the diocese gather every 2 months for meetings, retreats & continuing education.

Diocesan Center for Catechetical and Pastoral Formation

Bishop Melczek discusses the needs of the diocese with Bishop Mesidor.
Catholic School Education

Bishop Dale J. Melczek discussed the challenges of Catholic school education with Bishop Max Mesidor and his staff at the Diocesan Education Center.
Catholic Schools

- Diocese operates 93 Catholic Schools for 27,936 children
- K through 6th grade
- 2 sessions each day
- Administered by
  - 41 laity
  - 39 Priests
  - 13 religious congregations

Many children walk more than 2 miles to and from school. 60% of children living in Haiti do not attend school.
Catholic School Education

It is expected that parents pay $20 per year per child, but more than two-thirds are totally incapable of paying anything.

This school serves 744 boys from pre-school to 9th grade.
School Children

Bishop Melczek visited a parish school located in the mountains.

The government has no schools for the people in the mountains or other remote areas.
Catholic Relief Services

- CRS opened their office after the 2010 earthquake to address the problem of human trafficking.
- They have saved 402 victims – mostly children and some adult women.

Border crossing between the Dominican Republic and Haiti.
Good Samaritan Home

- For poor and abandoned aged
- Run by a nun, a lay man, & 30 non paid workers
- The poor serving the poor

Bishop Melczek greets residents.

Residents grow their own food.
Caritas (Catholic Charities)

- Irrigation project made possible the planting of rice on 600 acres
Caritas (Catholic Charities)

A proposed well would bring drinking water to people in remote areas.

People wait at the Caritas Food Distribution Center for the truck to arrive.
Notre Dame Shrine Parish

- Founded in 1954 by Belgin priests (left country in 2000)
- Serves 18,000 Catholics
- 2 priests serve the Shrine and 3 remote chapels
- Parish school has 850 children, K-6
- Small faith sharing groups meet weekly

People travel great distances to visit the shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes.
Nativity Parish

- Operates parish, 3 chapels and a school
- Catechetical and liturgical ministries are run by laity with little resources

Lay parish leaders met with Bishop Melczek to share what their parish ministries are doing to help their people.
Nativity Parish Ministries

- Parish Organizations run by lay leaders
  - Women’s Assoc. - 450 members promote health care and women’s rights, gather & sell charcoal, farm & sell goods
  - Men’s Fishing Assoc. - 300 use small boats to catch then sell fish for a small profit
  - Agriculture Committee - 110 members till the soil and raise farm animals
  - Health Committee - 17 members promote health issues
The people of the Diocese of Fort Liberte’ may live in small huts with dirt floors, have no electricity, running water or sanitation, but they are grateful for what they have.
Special Collection

Each May a special collection is taken up in parishes in the Gary Diocese to help our sister diocese, Fort Liberte’. Bishop Mesidor would like to designate assistance from the Diocese of Gary to help train teachers in the Catholic schools and provide the possibility for children to attend Catholic schools when they have no means to pay anything.
Summer 2013

- Trip to Fort Liberte’
- A delegation from the Gary Diocese will travel to Haiti to seek other ways for our diocese to assist with the basic needs of the people.
  - Drinking water
  - Food
  - Shelter
  - Healthcare