

## **First Jamaica Outreach Program Mission in New Dental Clinic, March 25 to March 29, 2012**

Our dental team consisted of professionals from Rhode Island, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania. They proved to be a tremendous resource in getting our first mission in the new dental clinic into operation. They came to us through the grace of God and a little networking on our part. Each of them worked tirelessly day after day to get the job done and at the end of the third ten hour day, they were still smiling (although very tired) and enjoying every minute of their venture. They worked through brownouts, faulting equipment, and never lost their enthusiasm.

Interaction with the local Jamaican residents was incredible and the warmth of the smiles combined with the gratitude of the patients made it a highly rewarding endeavor for our volunteers.

Our mission began with a dedication of the VanDomelen Family Dental Clinic, attended by many local parishioners, patients and the dental team. This consisted of a blessing of the building and equipment and appropriate readings done by Father Thomas Dynetius. The Archbishop of Kingston was present at our inaugural dental mission along with our friends and former St. Pius X pastors Father Burchell, Father Collin and Father Steve.

In all 114 patients were treated. (91 full cleanings, 24 fillings, 29 extractions plus an innumerable number of consultations which resulted in referrals to oral surgeons etc.) Many received free medications for infection and pain, all received dental kits consisting of brushes, paste and floss donated by the missionaries. Unfortunately, many had to be referred to our next dental mission because of our inability to handle the need. All in all, we were rewarded by many smiling faces leaving the clinic.

In addition to the actual treatments, Mary one of our hygienists conducted three educational sessions in the DuPont school auditorium consisting of basic introduction to dental hygiene to first, second and third graders respectively. Approximately 420 students were involved and the sessions were very dynamic and extremely interactive. Unfortunately her sessions revealed that about 7 out of every 10 children present had cavities which need to be dealt with.

To see photos from this successful mission, click this link.

We have three dentists and a few hygienists and assistants offering their services for future missions, but if any of you know of other dental professionals (family, friends and acquaintances) anywhere in the US who might be willing to give of their time and energy for this service, please refer them to me, Roger Plante, for follow-up. Many will be needed to make future missions a success. (rpsold@cox.net – 239-948-2145).