

Medical Mission

April 18- April 23. 2026

This mission was to the Holy Spirit Clinic in Maggotty, St. Elizabeth. Since our February Mission, the Holy Spirit campus has made a great deal of progress in repairing the damage brought by hurricane Melissa in November 2025. The library and computer room have a new concrete roof, the building that was the sausage factory is progressing nicely and will be a nursing care facility for those who are ill or recovering from illness but have no one to care for them. There is still much to be done but the efforts of Father Marek and the community have brought significant improvements. Food is scarce and expensive. So many crops were damaged. Father Marek lost many of his coconut trees, fruits, bee hives and herbs. He is working with the Jamaica Agricultural team to have cocoa plants added in the near future.



Mission Days

The clinic in Maggoty as always, is very organized and well known by the people in the area. Sister Emila and Sister Scholastyca (who has a nursing background) helped with the patients. Sister Rita was not there -she was on a trip to visit family in Poland. Perdie is their staff person who checks in patients and Nashia helps out in the pharmacy as well.

Unfortunately, the other two doctors who were supposed to come on the mission cancelled at the last minute and no one else was available on such short notice. So Loretta and I were the team.

We saw a total of 123 patients in 3 days . Two patients came in with severe asthma. They were given nebulizer treatments and re-check 30 minutes later. Breathing improved and they were given inhalers and medication to take home. A woman had cut her big toe with a machete the first morning of the mission. The wound was cleaned, steri-strips were applied and the wound was dressed. The patient was advised to get a tetanus vaccine. She returned for a dressing change 2 days later. She had gone to the hospital to get a tetanus shot.

Two additional patients needed wound care. They both had severe wounds post surgery. They were both diabetics. The wounds were cleaned and dressed. Medications were given.

Andrew who works at the campus came in with a BP of 164/117. He is 48 years old. After forcefully explaining his risk of stroke and making clear that he needed to take his medications daily, he was given Amlodipine and Lisinopril and told to return the next day for recheck. His pressure improved dramatically and he was very pleased. There were several patients with severe shoulder and back pain and several who needed Optical care.

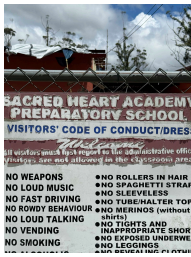
They were many patients with hypertension and diabetes. One person had severe nodular skin lesions which has been treated with hydrocortisone cream over the past year or so. It has improved somewhat. Referral to dermatology for a biopsy was given. A 31 year old women with right hip pain radiating down to her ankle was seen. She had been on prednisone for 2 years. She was told about the negative effects of prednisone, even though it was the only medication that gave

her relief (she was given prescriptions from different clinics). Dr. Vento gave her Naproxen and instructed on how to taper off prednisone.

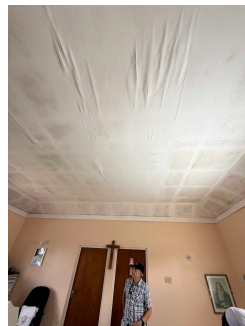


On Friday April 17, Father Marek took us to the chancery in Mandeville to meet with Bishop Persaud. Bishop told also that Father Francis would be taking us to Christiana, Balaclava and Santa Cruz to see damage from the hurricane that they need assistance to repair. They already have other projects underway which are already funded.

Father Francis arrived and we left for our “tour”. During the ride we were extremely impressed with Father Francis’s knowledge of construction and building materials. He is from India and has been in Jamaica for over 20 years. He criss crosses the area regularly assessing need, overseeing construction and documenting progress with photos and videos from his drone and camera. Our first stop was Sacred Heart Church and school in Christiana. The school was in session and was well attended and well run.



On these grounds it is the **convent that is in need of roof repair**. The sisters here are from Kenya and the roof damage is very apparent from the inside the convent. Father Francis took drone shots of the roof and will forward those along with his request for assistance.



Our next stop was Balaclava - a 40 minute ride on a rough, rocky road.

The home for the disabled there is being repaired. This is already being addressed. There is a great deal of damage. Going forward this home will only be for men. The women have already been transferred to a facility in Kingston.



Here the rectory is still in need of repair. Since we could not view the building from an elevated point, the drone photos from Father Francis should be more revealing.

Our next stop was the **St Croix Catholic Church**. They had a clinic (that was not in good shape) that was rendered useless by Melissa. They have been continuing the clinic in small spaces in the church structure. They have plans to build a new clinic.



Our final stop was a small convent in Santa Cruz. Two nuns from Kenya live there and were telling the diocese they had a small leak. When Father Francis saw the condition of their roof he was stunned.



There was a downpour when we arrived at this location. It is amazing that the ceiling had not completely collapsed.

From there we drove back to Mandeville to the Bishop's home. We had a quick bite, changed clothes and left for Kingston to attend the vigil for Bishop Burchell.

The traffic was horrific and the ride took about 3 hours (mostly because of rain and traffic in Kingston). The ceremony was very touching. Jeanne spoke on behalf of JOP. It was a wonderful tribute to Bishop Burchell.

It was also our privilege and honor to attend Bishop Burchell's funeral the following morning. The service was full of joy - a true celebration of Bishop Burchell's life and work.