

Your Favorite Page

One might question the propriety of having this laff page after reading the previous pages. I would say it is totally appropriate: laughter in the face of evil and death is the one sound that Satan detests above all. Think also of how many wakes, funerals, and funeral meals are marked by laughter as we recall the antics of the beloved!

Attending a wedding for the first time, a little girl whispered to her mother: “Why is the bride dressed in white?” The mother replied, “Because this is the happiest day of her life.” The child thought about this for a moment and then said, “So why is the groom wearing black?”

A police recruit was asked during the exam, “What would you do if you had to arrest your own mother?” He answered, “Call for backup.”

A Sunday School teacher was discussing the Ten Commandments with her 5 and 6 year olds. After explaining the commandment to “Honor thy father and mother,” she asked: “Is there a commandment that teaches us how to treat our brothers and sisters?” Without missing a beat, one little boy answered, “Thou shalt not kill.”

In another Sunday school class, they were teaching how God created everything, including human beings. Johnny seemed especially intent when he learned how Eve was created out of one of Adam’s ribs. Later in the week his mother noticed him lying down as if he were ill and said, “Johnny, are you OK? What’s the matter?” He said: “I have a pain in my side...I think I’m having a wife.”

After putting her grandchildren to bed, Grandma changed into old slacks and a droopy blouse and proceeded to wash her hair. As she heard the children getting more and more rambunctious, her patience grew thin. Finally, she threw a towel around her head and stormed into their room, putting them back to bed with stern warnings. As she left the room, she heard the three-year-old say with a trembling voice, “Who was THAT?”

Moving to the world of adults.....

A group of guys were all approaching their 40th birthday, and decided to celebrate. They were trying to pick a place to eat, and after much discussion decided to go to dinner at Chez Famous Ray’s because the waitresses had low-cut blouses.

The same group of guys arrives at their 50th birthday, and want to celebrate again. After much discussion they decided to go to dinner at Chez Famous Ray’s because the food and the service were both very good.

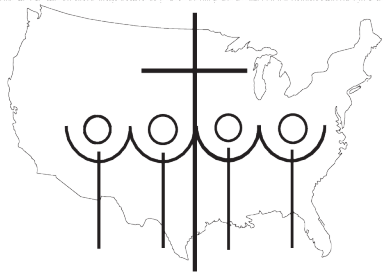
Ten years later, it’s time for the 60th birthday celebration. After much back and forth discussion, they decided to go to Chez Famous Ray’s because it was a quieter place than most and they could hear better.

Moving right along into the 70th year, the guys decided to continue their tradition of celebrating their birthdays with a blast. After days of discussion, they decided to go to Chez Famous Ray’s because they had senior portions as well as a handicapped ramp and bathroom facilities.

And then came time for the magical 80th birthday celebration. The discussion about where to eat was still as energetic as ever, but in the end, the guys decided to meet at Chez Famous Ray’s, because they had never eaten there before.

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March 1, 2010

Greetings, my friend!

I’m writing this on a snowy February Tuesday afternoon. We’re supposed to get anywhere from 10-16” of the white stuff between now and Wednesday evening. This is the same storm that’ll hit you folks in the East still digging out from that weekend “snow-maggadon!” Ah winter...don’t ya love it! This would be a wonderful day to be in front of a fireplace, with a good book, and a cat purring in my lap.

Let me deal with what was probably your first reaction on seeing the size of this *Links* – your forehead furrowed quizzically, your eyes went up, and you thought, “Wow!” I already had a reflection prepared for the Easter newsletter when the Haiti earthquake struck. As customary when events of this magnitude strike, the Superior General and/or the affected Provincials keep the CSC Community informed as to what’s going on. As e-mail after e-mail came in regarding Haiti, I realized that they needed to be shared with the rest of the Holy Cross family. These e-mails are a compelling read – they grip you as you see how the earthquake affected Holy Cross, the Catholic Church in Haiti, as well as the citizens of that country. You get a behind-the-scenes look not reported by the media.

EASTER APPEAL

We are always praying for our benefactors, but at certain times of year this prayer is intensified. So it is with the Easter Season. If there is anyone – living or dead – whom you wish to commend to our prayer, jot their names on the enclosed prayer list and send it back to us.

No offering is required, but any offering received will be used for the day-to-day needs of Moreau Seminary and Holy Cross House.

Please note: this is not an appeal for Haiti. You have no doubt given through your parish already. If you can help the Province meet its day-to-day needs, that will free up more resources from other Province funds that can go to Haiti.

Holy Cross priests, sisters, and brothers have been present in Haiti since 1944. As you read those e-mails you will see death and destruction – a Good Friday, if you will. But here and there, you will get glimpses of resurrection, glimpses of extraordinary faith, hope, and love emerging from the rubble and the grief. As I said, it’s a compelling story, a perfect fit for the season of Lent and Easter.

Two other items. First, several benefactors have asked about the canonization of Blessed Andre Bessette, CSC. The folks in Rome responsible for validating the authenticity of miracles have approved a second miracle attributed to the Intercession of Bro. Andre, and that is sufficient for his canonization. The official announcement from Rome has yet to come, but the folks at St Joseph Oratory in Montreal are thinking of October 2010 as a possible date for the celebration.

Second, **Rev. Eugene A. Burke, CSC** passed through his own Good Friday of failing health and entered into Easter’s new life on December 26, 2009. He was 87 years old. Gene entered Holy Cross after a stint in the Navy, and he was literally a jack of all trades. He was a parish priest, a math teacher, a counselor, and had skills in construction, electricity, and plumbing. I lived with him several times in the course of my ministry, and always found Gene to be a wonderful, delightful, humble person. He was a little bit of a hypochondriac, and that could get our eyes rolling sometimes, but that paled in comparison to his generous spirit and willingness to help!

I want to close by thanking Jim Kramer for the idea of making this newsletter longer than usual. I was going nuts trying to condense everything into the usual 2-3 pages. Carol and Kim, plus Jim, Terry, Nancy, and Beata join me in wishing you a blessed Lent and an Easter Season filled with hope, joy, and life. Thank you for being you, thank you for being our companions on the journey.

Pray faithfully, laugh often, love deeply!

Fr. Herb

Hugs!!

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TRAGEDY TO TRIUMPH - DEATH TO RESURRECTION: A Chronicle of Haiti

The earthquake that destroyed Port-au-Prince and the surrounding area struck at 5:00 PM on Tuesday, January 12. What follows are excerpts from e-mails that were sent out to all members of Holy Cross in the days afterwards. They provide a first-hand glimpse into how different lives were affected, a glimpse not provided by the news media. The e-mails are reproduced as received; spelling and grammar are unchanged, because the native language of the CSC's in Haiti is French. As you will see, the Catholic Church in Haiti had a huge loss of lives and property. Fr. Michel Eugene, CSC, whose name appears often, is the Superior of the CSC Priests in Haiti.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13

At 3:53 AM the next morning, the Holy Cross community received first word from our Superior General, Fr. Hugh Cleary, CSC: We have been trying to establish contact with our Holy Cross community in Haiti but so far we have been unsuccessful. Father Eric Jasmin, C.S.C., has been here in Rome for the General Council meetings this past week. He is doing all that is possible to ascertain information about our religious and the Holy Cross sisters.

Sr. Kesta Occident, CSC 8:42 AM: Impossible to communicate by phone with Haiti. Thanks God e-mails are working! We have heard from the sisters in the North. They have had some more tremors after the big ones that last more than 60 seconds around 5h00 PM (17h00) yesterday. So far no damages. Through e-mails, we knew that many houses collapsed along the streets where the CSC men and our sisters are located in Port-au-Prince, the epicenter of the earthquake.



Sr. Rosemond Marcelin, CSC 10:47 AM: I'm still dazed from the catastrophe of this earthquake. I just woke up from a long night outdoors, sleeping alongside my scholasticate confreres, happily spared by this tragedy. Some of us had time to visit our confreres in Turgeau right after the huge jolt. They were found to be out of danger, all of them in a terrible state of shock. Only the provincial was not there, having gone to a meeting, but we are certain that he is alright, protected by Providence. The brothers of Basile Moreau are safe and sound, except that the high school building collapsed, burying some students watching a soccer game. At the scholasticate, we've been hurt only by the loss of an exterior wall separating us from the main street. We are all here, except for Guillaume who had gone to class in Quisqueya and is probably still on the street trying to come back through the ruins and the bodies.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 15

Fr. Eric Jasmin, CSC 7:45 AM: Fr. Bernard Antoine informs that the dead body of our temporary profess, Emmanuel Jacques Guillaume has been found under the debris at/of university Quisqueya. Our provincial house (or what is left from it) and its yard are now filled with people seeking aid/help. Fr. Yvon Joseph has sent a SOS to Fr. Bernard Antoine saying that they are out of water and food. Fr. Bernard hurried to send a pick-up filled with water, food and other things which is on its way to Port-au-Prince. Only God knows if everything will arrive at destination because many people who are starving try to deprive any car found in the streets loaded with food.

Fr. Michel Eugene, CSC 1:17 PM: For those who heard I was missing until Wednesday noon, I can say that I am alive and without any physical harm. I was not in the provincial office on Tuesday at 16.53. I could only return on foot to Turgeau (location of the provincial offices) by Wednesday noon to look after our confreres and determine the following:

GOOD NEWS: 1. No one died or was injured at Turgeau, a small miracle. 2. The guest house apparently was hit by the quake; we need to check it out, but it seems that it is not damaged. 3. There were no deaths at Bizoton (Ecole Basile Moreau, Scholasticat Basile Moreau) nor at Waney (Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish); our scholastics left unhurt from CIFOR which is com-

gence, his composure, his discretion, his zeal for work, his empathy, the quality of his religious commitment, his faith, his faith in the future of Haiti and his love for Holy Cross. This is the first time since the arrival of Holy Cross in Haiti that we mourn the death of a young religious. A marble sculpture will be placed in the Holy Cross cemetery in Cap-Haitien to perpetuate his memory.

Port-au-Prince is trying to get back on its feet in spite of immense concerns. There is no evidence that the authorities understand that they cannot be content with merely patching up the city so that it might be almost as bad as it has been these past decades. Courageous, unpopular, and in some aspects, radical measures are needed. Emergency assistance is distributed anarchically. In this sense the non-governmental organizations do not have any more success than the government. Confidence in the NGO's capacity to bring assistance to the most needy dwindles. There are several accounts of persons who died during these past days out of despite. For the most part, they are of the middle class, natives of Port-au-Price, who refuse to go and fight for food relief. This is a new category of the poor falling into greater danger. Among them are relatives of Holy Cross religious, people from our parishes, students as well as alumni of our educational institutions.

We have begun to develop ways to fill the gap in order to reach them. With our meager means we are trying to help them, especially those at Turgeau but also at Bizoton and Waney. Fortunately, we have received help from the Cooperation Jesuite. We have been able to bring relief to a large number of people for a few days. More and more religious communities are seen as sure means of bringing urgent help to the population. The distribution of primary relief items received from the Jesuits witnesses to this.

Furthermore, we are making repeated attempts in the North for the resumption of academic activities in order to return as quickly as possible to normal. This is one of the surest strategies to metabolize the trauma from the deadly quakes of January 12. We will receive in our schools children who are victims of the Port-au-Prince quakes. We are seeking ways to finance their studies. Their parents are either dead, injured or they have lost everything in Port-au-Prince. At College Notre Dame, the religious are gathering together the young victims

of Port-au-Prince who are originally from Cap Haitien in order to help them bounce back. This same initiative is undertaken in our parishes in Borgne, Caracol, Pilate, and Petit Bourg-de-Borgne. The number of individuals coming to us for this group accompaniment is continually increasing. It is to be noted that emergency assistance from NGO's will never reach the displaced persons from Port-au-Prince.

It appears clearer to us that we must commit ourselves to accompany these traumatized people by providing time, energy, zeal and money. There is a growing demand in this area. Up to now, I have personally made many psychological interventions in the North on the radio to specific groups (teachers, schools congregation members) and to individuals.

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I should have mentioned this at the beginning, but Turgeau, Bisoton, and Waney are neighborhoods of Port-au-Prince. Cap-Haitien is on the north coast, 40 minutes by plane from the capital.

Did you catch the first movements of Easter and new life in these accounts? For myself, the most moving statement of all was by Sr. Maureen: "We shed tears, we hurt, but know we are not alone. Many things will be changed forever, but life will go on because we know we are loved by a Divine Presence in our midst." That statement was the one that got me thinking about using these e-mails for the Easter newsletter.

After the crucifixion, the disheartened disciples felt alone and abandoned. That changed to joy when they experienced the presence of the Risen Jesus. Note how often those e-mails express a deep gratitude for the simple ministry for our presence with them in prayer. It's the same consolation the women and the beloved disciple extended to Jesus as he was dying. They could do nothing but "be there." So often when someone we love is suffering, we wonder what we can do. Never underestimate the enormous value of your simple presence and prayer.



A section of the Basile Moreau School

other urgent needs like getting electricity up and running. People are having to come to terms with the inevitable....many loved ones are lost.

I must go. I am constantly being bothered by our “live-in” guests so thank you again for your love, caring and solidarity. God bless and keep you. Please excuse all errors I do not have time to re-read this letter.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 26

Fr. Michel Eugene, CSC Two weeks after the deadly earthquakes, Port-au-Prince is giving the impression of a return to life. This is thanks to the resumption of certain commercial activities and the availability of fuel. In certain main streets of the capital were it not for the pulverized buildings, the scars of the earthquake, one would have the impression that everything has returned to normal. This early “return to normal” is also most probably due to the formidable resilience of the Haitian people. Most of the houses built of concrete to withstand cyclones and seismic temblors lower than 6.0 on the Richter scale have given way. As a result, a good number of religious are living on the streets like the families in Port-au-Prince.

The time has already come for us to make a first assessment, to begin seriously to bind up the deep wounds and to face construction for the future. In addition to their mission of accompanying the people and stimulating the Haitian Church that was struck in its very heart, the religious men and women of Haiti must face the

difficult and distressing reality of their respective congregations. They have for the most part counted mainly on the income from their schools for self financing. Now these schools have crumbled and our insurance companies owe us nothing in situations of natural catastrophes.

Holy Cross along with the congregations of priests and the diocese must find a solution for continuing the philosophical and theological formation of candidates for the priesthood. The major seminary is reduced to a mass of rubble. It is the same at CIFOR. These institutions will not be able to get back on their feet in the days, even months to come. We have already begun to draw up scenarios. Some involve a close cooperation with other congregations to create one or two temporary structures while at the same time working to rebuild CIFOR and taking part in the rebuilding of the major seminary.

We must accompany and offer alternatives in formation to approximately twenty young men. Several Holy Cross scholastics find it difficult to live with this insecure situation and they impatiently await solutions from us. For the time being we have taken the conservative decision to send them to local communities in the north so they can recuperate while at the same time make themselves useful. At the moment they do not know where or when they will be able to continue their philosophical or theological formation.

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 6

Fr. Michel Eugene, CSC: On February 2nd, we celebrated the funeral of our confrere, Emmanuel Jacques Guillaume in the parish church of Acul-du-Nord. The scholastics and a large majority of the men and women of Holy Cross located in the North came to the home parish of Emmanuel Jacques Guillaume to draw comfort from each other and to comfort the members of his family. During the moving and prayerful service we expressed our grief, our hope and especially our gratitude for all the Lord has given us through the life of Emmanuel Jacques Guillaume.

His classmates, the members of his family and other religious of Holy Cross who witnessed during the ceremony unanimously emphasized his simplicity, his seriousness, his sense of responsibility, his lively intelli-



Holy Cross Provincial House

pletely destroyed (Ed note: CIFOR is the acronym for Centre Inter-Instituts de Formation Religieuse...a formation center for the religious communities in Haiti). Several seminarians from other communities died their bodies are already decaying under the debris.

BAD NEWS: 1. One scholastic has not responded to calls. He was taking a class at Quiqueya University. All the main university buildings crumbled like a house of cards. We have not yet identified his body... we are not sure we will be able to do this as bodies are already in a state of decay.

2. The provincial administration offices no longer exist. The reinforced ground floor did not give way completely. There is the possibility of gathering up documents but the building cannot be used. We are miserable. Apart from the documents on the ground floor and the things in my room, we have lost everything. The secondary section of the Ecole-College Basile Moreau no longer exists; the primary section is cracked and is most likely no longer useable. The residence for the religious is unharmed but the ground floor is cracked. The preschool does not have a place.

I will stop here for the moment. I will return with more news soon. In the midst of our misfortune at Bizoton 53 as at Turgeau we are sheltering a number of refugees, in particular the entire Oblate Community of Haiti. We are trying hard to feed them, to keep them alive....

SATURDAY, JANUARY 16

Sr. Maureen Fuelkell, CSC 12:04 PM: Other confirmed news not good :

- 200 students and profs at the Salesian’s school in Port-au-Prince all perished in the collapse of their technical school.
- 300 students and teachers perished in the St. Gerard’s Parish School; the Parish was also demolished.
- The Daughters of Marie in Bel Air had 27 in their residence; only 7 escaped. The Provincial was among the dead.
- Three Daughters of Wisdom perished and three are seriously injured.
- College Canado, Ecole St. Jean run by the Sacred Heart Brothers, and Fameo Pereo Center run by Fr. Real Charlebois, CSC, are all demolished. Fr. Charlebois is OK.
- The Montfortain Fathers lost seven scholastics who came out of CIFOR; they were in their vehicle ready to drive away when CIFOR collapsed and buried the vehicle.
- The Brothers of Christian Instruction lost two brothers when part of their residence in Delmas was demolished: one immediately, another when he jumped from the second floor; he died the next day at Canape Vert Hospital. Br. Joseph was also killed.
- The Sisters of St. Ann’s dispensary & school in St. Antoine’s Parish are gone plus two of their residences and damage done to their school Esther on Turgeau and College Marie Anne at Bourdon.
- The Sister of Charity of St. Louis’ school – also down.

- There is only one Catholic Church standing in Port-au-Prince: Notre Dame d’ Alta grace on Delmas.

A Holy Cross priest stopped by to see us here in Cap-Haitian this afternoon. He arrived from Port-au-Prince yesterday. He said he could walk on the main street for blocks and blocks and look at the sea. That is how flattened the city is.

Thanks to everyone for your prayers and solidarity. We shed tears, we hurt, but know we are not alone. Many things will be changed forever, but life will go on because we know we are loved by a Divine Presence in our midst.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 17

Sr. Lucienne Landry, CSC 2:54 PM The number of persons in the yard has grown every day. There may be as many as 200, but some will leave today. Presently, Sister Maureen is trying to get the water pump going. This is what is lacking the most. There is no fuel. No pumps are functioning yet.

MONDAY, JANUARY 18

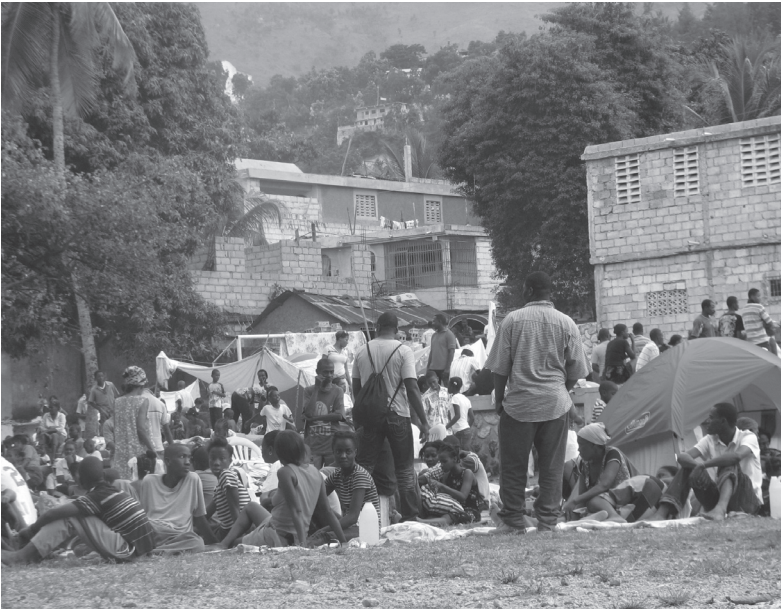
Fr. Michel Eugene, CSC 3:48 PM: In the name of the Province of Haiti, I sincerely express our gratitude for all the signs of affection and the Masses celebrated yesterday and during the week for Haiti and for the Holy Cross religious of Haiti. We need this solidarity to hold on and to get going again. This is all you can do for the time being. What we need now is to know that we are not forgotten and that you are in solidarity with your Haitian confreres.

Our refugees: some have left and others have come to us. The Oblates have left and have gone to one of their houses in the area of Petite-Place-Cazeau. The seminarians have returned to their respective dioceses. Relatives and families of some confreres are passing through Turgeau. Every day we are receiving some and we organize departures for the north. Former parish members come to us as do our employees and their families living in Port-au-Prince.

Saturday evening we were able to free the main entrance to CIFOR and get the generator and the three minibuses belonging to Holy Cross, the Oblates and the religious of St. Camillus. There were several attempts on the part of looters to steal them. This operation opened the way to freeing the bodies of deceased seminarians. During the course of the afternoon the heavy equipment of CNE helped move the blocks of concrete. Steps have been taken to recuperate material from CIFOR before the looters return. In addition to what we are doing at Turgeau, Bizoton and CIFOR, we are helping in the organization of relief. We are counting soon on offering our experience in the area of psychological help to the people.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 19

Fr. Michel Eugene, CSC 4:01 AM: This afternoon the bulldozers came to the main campus of the Quisqueya University to free the bodies buried under the rubble of the collapsed buildings. Wesner Neree and I moved the body of our confrere Guillaume to its place of burial in a corner of the university garden. The bodies were unrecognizable. We recognized our confrere by his clothes and his student identity card. He was buried along with six other unfortunate comrades among whom were two Salesian seminarians and one Sister of Ste-Anne. The burial was preceded by a moment of prayer and the blessing of the bodies. A funeral monu-



Refugees gather outside Basile Moreau School

ment will be set up on the burial site in memory of those who died.

Fr. Hugh Cleary, CSC 11:52 AM I just participated in a celebration of the rebirth of Holy Cross High School in New Orleans, a ministry of the S.W. Province of Brothers, which had been destroyed by Hurricane Katrina five years ago. The rebirth is beautiful testimony to the power of our hope in the Cross of Christ. May the rebirth in New Orleans, and indeed in the tragedies wrought by nature around our Holy Cross world, be a gift of hope to Holy Cross in Haiti.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 23

Sr. Maureen Fuelkell, CSC It has been several days since I wanted to give you an update on our situation in Haiti. Unfortunately we have had electrical problems and realized only this evening that one of our inverters had a poor connection probably caused by the house shaking from the main Earth Quake. And from all the tremors since, which still come far too often. According to reports this will go on until Sunday or according to others until the end of January. Our internet was not functioning properly. The majority of the population is still sleeping outside of their homes fearing numerous tremors will cause more homes to collapse. Believe me, it is not pleasant. My heart beat increased a good bit after a short but hard tremor last evening.

The number of victims living in our yard number 391. The number seems to increase everyday. They are grateful to have a secure yard, food distribution, potable water and the possibility to wash their clothes.

The little tykes have a ball running to and fro. A big plus is letting them charge their cell phones when our generator is running. This permits them to keep in touch with family here and abroad.

Humanitarian aid from the various Agencies is slow in reaching those in need. Waiting in long lines to hear “We will call you” can be frustrating. Some items sent in for distribution are, as far as I am concerned, silly for lack of a more appropriate term. Yogurt & fresh milk that needs refrigeration after being opened versus powered milk is not appropriate. We need rice, corn meal, beans, cooking oil and more basic food supplies.

Apparently many of the injured are being flown to hospitals in other parts of the country. Medicines are lacking or poorly distributed. The situation is not easy. I heard today tent cities will soon be built to accommodate the homeless. I shutter when I hear this after my experience as Directress of the Refugee Camp when 40,000 Haitians were expelled from the Dominican Republic and had no home to come to. They were put in a Camp until they could be relocated. What a job that was.

The more one drives around the city, the more we realize and see the unbelievable destruction. Ten days ago, thousands of people in one minute lost everything, too many even their lives. It is simply unbelievable.

I am sure you are probably continuing to receive news on TV which we don’t have so you may know more than I.

I want to thank each and every one of you for your solidarity, for your love and care. You have no idea how much it has helped to hear from so many who are concerned for the victims of this unimaginable disaster. Words cannot express the sadness in our hearts to know loved ones have been lost, beautiful structures have been destroyed and we will never again know or see what we were attached to all our lives. Things will change and let’s hope in many ways for the better, but many things will never or cannot be replaced. Your presence expressed in so many ways has softened the cruelty of this disaster, God bless you for this.

I still have so much, after 47 yrs in this country, to learn when I hear and see the people in our yard that have lost everything they owned, sing and thank the Lord every evening in prayer for God’s goodness, greatness and love. What resiliency, what courage and what faith. We do, however, need to be healed from our fears of these devastating tremors and know that we must respect and care for the gift of the earth, which we have received but which has been too long disrespected by humankind.

Last evening I was in bed listening to people wailing in another camp near by. No doubt more people were found dead. The Govt. has officially announced they do not hope to find anyone alive after so many days so have stopped all search and are concentrating on