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The Newsletter of Blessings International

December 2016



**HELP FOR**

**Haiti!**

**BLESSINGS SUPPLY MEDICINES TO 36 TEAMS PROVIDING  
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SUPPORT FOLLOWING HURRICANE MATTHEW**

Hurricane Matthew NASA

Healing the Hurting | Building Healthy Communities | Transforming Lives



# HAITI

## “IN SOME PARTS OF THE COUNTRY, IT LOOKS AS IF THE APOCALYPSE HAPPENED.”

**That heartbreaking description of Haiti comes from Debi Lammert, Advanced Practice Nurse/Clinical Nurse Specialist, the head of Blessings International’s Haiti Orphanage Medical Support (HOMS) project.**

Debi has run the project since it launched at the beginning of 2016 (more on the HOMS project later in this newsletter). When Hurricane Matthew was approaching Haiti, the U.S. Embassy urged her to evacuate so she did. Debi returned shortly after the storm passed and found the southern part of the nation in crisis.



*Hurricane Matthew turned roads into rivers.*

Blessings regularly supplies Debi and her team with medicines for children in the orphanages she serves. When Debi returned to Haiti after the storm passed, she immediately put her nursing skills to use with Among the Reeds, one of more than 30 groups that received emergency medicine from Blessings International to care for disaster victims.



“The main part of Les Cayes and the hospital there are all flooded with two to four feet of dirty, sewage-filled water. It’s been raining for 48 hours on already-saturated roads and fields. Many still have no shelter — if they are lucky, they might have a tarp to cover their missing roof. Many of the roads are impassable due to flooding. The roads are rivers and the rivers are raging. It’s a total mess.”

“One poor lady was literally screaming with pain,” Debi wrote of a victim who was recently brought to her a few weeks after the storm hit. “This lady had gangrene in her right foot (specifically the last three toes and part of her foot) due to constant wetness and exposure to mud, water and debris. She had only sandals to wear and a mud floor, so no protection. I am sure she faces amputation.”

Sadly, this woman is just one of the many Haitians who will be struggling in the weeks and months ahead. In Haiti alone, at least 540 and as many as 1,600 people died (reports vary widely and the numbers are still being determined) and thousands more were injured or had their homes partially or fully destroyed. In the 30 days after Hurricane Matthew hit, Blessings shipped more than 3,000 pounds of medicine to 36 teams providing emergency medical support to Haitians. Thank you for your prayers and financial support, which enable us to provide free medicines to victims of natural disasters around the world!



*Above: An orphanage damaged by the storm.  
Below: Orphanage children ask for prayer.*

*Right: Haitian woman suffering with an infected leg.*



*Right: Debi Lammert with orphans helped by HOMS project.*



# HAITI ORPHANAGE MEDICAL SUPPORT (HOMS)

HELPING CHILDREN WHO NEED OUR SUPPORT

PROJECT UPDATE



One year ago, Blessings International began raising funds to support a two-year project to help children living in Haitian orphanages.

The project's purpose is to provide consistent, standardized and quality medical care to as many as 30 orphanages. According to various reports, approximately 30,000 Haitian children live in some 760 orphanages scattered across the country. The HOMS (Haiti Orphanage Medical Support) project launched in January 2016 and began by serving three orphanages with a staff of three people, including Debi Lammert, APRN-CNS, a project director, and an assistant.

The project has grown steadily and is now serving 17 orphanages caring for more than 750 children. Many of the orphanages care for 12 to 25 children, but one has 225!

In addition to providing basic medical care for common maladies such as vitamin deficiency, skin infections, malaria and other common ailments in that impoverished nation, a secondary but important purpose of HOMS is to collect data on the children



living in these facilities. Debi and her team take weight and height measurements and are able to give feedback to both the orphanage and to Haitian child welfare authorities on the quality of care the children are receiving.

Some researchers believe, and the HOMS project is confirming, that as many as 80% of children living in orphanages actually have one parent alive. Many of these parents, however, cannot provide for their children and seek help. Sadly, some orphanages are not functioning with the sole purpose of providing for the welfare of these vulnerable children. Debi says, "The HOMS project is committed to seek out and support quality orphanages, with a goal of ensuring that they provide at least a basic level of physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual care for each child in the home/orphanage—and to encourage and support re-unification of a child with a parent whenever possible."

When Hurricane Matthew struck, some of the orphanages Debi and her team serve were damaged, but fortunately no children that she regularly serves were injured. One orphanage did lose its roof. She and her team have so much work already and sadly there are now even more orphans and economic-orphans. Hurricane Matthew has only made a desperate situation for so many even worse.

"There is so much to be done, and it will take a long, long time to recover," adds Debi. "Crops are ruined, fruit trees destroyed, animals dead — with these go their food sources and their livelihoods."

With your help, Blessings International will enable Debi and her team to serve, treat and rescue even more children in desperate need.

**"There is so much to be done, and it will take a long, long time to recover."**



**This Christmas season,**

will you consider making a special donation to help us help the suffering children of Haiti?

You can give to our Medicines for Orphans fund at [www.blessing.org/donate](http://www.blessing.org/donate).



**“Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress...”**

James 1:27

*I have had the chance to visit Haiti twice. Both times my heart was overwhelmed by the sheer volume of poverty and need. But I was also deeply moved by the depth of love and support given in response by the many Christian and humanitarian groups working to alleviate suffering there. Without the kindness of strangers caring for Haitian widows and orphans, the level of misery would be almost unfathomable.*

**And that was before Hurricane Matthew hit Haiti.** Fortunately, that storm did not devastate the entire nation. But it did ravage a large area.

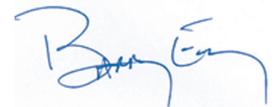
*Because of supporters like you, we are able to provide free and discounted medicines through our Emergency Disaster Relief Fund for medical teams traveling to disaster areas like those struck by Hurricane Matthew.*

*We are also able to provide support to Haitian orphans, as well as orphans in many other places like Uganda and Ethiopia. For the Christmas season, all funds raised by giving through Amazon Smiles will go to the worthwhile orphan projects.*

*Please consider choosing Blessings International as your charity when you buy online through Amazon.com. It will cost you nothing, but will add so much to those in need! And don't stop there; share Blessings International as an Amazon Smiles Charity with your friends and family.*

**Did you know that we are able to use 100% of every dollar you give to provide free medicine?** Our daily services cover the costs of our operating expenses, **but we need your help to be able to give away more medicine.** This is an honorable thing to do. This is true religion as James wrote, enabling you and us together to care for “widows and orphans in their distress.”

**Thank you so much for your gifts to Blessings International! May you and your family experience all the joys of the Christmas season as we remember God's ultimate gift to us — the birth and life of His son Jesus that led to his sacrifice and eternal salvation for all who trust in him.**



Barry Ewy, PharmD, JD, MHA

## What is Blessings International?

For 35 years, Blessings International has worked to heal the hurting by providing life-saving pharmaceuticals, vitamins and medical supplies to medical mission teams, clinics and hospitals located around the world; to build healthy communities by treating the poor and victims of endemic medical problems, outbreaks of disease or overwhelming disasters; and to transform lives by actively demonstrating the love and compassion of Jesus Christ.

**For more information or to order medicine,** go to [www.blessing.org](http://www.blessing.org) or email [info@blessing.org](mailto:info@blessing.org)  
Mail gifts to P.O. Box 35292, Tulsa OK 74153-0292, USA.  
Make checks payable to Blessings International.



Give online at [www.blessing.org](http://www.blessing.org)

**Text to give by texting “Medicines” to 41444**

**Federal employees** can donate through the Combined Federal Campaign #11864

**State and Local government employees** can also give to Blessings through their payroll giving plan



Code #11864

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