



Members of Team Rubicon on the ruins of the Jesuit Novitiate in Port-Au-Prince, Haiti

Brother Jim Boynton, SJ, recently assigned to Haiti to work at a school, is now part of the rapid response team of Jesuits and U.S. Marine veterans assembled to quickly get medical personnel and supplies into Port au Prince. Named “Team Rubicon”, the operation is privately funded and includes former servicemen from Iraq and Afghanistan who can operate both as security personnel and as medics.

On Team Rubicon’s blog, Br. Boynton writes of his recent experiences in Haiti and dealing with the devastating aftermath. National Jesuit News is reaching out to Br. Boynton to continue to get updates from him in Haiti.

“He descended into Hell” I have said these words every time I have prayed the Creed at Sunday mass, or the rosary. I have prayed these words often, but have never understood them until now. The smell of stale death is something that until now I have only experienced in roadkill in Northern Michigan roads. Usually a raccoon or a skunk, but never a person, and never many persons. In the past 6 years I have had the honor to serve on numerous medical brigades to the garbage dumps of Guatemala and Honduras, but nothing I have ever seen or done prepared me for the sights of the last few days. I am new to Haiti, and only arrived on November 1st to work in a school. To be honest I was nervous about that, but a

school in Haiti now seems no more daunting than a classroom at University of Detroit Jesuit High School, or St. Ignatius Cleveland, where I taught history for years. What is daunting now is Haiti itself. "Haiti cherie", or "dear Haiti", as this country is called by those who love her, is suffering. The news may report that help is being sent from all over the world, but today we are 6 days past the quake, yet at our location we were the first foreign aid to arrive. Most is bottlenecked in the airport. The only other non-Haitians I saw today were reporters from Caritas, Germany. One left his team to help us secure transportation for the wounded and in the end for ourselves.

"He rose from the dead" ... is another part of the Creed so often prayed. There is hope, there is a resurrection. Good is stronger than bad. Today the Haitians triaged themselves in an orderly fashion, the most wounded getting to see a doctor first, something that is difficult to attain in any American hospital on any given night. The amount of gratitude on part of the wounded, their families, and strangers is overwhelming. Today 4 times I flagged a car off the street to take vital cases to the nearest operation room. Gas is over \$25 a gallon, if available, but each time strangers said yes. Our return transportation failed to arrive. Strangers loaded us into two trucks to drive us to the other side of town, regardless of curfew, and regardless of looters.

"To give and not to count the cost" is from the prayer of St. Ignatius, the founder of my religious order. Somehow through a strange course of events, I have found myself with a group of men who are living these words to their fullest. In spite of the difficulties, the struggle for organization, and lack of everything medical, the team I am with is making an incredible difference. After today's work many will lose limbs, some may not walk, but others had the first chance at life in 6 days.

The motivations for each of us on this team are different. I am here because of my faith in Jesus Christ. If you share my faith, I would ask that you pray for the people of Haiti, and pray for the men I am with. Please make both a prayer of thanksgiving, for the people of Haiti are beautiful, and the team is as well.

Brother Jim Boynton, S.J.