

Thoughts for a 30 year Assessment Meeting

I have been pondering on the thirty (30) year Haitian ministry in Boston. I think some day, every body needs to sit down and look at the Haitian Ministry since Father Jeannot arrived in 1972. We have been in existence for almost 30 years now. I think everyone who was around when Msgr. Jeannot first arrived and those who became active in the ministry anytime thereafter should meet and look at what is happening and what needs to be done with the future of the Haitian Ministry in Boston. Representatives of those who were born during the first ten years of his ministry should be in such meeting also. I believe such assessment meeting should occur every five years.

The Haitian Ministry has been primarily occupied in meeting the new immigrants' "spiritual" needs. We need to start looking at the children of those immigrants. We need to start thinking about those who were baptized from 1970's on as well as those who were born during the mass migration of Haitians and the boat people influx of the 1980's.

In the United States, people talk about preparing the leaders of tomorrow. The Church also wants to evangelize tomorrow's leaders. The Haitian ministry should now say "Today's leaders". Haitian immigrants have been in many important decision making positions in the United States for the last three decades. They are now getting more visible in the public sector. A Haitian woman state representative in Boston is the first elected official in the U.S. Florida elected a Haitian-American mayor last spring, several city councils, and a state representative. The county, El Portal in Florida is primarily governed by Haitians. Those leaders have a soul. They need to hear the Gospel. As black people, they are also spiritual, but they will not be attracted by our kind of ministry. If Haitian lay and religious leaders really educate themselves and put Vatican II Council into practice, those Haitian Catholic leaders and elected officials would be in the Church, for She needs practicing Catholic in public offices like our current acting governor.

Lay and religious leaders need to start thinking of how the Boston Haitian Ministry can make a difference. Otherwise, if the Boston Haitian Ministry does not strive to make a difference, more young Haitian males will be in incarcerated and therefore no vocation. One priest from the community in 30 years is not enough.

Nekita Lamour (7-6-01) Msgr. Jeannot was taken to the eternal life on 7-8-01.

