



# FAMILY HEALTH MINISTRIES

*Supporting Haitian communities in their efforts to build and sustain healthy families*

October 2012

<http://familyhm.org>

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## A TRIBUTE TO SISTER CARMELLE

***Sister Carmelle Voltaire died in March 2012, at age 49, after many years of dedicated service to the people of Fondwa, Haiti.***

***Sister Carmelle was a nurse and caregiver. She was also the spiritual leader of the nuns and nuns in training in Fondwa.***

***She is dearly missed by her partners at Family Health Ministries, by all the Sisters that she led in ministry, and by the Fondwa families she served.***

FHM's Fondwa Project Manager, Jamalyn Peigh Williamson, prepared this tribute:

For the last ten years, I have come to understand Fondwa as home. I often joke that I live with each of my feet in different soil—one foot here in Indianapolis and one in Fondwa.

Dave and I were only seven months into our marriage when we moved to Fondwa and began our work as FHM Missionaries for two years.

It has been seven

years since we moved to Indiana from Fondwa. During that time, one thing has been constant in our visits back to Haiti - Sister Carmelle. Her love and vigor for life were contagious. She was a living example of hospitality.

When I led trips to Fondwa, she helped ease my team's anxiety by having cold Cokes ready and making sure the rooms were well-prepared.

She delighted in meeting new faces and making fast friends with them.



My friend Lisa Schubert Nowling tells a story that sums up how everyone who knew Sister Carmelle loved and felt about her:

*One day when Sister Carmelle was off running an errand, a little boy in the community got into a fight with a bull, and the bull won, piercing his upper lip with a nasty gash.*

*An American physician who was with us drafted me to translate while she stitched up the little boy. (continued)*

*Before I agreed, I searched all over the guest house for Sister Carmelle.*

*"Kote Sè Carmelle? Where's Sister Carmelle?" I kept asking everyone, not because I was afraid to translate or worried the physician wouldn't stitch him up well.*

*Rather, I knew that none of us could provide the loving comfort the boy needed quite like Sister Carmelle.*

Sister Carmelle made Haiti accessible to people who may not have dreamed they could fall in love with a land that so many had already dismissed as hopeless.

I still miss her deeply, but understand if I am to honor her legacy, then I must press on and fulfill her mission of working side by side with the people of Fondwa.

Sister Carmelle was devoted to Christ in all that she did. One of the funniest things I ever heard her say was, "Oh, that Jesus, I am crazy for that Man." I imagine she had an amazing reunion with the Man who taught her compassion and love for all people.

I hope you will all agree that we must continue on in Fondwa, hoping for a better tomorrow, leading with smiles and laughter, just like Sister Carmelle.

*-Jamalyn*



# NEWS and UPDATES



## NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH BUILDING GOODNESS FOUNDATION

Family Health Ministries is excited to announce our new partnership with Building Goodness Foundation (BGF) of Charlottesville, VA.



BGF brings together volunteers from all areas of the construction industry to design and build structures for communities in need.

They have been an active presence in Haiti since 1999, building houses, clinics, and schools.

Like Family Health Ministries, the Building Goodness Foundation puts great value on the personal relationships that we develop, not just the buildings we construct. Both organizations have discovered that wealth and happiness do not come from self-centered goals; instead, they come from caring, other-centered, long-term partnerships.

Together BGF and FHM along with our Haitian partners will be building the first Safe Motherhood clinic located on the rural mountain road between Leogane and Jacmel.

The vision of this local community center is to provide a welcoming space for Haitian women to gather, to learn, and to receive women's health services. It will be an educational space to expand FHM's initiative to teach basic skills to rural birth attendants.

The clinic will also be staffed with skilled nurses who will be able to assist women with labor and delivery.

In case of an emergency, women will be stabilized and transported to the larger Family Health Center in Leogane.

This is the start of what FHM envisions as a coordinated health system for the Leogane commune.

Next steps: This fall FHM and BGF will be working together to locate and purchase land. The BGF architect and project manager have already been identified and discussions are under way to design the new facility.

Family Health Ministries is excited to be stepping out in faith with our new partner, Building Goodness Foundation, to make women's health and safe motherhood a priority.

## MEET MILA



Coming soon to the FHM website - the video story of one of FHM's cervical cancer prevention patients, shot onsite in Haiti by Pat and Emiko Davison of Chapel Hill, NC.

Get to know Mila and learn about why her family so desperately needs her to get treatment.

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## HOLIDAY CATALOG COMING SOON

Send a card in honor of your friends, relatives, or co-workers when you make a donation to

women's and children's health care in Haiti. Look for your FHM Holiday Catalog online and in the mail soon.

Your cards will have this beautiful Haitian nativity metalwork on the cover. Make your selection from 16 unique catalog items, most \$50 or less.



## NEW LOOK AT FHM'S WEBSITE <http://familyhm.org>

Thanks to the work of Carol Thomson of Firestream Media in Durham, NC, Family Health Ministries' website will soon have a new look. Check it out in the coming weeks and let us know what you think. Email us at [info@familyhm.org](mailto:info@familyhm.org).

Get frequent updates on FHM activities and opportunities to participate at [familyhm.org](http://familyhm.org) or join us on Facebook

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