

Congregation of the Holy Spirit

Overseas with Fr. Jeff Duaine, CSSp



Taking Chances for God

The Overseas Training Program (OTP) is a vital component of the Spiritan formation process. Following the novitiate experience, candidates spend one year as a missionary working in a variety of cultural settings. This shift in geography, culture and language allows each participant to cultivate a deeper appreciation of God's unique call in his life.

Fr. Jeff Duaine, Provincial of the US Province, remembers his OTP experience as one that taught him to take chances. After finishing his second year of theology in 1982, Fr. Duaine wanted to spend three months in Haiti and then return to Brooklyn, New York to spend six months working with Haitian refugees. These decisions were rooted in his desire to minister among the Haitians as they were rebuilding their country after the fall of François Duvalier's dictatorship.

"In Haiti I lived and worked with Dominicans because in 1969 U.S. Spiritans were exiled because of their work for a democratic process and their option for the poor. I enjoyed my work

with the Dominicans and as I became more familiar with Creole, I decided to remain overseas for the full year rather than returning to Brooklyn to work with refugees.”

Returning to the U.S. in 1984 to complete his formation, Fr. Duaime struggled to reconcile his new perspectives on justice and poverty with America’s materialist society. His professors and other mentors encouraged him to integrate his Haiti experience into his academics and ministry.

Following his final vows, he returned to Haiti where he worked from 1986-1988 with base parish communities, youth groups and also taught English. Later, while pastor of Our Lady Queen of Peace in Arlington, Virginia, he created a parish partnership with a sister church in Haiti.

Currently, he is creating a summer mission program for Holy Ghost Prep students to live and work in Haiti. It is obvious that Haiti is still very much alive in Fr. Duaime’s own life.

“My OTP in Haiti taught me to be open to new experiences with God. I never thought of myself as a missionary until I took a chance to see. Since then, my whole world view has changed. Haiti caused me to be a new person.”

Further information can be obtained from the Vocations Director.

Br. Michael E. Suazo, CSSp, Vocations Director

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