



WELCOME TO HAITI!

Welcome to Pignon! Volunteers have been traveling to Pignon, Haiti for over 30 years to work with Promise for Haiti at Hospital Bienfaisance, in our schools, and with various projects to give quality life within the community. WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT, DONATIONS, AND TALENTS THAT YOU PROVIDE!

Dr. Guy Theodore, the founder of Promise for Haiti, made a promise to the Lord that when he became a doctor, he would return to his homeland and help treat the sick people of Pignon. As Dr. Guy received his education in Port au Prince Haiti and the United States, his collaboration with friends and other medical personal made this vision a reality.

To make this a wonderful and rewarding experience as a volunteer, please read thoroughly through this ***Traveler's Manual*** which will give important information about traveling to Haiti and understanding life in Haiti. Our goal as an organization is to respectfully work together with the Haitians to help them better their living conditions. Sharing our talents, love, and support will help empower and teach the Haitian people to have a brighter tomorrow.

Trip Preparation

Passport: All U.S. citizens are **required** to have a passport for travel to Haiti and anywhere outside of the United States and for return to the U.S. For passport information, go to <http://travel.state.gov/passport>. A photocopy of your passport is recommended to keep with you at all times.

Immigration Card (given to you on flight to Port au Prince) is required by Haiti Immigration Services. There is a **\$10 cash fee that is paid upon your arrival in Haiti!** Your Immigration card must be completed before landing in Haiti. Fill in the card as follows:

Purpose-“Pleasure”

Passport Number (Write this on card)

Address of your location in Haiti-

***Hospital Bienfaisance de Pignon,
Pignon, Haiti***

****Keep the bottom half of this card with your passport. You will need to return this to Immigration as you leave Haiti!***

If Passport is lost, keep these documents readily available *At Home!*

1. **Certified Birth Certificate**-necessary to replace your lost or stolen passport
2. **Two Current Passport Pictures**-necessary to replace your passport
3. **Two Photocopies of Passport**
 - (a) Keep photocopy *at home* with family or contact person.
 - (b) Keep photocopy *in your suitcase* as backup for lost documents.

Evacuation Insurance- Promise for Haiti requires all teams to carry volunteer missionary travel insurance. This is arranged through **Gallagher Charitable**. This covers Medical Reimbursement, Emergency medical Evacuation, Permanent Total Disability, Personal Property, Accidental Death & Dismemberment, Repatriation of Mortal Remains, Travel and Medical Assistant Services. You will find a link to this at www.promiseforhaiti.org and click on “Volunteer with Us” at the top of the screen.

Medical Insurance Card- It is a requirement that everyone has a valid health insurance card. You need to have a copy of the Insurance ID card or proof of insurance. **Senior citizens** may wish to contact the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) or a travel agent for information about *foreign medical care coverage with private Medicare supplement plans*. **You are NOT covered by Medicare abroad.** The Social Security Medicare program does not provide coverage for hospital or medical costs outside of the United States.

Travel Safety Information

General Safety Tips:

- Never leave your luggage unattended while traveling.
- Always have a buddy with you at all times; also in the airport.
- Keep your passport, ID and money with you at all times. In Pignon, you may leave valuables in the dorm.
- Always be aware of your surroundings.

Registration with the U.S. Department of State and Haitian Embassy:

Each team registered with the U.S. Department of State prior to arrival in Haiti will have their names, passport numbers, and emergency contacts provided to the U.S. Embassy in Haiti. This will help the Embassy to provide services to U.S. citizens who are traveling or residing in Haiti.

Medical Needs: *Use mosquito repellent (containing DEET) at all times!* There are multiple diseases that can be transmitted by mosquitos-Malaria, Dengue Fever and Chikunguya Fever. Consider bringing a mosquito net or bed liner for sleeping. *We strongly suggest that you wear long sleeve shirts, long pants and closed-toe shoes, and socks due to this problem!! *Many volunteers treat clothing and socks with Permethrin.* If you must wear shorts, please cover with mosquito repellent liberally. Also, remember there are parasites which can be contracted from walking without shoes in dirt infested with spores or cysts.*

Immunizations: CDC recommends travel vaccines. See your doctor at least 4-6 weeks before your trip allowing time for immunizations to be effective. *Hepatitis A, B* and a *current Typhoid vaccines* are recommended. *Malaria pills are recommended.* Travelers must be responsible and provide their own Malaria medication. For liability reasons, we cannot give this to you once you are in Haiti. Check with your doctor about concerns of drug interaction with other medicines that you are taking.

Prescriptions: **Any medical condition should be communicated to your Team leader.**

If you are taking routine prescription medications for a medical condition, bring adequate supplies of the medicine. All medicines have to be in the original labeled container for authentication of contents. Any unlabeled meds could be mistaken for illegal drugs. This includes (over the counter) meds as well. Consult your personal physician before departure for health evaluation and clearance for travel. *We strongly suggest that you bring anti-nausea/anti-diarrhea medication as well.*

EMERGENCIES: *Prior to your travel you will be provided with a contact number should you experience any emergencies while in Haiti. Please keep this with you in case you have an emergency situation and need assistance.*

Packing Items/What To Bring

Personal Items and Miscellaneous Suggested Items:

****Remember there is not a drug store or convenience store.****

Personal toiletries in small container and for personal hygiene

- **Personal Medications**-Prescription meds & Imodium, Laxative (Pepto-Bismol), Tylenol, Advil and mild sleep aid (Benadryl), ciprofloxacin (for GI illness), zofran
- Earplugs or headphones
- **Bible**
- **Lock** for your suitcase
- **Passport** on-body holder-keep it with you at all times
- Cash IN SMALL BILLS (Haitian vendors do not have change)
- Insect Repellent with **DEET**
- T-shirts (Team shirt is good for group traveling identification)
- Work clothes- long pants give protection from insect bites
- Nice clothes- (skirt, blouse, dress pants) if attending church
- Light weight jacket/sweater (nights can be cool in winter months)
- Shoes-study **closed toe** for outdoor work & **flip-flops** for shower
- Socks (treated with **Permethrin**)
- Hats/bandannas
- Sunglasses/protective eye wear
- Towel (1 or 2)
- Plastic Laundry bag- Keep dirty clothes separate from clean clothes!
- Toilet paper (2 rolls)
- Bar Soap
- Band Aids
- Swimsuit for hotel (if applicable)
- Sun block lotion
- Flashlight and **Extra Batteries**
- Wet wipes/Hand sanitizer
- Camera
- Water bottle
- Granola Bars, snacks & Dehydrated food
- books for leisure reading

Things to Remember

Water & Drinks- Do not drink or brush your teeth with any water in Haiti!

Purified drinking water is provided at dormitory. Do not drink shower water, use ice or local tap water. You could get *sick*. **Bottled water, boiled water, or hot beverages** (coffee or tea made with boiled water) **are safe!!** Canned or bottled beverages and juices are safe. Always clean the area of the bottle that will touch your mouth.

Food- Eat only foods that are prepared by the mission staff at the dorm. Meals are usually served at 8 am, 12pm, and 5:30pm. Do not eat any raw food or milk products. They could be contaminated.

Money & Valuables- (\$50-\$100) The amount of money you bring will depend on your desire to purchase souvenirs. Do not bring any bills larger than a \$20 and we recommend bringing \$1 bills to buy most anything. **Do not bring Traveler's Checks!** There is not a safe at the dorm to lock your money or passport. Keep your passport in a safe place when traveling and keep it with you at all times. **Leave your jewelry at home!!**

Camera Usage- Bring cameras but **Please Ask** people if you may take their picture. Do not snap their picture without asking since some may not want their picture to be taken or will ask to be paid. Please be respectful and sensitive toward others. People have been traveling to Haiti for years taking pictures, and some Haitian's have become unwilling to be photographed.

****REMEMBER-* To Avoid Illness**

- Don't Eat Food Purchased from Street Vendors.
- Don't Drink Beverages with Ice.
- Don't Eat Dairy Products Unless They Are Pasteurized.
- Don't Eat Raw produce (salads, uncooked vegetables)
- Don't Handle Animals. (Dogs, Cats, Monkeys)

Invitations to the U.S- **DO NOT** invite a Haitian (i.e. interpreter, teacher, pastors) to the U.S. Be aware that normal, friendly comments are easily misconstrued as actual invitations. Words such as, "You should see our church" or "it would be nice to have you visit the U.S." can be inviting. In addition to the fact that passports and visas are nearly impossible for average Haitian people to obtain, coming to the USA may hinder their desire and vision to minister in their own country and community.

***For Your Protection- DO NOT GIVE OUT YOUR EMAIL ADDRESSES, PHONE NUMBERS OR MAILING ADDRESS to individuals.**

- If someone asks you for something of yours do not say, “Maybe” or “We will see.” This can be interpreted as a “Yes” to Haitians. As this answer gives hope, then it will only encourage a continual pursuit. Again, we discourage any special giveaways as previously mentioned.
- Internet and telephone access at the mission campus is for host staff only, except in cases of emergency. Internet access in Haiti is limited and expensive, so please leave your laptop computer and other electronics at home. Although this may be difficult to do, you will find it rewarding in other areas while on your trip. A communication will go to your loved ones at home letting them now you have arrived safely.

IMPORTANT- Begging and Charity (Giving to the Poor)

On the streets of Haiti, many, including children, will beg from others more fortunate. This may occur quite often. It is **ESSENTIAL** that you observe the following rules about giving. If one person breaks these rules, word is spread throughout the community. This will create an unhealthy environment and undermine our work.

- *If you bring items to be given away, mission leaders will collect them and distribute them evenly, most likely when you are not present.*
- Please **DO NOT GIVE ANY MONEY** unless you coordinate it with host leader.
- *Travelers may not pay rent or finance home construction for anyone without the approval and supervision of mission staff.*
- *There are areas on all campuses where only travelers and staff only are permitted.* Please do not invite Haitians into these areas and be respectful of those who live there.
- *We do not assist other people being supported outside of our programs. Do not agree to sponsor a child/student directly.* We cannot guarantee that money given to individuals outside the programs will be used in the way you intended. People on the street may ask you to finance them for a test, schooling, or supplies. Many of these people already have benefactors or they may not need the money for school at all. There are several individuals within our programs that do need support, and we ask that you work through our organization to support them properly.
- *For further information on this topic, please refer to the book, When Helping Hurts by Brian Fikkert.*

HAITIAN CREOLE LANGUAGE

Haitian Creole is derived from the French language, a very basic way to think of it is as a phonetic version. For example: Bonswa, is pronounced as it looks (with French pronunciation) as bone-swa.

Useful words and Phrases:

- **Good morning-** Bonjou
- **Good afternoon-** Bonswa
- **Good evening/Good night-** Bonswa
- **Please-** Tanpri
- **Thanks-** Mesi
- **What is your name?-** Kijan ou rele
- **My name is-**Mwen rele
- **I am fine-**Mwen byen
- **How about you?-** E ou menm
- **Happy-**Kontan
- **Yes/No-**Wi/Non
- **I don't speak Creole-**Mwen pa pale kreol
- **Where is the toilet?-**Kote twalet la ye
- **Show me where the toilet is please-**Montrem kote twalet la ye tanpri
- **Please speak slowly -**Pale Dousman tanpri
- **Slow-**Dousman
- **There is a problem-**Gen yon problem-
- **Excuse me please-**Eskize-m-silvouple
- **Enough-**Ase
- **Church-**Legliz
- **Where?-**Ki kote
- **Food-**Manje
- **Hungry-**Grangou
- **The rice is good-** Diri a bon anpil
- **Good job-**Bon travay
- **Goat-**Kabrit
- **Dog-** Chen
- **Chicken-**Poul
- **Donkey-**Bourik
- **Horse-**Cheval
- **Work-**Travay
- **Hammer-**Mato
- **Cement-**Siman
- **Water-**Dlo

- **Shovel**-Pel
- **Bucke**- Bokit
- **Sand**-Sab
- **Pass me the hammer please**-Pasem mato a tanpri
- **I am tired**-Mwen fatigue/ mwen bouke
- **Let's take a rest**-An nou pose
- **How much?**-Knobyin

HISTORY OF PROMISE FOR HAITI

“A Promise made a Promise Kept” As a child, young Guy Theodore frequently accompanied his father on donkey ride visitations to the sick and dying people of the remote countryside. His father would pray with the sick and their family, often times dispensing some basic pills or other available medicines that he could acquire with his own money. At the age of twelve Guy often saw children his age dying, casualties of malnutrition, poor sanitation and lack of medical attention. His birth town had no doctor to treat them. Many children that Guy encountered on one visit would be dead the next visit. He knew that these people were perishing not only unnecessarily, but often hopelessly.

On a trip with his father to one of his friends, Guy asked his father why he didn't give that child any medication. His father told him the friend was dying. There were no doctors in the area and most people could not afford to travel some twenty miles to Cap-Haitian or Port-au-Prince for help. With both a child's innocence and a maturity beyond his years, young Guy asked if he could become a doctor and care for his people. His father told him that it was possible with the Lord's help and blessings. There, in the mountains, they got down off the donkey and Guy prayed aloud: "Lord there is so much need all around me. As a Christian, I feel it is my duty to try to help people. Give me the wisdom and intelligence to become a doctor. Wherever I am, I will come back to Pignon and do Your Work." Within him burned a determination to cultivate his God-given intelligence to attend medical school, and share his faith and knowledge with Pignon's residents. God answered Guy's prayers and enabled him to finish high school and medical school in Port-au-Prince. After his medical training and a residency in urology, he traveled abroad to pursue an internship in New Jersey; thereafter he completed his surgical residency in New York City and entered private practice.

For a Haitian boy reared in a remote village of Haiti, Dr. Theodore found himself in unimaginably pleasant circumstances while in the United States. He had friends, comfort, possessions and prestige--until one night in 1976 when he had a dream and his life passed before his eyes. He remembered himself as a twelve year old boy and heard his father probing, "Guy have you forgotten your commitment to the Lord?" He saw again the hollow eyes of dying children and awoke knowing he must return to Pignon. He had to honor his promise to the Lord.

At the time of his dream, Dr. Theodore was about to invest in a new home in New York City. Instead he took his money and sent it to Pignon to begin building the Hospital de Bienfaisance on the site where he was born. He also entered the U. S. Air Force to broaden his experience. He became the chief Surgeon at the Little Rock Air Force Base in 1980. While there he formed the Christian Mission of Pignon (now Promise for Haiti) in 1981 with the help of other doctors, who began making medical and dental team visits to Pignon. In 1982 he became a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons, being one of few Haitians to achieve this distinction. In 1983, after seven

years of service in the US Air Force and obtaining the rank of Colonel, he returned to Pignon to serve his people full time and fulfill his promise to both his father and to God. Under Dr. Theodore's leadership and with the help of thousands of Christian volunteers, his vision has become a reality. The Comite de Bienfaisance (CBP), a locally elected Haitian committee, presides over the entire mission effort, its programs and projects. The hospital works with partners and other non-profit concerns to assist directly with the Comite de Bienfaisance. The mission coordinates efforts, identifies needs, proposes development of policies and recommend priorities. Approved projects are coordinated with various stateside support groups and individuals to carry out the Lord's work in Pignon and the surrounding area. Young Guy Theodore's promise has been fulfilled and Dr. Theodore's vision is becoming a reality as the mission continues to expand its efforts in the North Central Plateau of Haiti.