

LATIN AMERICAN SOCIO-RELIGIOUS STUDIES PROGRAM -  
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**ENCYCLOPEDIA OF RELIGIOUS GROUPS IN  
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN:  
RELIGION IN HAITI**

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# Religion in Haiti

## Country Summary

The Caribbean island nation of the Republic of Haiti (*République d'Haïti*) shares the island of Hispaniola with the Dominican Republic, with the former on the west and later on the east. Haiti's 10,600 square miles of territory is about one-third of Hispaniola's land mass. Haiti is the third largest country in the Caribbean behind Cuba and the Dominican Republic; the latter shares a 360-km (224 mi) border with Haiti. At its closest point, Haiti is only about 45 nautical miles (83 km; 52 mi) away from Cuba and has the second longest coastline (1,771 km/1,100 mi) in the Greater Antilles, with Cuba having the longest. Haiti's terrain consists mainly of rugged mountains interspersed with small coastal plains and river valleys.

The country's most important valley in terms of agriculture is the Plaine de l'Artibonite, which is located south of the Montagnes Noires ("northern mountains"). This region contains the country's (also Hispaniola's) longest river, the Riviere l'Artibonite, which begins in the western region of the Dominican Republic and continues westward through central Haiti and empties into the Golfe de la Gonâve. The eastern and central region of the island is a large elevated plateau.

The southern region consists of the Plaine du Cul-de-Sac (the southeast) and the mountainous southern peninsula (also known as the Tiburon Peninsula). The Plaine du Cul-de-Sac is a natural depression that harbors the country's saline lakes, such as Trou Caïman and Haiti's largest lake, Lac Azuei. The Chaîne de la Selle mountain range – an extension of the southern mountain chain of the Dominican Republic (the Sierra de Baoruco) – extends from the Massif de la Selle in the east to the Massif de la Hotte in the west. This mountain range contains Pic la Selle, the highest point in Haiti at 2,680 m (8,793 ft).

The nation's population was estimated at 10,188,000 in 2009, almost totally of African descent. The capital city is Port-au-Prince, with an estimated population of 1,082,800 in 2007. The city, with its important natural harbor, faces the Gulf of Mexico. It was first incorporated under the colonial rule of the French in 1749, and has been Haiti's largest metropolis since then. The city's layout is similar to that of an amphitheatre; the commercial districts are near the sea, while residential neighborhoods are located on the hills above. Its population is difficult to ascertain due to the rapid growth of slums on the hillsides above the city; however, recent estimates place the metropolitan area's population at around 3.5 million, which is nearly half of the country's national population. The urban population was 47 percent of total national population in 2008, and the rate of urbanization was estimated at 4.5 percent annual rate of change between 2005 and 2010.

The metropolitan area of Port-au-Prince is subdivided into various districts (communes). There is a ring of districts that radiates out from the commune of Port-au-Prince: Pétionville is an affluent suburban commune located southeast of the city; Delmas is located directly south of the airport and north of the central city; and the rather poor commune of Carrefour is located southwest of the city. Port-au-Prince commune harbors many low-income slums that are plagued with poverty and violence in which the most notorious, Cité Soleil, is situated. However, Cité Soleil has been

recently split off from Port-au-Prince proper to form a separate commune. During 2009, the Champ de Mars area began some modern infrastructure development projects, and the downtown area was the site of several projected modernization efforts.

However, Port-au-Prince was seriously damaged by a major earthquake (magnitude 7.0) on 12 January 2010, which left large numbers of structures damaged or destroyed and an estimated death toll of 230,000, with 300,000 injured and 1,000,000 made homeless. The government also estimated that 250,000 residences and 30,000 commercial buildings had collapsed or were severely damaged. An estimated three million people were affected by the quake. Among those killed were Archbishop Joseph Serge Miot of the Archdiocese of Port-au-Prince, and opposition leader Micha Gaillard. The headquarters of the United Nations Stabilization [Peacekeeping] Mission in Haiti (*Mission des Nations Unies pour la stabilisation en Haïti*, MINUSTAH) collapsed, killing many, including the Mission's Chief, Hédi Annabi of Tunisia, and his deputy Luiz Carlos da Costa of Brazil.

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The quake's epicenter was near the town of Léogâne, approximately 25 km (16 miles) west of Port-au-Prince. Most of the central historic area of the city was destroyed, including Haiti's prized Cathédrale de Port-au-Prince, the Presidential Palace, the capital building, the Legislative Palace (the Parliament building), the Palace of Justice (Supreme Court building), several ministerial buildings, the main prison, and several hospitals and clinics. The seaport and airport were both damaged, and most roads were blocked by debris, which limited aid shipments for post-earthquake relief. The seaport was severely damaged and was unable to accept aid shipments during the first week after the quake. The airport's control tower was damaged and the U.S. military had to set up a new control center with generators to get the airport prepared for aid flights. After that, aid was delivered to Port-au-Prince by numerous nations and voluntary groups as part of a global relief effort. On 20 January 2010, an aftershock rated at a magnitude of 5.9 caused additional damage.

Many countries responded to appeals for humanitarian aid by pledging funds and dispatching rescue and medical teams, engineers and support personnel. Communication systems, air, land, and sea transport facilities, hospitals, and electrical networks had been damaged by the earthquake, which hampered rescue and aid efforts. Confusion over who was in charge, air traffic congestion, and problems with prioritization of flights further complicated early relief work. Port-au-Prince's morgues were quickly overwhelmed with tens of thousands of unidentified bodies, which had to be buried in mass graves because of public health concerns. As rescues of those trapped in the rubble decreased, supplies, medical care and sanitation became priorities for the government and international relief organizations. Delays in aid distribution led to angry appeals from aid workers and survivors, and looting and sporadic violence were observed. On 22 January, the United Nations noted that the emergency phase of the relief operation was drawing to a close, and on the following day the Haitian government officially called off the search for survivors.

Prime Minister Bellerive announced that, beginning 20 January, people would be helped to relocate outside the zone of devastation, to areas where they may be able to rely on relatives or better fend for themselves; the homeless would be relocated to the makeshift camps created by

relief organizations and residents within the city, where a more focused delivery of aid and sanitation could be achieved. Port-au-Prince was ill-equipped before the disaster to sustain the number of people who had migrated there from the countryside over the past ten years to find work. After the earthquake, thousands of Port-au-Prince residents began returning to the rural towns from which they had come.

As of July 2010, as much as 98 percent of the rubble from the quake remained where it fell (an estimated 20 million cubic meters of rubble), which made most of the capital impassable, and thousands of bodies remained in the rubble. The number of people living in relief camps of tents and tarps since the quake was estimated at 1.6 million, and almost no transitional housing had been built. Most of the camps had no electricity, running water or sewage disposal, and the tents were beginning to fall apart. Crime in the camps was widespread, especially against women and girls. An estimated \$1.1 billion had been collected for Haiti for relief efforts by 23 major charities, but only two percent of the money had been released to organizations working in the field. According to a CBS News report, \$3.1 billion had been pledged for humanitarian aid and was used to pay for field hospitals, plastic tarps, bandages and food, plus salaries, transportation and upkeep of relief workers.

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Land ownership is a particular problem for rebuilding, because so many pre-quake homes were not officially registered. Even before the national registry fell under the rubble, land tenure has always been a complex and contentious issue in Haiti. Many areas of Port-au-Prince were settled either by the para-military *Tonton Macoutes* – Dictator François Duvalier's (ruled 1957-1989) death squads – who were given land for their service, or by squatters. In many cases land ownership was never officially registered. Even if this logistical logjam were cleared, the vast majority of Port-au-Prince residents, up to 85 percent, did not own their homes before the earthquake.

Haiti's natural resources include bauxite, copper, calcium carbonate, gold, marble and hydro-power. Haiti contains relatively small amounts of gold, silver, antimony, tin, lignite, sulphur, coal, nickel, gypsum, limestone, manganese, marble, iron, tungsten, salt, clay, and various building stones. Gold and copper are found in small quantities in the north of the country. The government announced the discovery of new gold deposits in the northern peninsula in 1985, but long-standing plans for gold production proceeded slowly. Copper also was mined, beginning in the 1960s, but production of the ore was sporadic. There are bauxite (aluminum ore) deposits on the southern peninsula, but large scale mining there was discontinued in 1983. The country's only bauxite mine, the Miragoâne Mine in the southern peninsula, produced an average of 500,000 tons of bauxite a year in the early 1980s. However, in 1982, the declining metal content of the ore, high production costs, and the oversupplied international bauxite market forced the mine to close. Bauxite had at one time been the country's second largest export. Haiti apparently has no hydrocarbon resources on land or in the Gulf of Gonâve and is, therefore, heavily dependent on energy imports (petroleum and petroleum products).



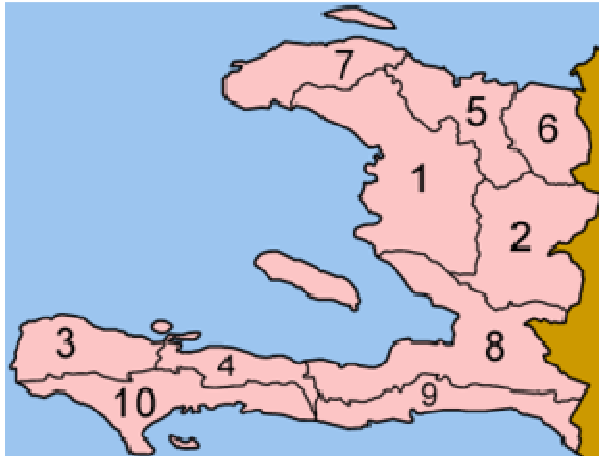
Two-thirds of all Haitians depend on the agricultural sector, mainly small-scale subsistence farming, but this activity makes up only 30 percent of the GDP; agriculture remains vulnerable to damage from frequent natural disasters, exacerbated by the country's widespread deforestation. The country has experienced little formal job-creation over the past decade, although the informal economy is growing. Mangoes and coffee are two of Haiti's most important exports. While the economy has recovered in recent years, registering positive growth since 2005, four tropical storms in 2008 severely damaged the transportation infrastructure and agricultural sector.

Haiti is no stranger to natural disasters; in addition to earthquakes, it has been struck frequently by tropical cyclones, which have caused flooding and widespread damage. The most recent cyclones to hit the island before the 2010 earthquake were Tropical Storm Fay and Hurricanes Gustav, Hanna and Ike, all in the summer of 2008, which caused nearly 800 deaths.

In 1925, Haiti was a lush country, with 60 percent of its original forest covering the hills and mountain regions. Since then, the population has cut down an estimated 98 percent of its original forest cover for use as fuel for cooking, and in the process has destroyed fertile farmland soils, contributing to desertification. In addition to soil erosion, deforestation has caused periodic flooding, as experienced on 17 September 2004.

Haiti has an elected government with three branches: executive, legislative and judicial, and a legal system based on Roman law. The current president is René García Preval (elected on 7 February 2006 with 51% of the vote); the Prime Minister is Jean-Max Bellerive (since 11 November 2009). The Cabinet is chosen by the prime minister in consultation with the president.

The President is elected by popular vote for a five-year term and is prohibited from serving consecutive terms); the next election is scheduled for 2011. The Prime Minister is appointed by the President and ratified by the National Assembly. The National Assembly is composed of a 30-seat Senate and there are 99 legislators in the Chamber of Deputies.



Haiti is divided into ten departments. The departments are listed below, with the departmental capital cities in parentheses.

1. Artibonite (Gonaïves)
2. Centre (Hinche)
3. Grand'Anse (Jérémie)
4. Nippes (Miragoâne)
5. Nord (Cap-Haïtien)
6. Nord-Est (Fort-Liberté)
7. Nord-Ouest (Port-de-Paix)
8. Ouest (Port-au-Prince)
9. Sud-Est (Jacmel)
10. Sud (Les Cayes)

The departments are further divided into 41 *arrondissements* (cantons) and 133 communes, which serve as second and third level administrative divisions.

Racially, the majority of Haitians are black (about 90 percent), while mulattoes (white and blacks mixed) comprise the remaining 10 percent of the population. However, significant distinctions exist as the result of differences in educational levels, social status, wealth and familial ties. A small percentage of the non-black population consists primarily of white Haitians; mostly of Arab, Western European (French, German, Polish, Portuguese and Spanish), Arab, Armenian or Jewish origin. Haitians of Asian descent (mostly of Chinese or East Indian origin) number approximately 400.

One of Haiti's two official languages is French, which is the principal written language, spoken in schools, and used administratively. It is spoken by most educated Haitians and used in the business sector. The second is the recently standardized Haitian Creole, spoken by virtually the entire population of Haiti. Haitian Creole is one of the French-based creole languages, which also contains significant African influence, as well as influence from Spanish and Taíno. Haitian Creole is closely related to Louisiana Creole. Spanish is also spoken by a portion of the population, though not an official language.

Millions of Haitians live abroad, chiefly in North America (the USA and Canada) and the Caribbean: the Dominican Republic, Cuba, the Bahamas, Jamaica, the French Antilles, the Turks and Caicos. Others live in the United Kingdom, Ireland, France, Venezuela and French Guiana.

In the U.S. alone there are an estimated 600,000 Haitians, plus 100,000 in Canada and an estimated 800,000 in the Dominican Republic. The Obama administration has made Haiti a priority in the hemisphere and has reviewed U.S. immigration policy. A U.N. envoy in October 2007 found racism against blacks in general, and Haitians in particular, to be rampant in every segment of Dominican society.

An estimated one million Haitians live in the Dominican Republic, most of them without visas, many without passports, and some with no identity papers whatsoever. There has been a growing public conversation about the arrival of more and more Haitians as their home situation worsened during the past year, which has been called a "peaceful invasion." Now Dominican television and radio announcers consistently refer to Haiti as "our sister nation." Deportations of Haitians from the Dominican Republic, which have been condemned by some human rights groups for their lack of due process, have been halted.

In North America there is a significant Haitian population in South Florida, specifically the Miami enclave of Little Haiti. New Orleans, Louisiana has many historic ties to Haiti that date back to the Haitian Revolution. New York City – especially in Flatbush, East Flatbush and Springfield Gardens – has a thriving émigré community with the second-largest population of Haitians of any state in the nation. There are also large and active Haitian communities in Boston, MA; Spring Valley, NY; New Jersey; Washington, DC; Providence, RI; Georgia; Connecticut and Pennsylvania. There is also a large Haitian community in Montreal, Canada.

The motor that drives emigration is poverty, illiteracy, corruption, violence and lack of hope for a better life. Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere and is ranked 149th of 182 countries on the Human Development Index, with 80 percent of the population living under the poverty line and 54 percent in abject poverty, which is the result of generations of government neglect, social strife, and lack of educational and economic opportunities, despite hundreds of millions of dollars received in foreign aid, especially since 1945. Haiti ranked No. 168 (the lowest ranking was 180 among all countries included) on the 2009 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) published by Transparency International.

Most Haitians live on \$2 or less per day, Haiti has 50 percent illiteracy, and more than 80 percent of college graduates in Haiti have emigrated, mostly to North America. Cité Soleil is considered one of the worst slums in the Americas; most of its 500,000 residents live in extreme poverty. Poverty has forced at least 225,000 Haitian children to work as *restavecs* (unpaid household servants); the United Nations considers this to be a modern-day form of slavery.

The richest one percent of the population owns nearly half the country's wealth. Since the era of "Papa Doc" Duvalier, Haiti's government has been notorious for its corruption. It is estimated that President "Baby Doc" Duvalier, his wife Michelle, and three other people robbed \$504 million from the Haitian public treasury between 1971 and 1986.

### **Current Religious Situation**

The Constitution provides for freedom of religion, and other laws and policies contribute to the generally free practice of religion, provided that these practices do not disturb law and order. The law at all levels protects this right in full against abuse, either by governmental or private actors.

The state religion, adhered to by the majority, is Roman Catholicism, while an estimated 30 percent (3,056,400) consider themselves Protestant. Haitian Vodou is still widely practiced, even within "Christian" circles, since Vodou is as much a world view (a way to understand one's circumstances) as a religion.



A U.N. Population Fund (UNFPA) census released in 2006 (based on 2003 data) lists the following religious demographics: 54.7 percent of the population is Roman Catholic, 15.4 percent Baptist, 7.9 percent Pentecostal, and 3 percent Seventh-day Adventist, with smaller percentages of Episcopalians, Methodists and other Protestant denominations (total = 30 percent). Those who claimed “no religion” numbered 10.2 percent. Other religions (5.1 percent) include Jehovah's Witnesses, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons), Muslims, and practitioners of Vodou (voodoo). An undetermined percentage of the population practices both Vodou and Christianity (mainly Roman Catholicism). Recent estimates indicate that half of the population practices Vodou, most along with other religious practices. The UNFPA reported 2.1 percent of the population practices Vodou as their primary religion.

The report that 30 percent of the population is Protestant is in reality a hemisphere-wide trend: Roman Catholics in Latin America and the Caribbean are converting to Protestantism in large numbers, especially to Pentecostalism.

The Constitution directs the establishment of laws to regulate the recognition and operation of religious groups. The administration and monitoring of religious affairs falls under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship. The Bureau of Religious Affairs within the Ministry is responsible for registering churches, clergy and missionaries. The Government observes Good Friday, Corpus Christi, Feast of the Assumption, All Saints' Day, All Souls' Day, and Christmas as national holidays.

Historically, Roman Catholicism was the official religion. While this official status ended with the enactment of the 1987 Constitution, neither the government nor the Holy See renounced the 1860 concordat, which serves as the basis for relations between the Catholic Church (and its religious orders) and the State. In many respects, Catholicism retains its traditional primacy among the country's religious groups. Official and quasi-official functions are held in Catholic churches and cathedrals, such as "Te Deum" masses for Independence Day, Flag Day and Founders Day. However, the government recognizes the increasing role of Protestant churches; for example, Episcopal and other Protestant clergy were invited to participate when the religious sector was asked to play an advisory role in politics.

Organized missionary groups and missionaries affiliated with independent churches operate hospitals, orphanages, schools, and clinics. Foreign missionaries enter as regular tourists and submit paperwork similar to that submitted by domestic religious groups to the Bureau of Religious Affairs. Delays in issuing residence permits were attributed to bureaucratic delay.

### **Historical Overview of Social, Political and Religious Development**

Spain claimed the island of Hispaniola when Christopher Columbus first landed there in 1492. The Spaniards used the island as a springboard to colonize deeper into the Western Hemisphere and exploited the island's gold mines. They imported the first black slaves to Hispaniola in 1502 when their first pool of forced laborers, the island's native Taíno Indians, was nearly eliminated by disease and harsh living conditions. In 1508, Spanish King Ferdinand II of Aragón officially established Spain's African slave trade.

Estimates of the number of Amerindian inhabitants on the island of Hispaniola at the time of Columbus' arrival vary from 500,000 to two million. Within fifty years, the indigenous population had been reduced to a few hundred as the result of warfare, disease and the harsh conditions of slavery, which forced the Spanish to import African slaves as a replacement labor force.

Although the island's native religious cultures (Arawak, Taíno and Carib) all but perished with their bearers, certain indigenous Caribbean influences are still noticeable in elements of Haitian Vodou. Zaka, the Vodou spirit of agriculture, for instance, is considered a derivative of an Amerindian "corn spirit."

As early as 1502, the Spanish were importing African slaves to the island, empowered by the 1454 papal bull *Romanus pontifex*. Slaves were forced to be baptized as Catholics upon their arrival in Hispaniola, yet their "conversion" was merely a formality. African religious traditions, despite their prohibition, thrived in the colony, especially in Maroon communities of escaped slaves, where elements of Catholicism eventually merged with African religious beliefs and practices to become the religion now known as Vodou.

French pirates or *buccaneers* used what is now Northwest Haiti – Tortuga Island (*Île de la Tortue*) in particular – to attack English and Spanish ships. Eventually, their numbers grew and the French settled further south onto the mainland. In 1657 the region became a French Colony, and in 1664 it came under the control of the French West Indies Company. In response to an increasingly uncontrollable French presence on the island's northwestern coast, the Spanish ceded the western third of the island to the French under the Treaty of Ryswick in 1697, which ended the Nine-Years' War in Europe and the Caribbean.

A population explosion occurred after the French plantation system was established in western Hispaniola, where laborers worked on sugar, tobacco and coffee plantations. When the treaty was signed, there were roughly 2,000 slaves in the nascent French colony of Saint-Dominique, whereas, by 1789, over 600,000 slaves labored in the colony, which at one point produced one-third of all sugar consumed in Europe. By the time of the American Revolution (1776-1781), Saint-Dominique had become one of the richest colonies in the French empire, the "pearl of the Antilles."

The conditions for many slaves were horrific. Writings from the time describe masters torturing and killing their slaves. In 1790, there were slightly more than 50,000 white landowners and freemen extracting labor from half a million slaves – nearly one freeman for every 10 slaves.

In 1791, a long and violent slave uprising led by Toussaint L'Ouverture, Jean Jacques Dessalines and Henri Christophe finally led to independence in 1804. The nation was renamed Haiti, after the Taíno word for the island meaning "mountainous land." The new Haitian rulers had to govern a devastated and impoverished country, left in ruin by years of civil war and invasion by French, English and Spanish forces.

Haiti became the world's first black republic and the second free nation in the Western Hemisphere, after the United States of America. But the existence of a country of former slaves so close to home was abhorrent to many North Americans, particularly in the slaveholding South.

For years, no nation would recognize Haiti as a country. The U.S. government did not accept Haiti's independence until Abraham Lincoln's administration, nearly 60 years later.

France eventually acknowledged Haiti's sovereignty in 1838, but only after exacting 150 million gold francs from Haiti in restitution – ten times the nation's total annual revenue. It was the first of many abusive international actions that set Haiti on its present course of indebtedness and would help fuel political instability there for two centuries.

Haiti was never able to revive its profitable plantation economy, which had depended entirely on slavery, an idea detestable to Haitians. Most of them squatted on small plots of land around the country, which resulted in the motley collection of small subsistence farms that still exists today.

In the 19th century, Haiti floundered under a series of ineffectual and tyrannical leaders and endured a series of occupations by the U.S. Marines (1915-1934). U.S. President Woodrow Wilson ordered his military forces to occupy Haiti in 1915 to prevent Germany from taking over the country, and to foster economic development for U.S. companies. Haiti's government was deeply in debt to foreign companies by the early 1900s, many to German commercial interests. German nationals controlled nearly 80 percent of the nation's foreign trade, owned major utilities, and frequently inspired revolutions to bring to power rulers they could control. Haiti's bankruptcy and continued political chaos offered both an opportunity and an excuse for foreign intervention. Between 1908 and 1915, there were seven presidents and 20 or more uprisings and attempted insurrections.

The U.S. Government intervened in Haiti on 18 July 1915 by sending in thousands of sailors and marines to occupy Port-au-Prince, the country's customs houses and other government buildings. The Haitian Congress quickly selected **Philippe Sudre Dartiguenave** as the nation's president on 12 August, in the belief that cooperating with the U.S. Government would benefit the nation by bringing order and stability. However, as hostility by Haitians against the presence of U.S. troops on their soil increased, the U.S. commander declared martial law thereby allowing U.S. military courts to try Haitian political dissidents. President Dartiguenave governed from August 1915 to May 1922.

On 11 November 1915, the U.S. authorities forced a reluctant Haitian Senate to sign a treaty that legalized the U.S. military occupation of their nation. This treaty placed Haitian finances and government under U.S. control, abolished the existing army, and created a single police force – **the Gendarmerie d'Haiti** – under the control of U.S. military commanders.

**Lawyer Eustache Antoine Francois Joseph Louis Borno**, appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs, negotiated a commitment with U.S. authorities to achieve the economic development of the country and refused to transfer any territory. When President Dartiguenave finished his term, Louis Borno was elected president by the State Council on 10 April 1922. However, both Dartiguenave and Borno only served at the pleasure of the U.S. military occupation force, which appointed General John H. Russell as the High Commissioner. Gen. Russell coordinated all U.S. activities in Haiti until 1930 under a joint dictatorship with President Borno. Under this Russell-Borno dictatorship, Haiti was comparatively tranquil and prosperous due to abundant coffee crops during years of high prices on the international market.

However, at the time Borno took office in 1922, the Haitian state's external debt alone was equivalent to four year's of the government budget. Borno decided, in June 1922, to take out a loan of \$23 million to clear all debts. He reduced export taxes and soon the trade deficit balanced. Under his administration (1922-1930) infrastructure improvements were particularly impressive: 1,700 km of roads were improved, 189 bridges were built, many irrigation canals were rehabilitated, hospitals, schools, and public buildings were constructed, and drinking water was brought to the main cities. Port au-Prince became the first city of Latin America to have phone service available with automatic dialing. Agricultural education was organized with a central school of agriculture and 69 state-managed farms in the countryside.

President Borno relied on the Roman Catholic Church to develop low-cost quality education throughout the country by using teachers from French religious orders who were invited to work in Haiti. Borno was aware that most Haitians did not speak French, so he authorized the use of Haitian Creole in the education system.

Instead of seeking to win popular support, High Commissioner Russell strengthened U.S. authority over the Haitian state. In 1928, the joint dictators imposed constitutional amendments that increased presidential power and extended Borno's term from four to six years. During 1929 there were angry protests by students and peasants against the government and the U.S. occupation, which produced armed clashes between the protestors and U.S. Marines. After the 1929 uprisings, U.S. President Herbert Hoover was especially concerned about adverse reaction in other Latin American countries, at a time when he was promoting a "good neighbor" policy. Hoover wanted out of Haiti and sent two special commissions to investigate the situation and ease tensions: President Borno was ousted, a new legislature was selected in October 1930, and **Sténio Joseph Vincent** was chosen as President.

President Vincent called for the immediate withdrawal of all the U.S. Marines from Haiti, which did not occur until August 1934 under orders from U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The Haitian government replaced U.S. authorities in the country with Haitians, and the Gendarmerie became the Garde d'Haiti (National Guard) under Haitian officers to provide public security. The U.S. National City Bank sold the Banque Nationale to Haiti for \$1 million, although the U.S. continued to supervise Haitian government finances until the 1922 loan was paid off in 1947.

The U.S. occupation worsened unfortunate tendencies in Haitian political and cultural life that had existed since the Revolution of 1791: the hatred between black and colored Haitians. The U.S. authorities had chosen three puppet presidents from the colored elite, and they generally appointed light-skinned officials, which alienated the black nationalists who sought to reaffirm their African roots. François Duvalier later came to power as a representative of the "black power" movement.

Since 1933, Haiti has suffered from frequent political rebellions and military coups. However, under this surface of political violence, the nation's fundamental power structure has changed little since the 1840s. Haiti's rulers traditionally have treated the citizenry with disdain, as subjects to be plundered for the profit of the ruling elite that has continued to dominate commerce and the professions. The commercial elite have dominated the market place by buying licenses for the exclusive right to import, export or sell certain goods. Through these licenses, a few

wealthy families have controlled the economy and have kicked back part of their profits to the black middle class that controls the government. According to Jan Rogozinski (1999: 266-267),

As much as economic institutions have been perverted to benefit the commercial caste, the government has served solely to provide a living for those in office. Haitian officials have lived off politics by soliciting bribes and by stealing public revenues. Haitian governments do not provide public services in areas such as education, health, employment or finance. Taxes enrich politicians; they are not spent to build roads or to make other needed infrastructural improvements.

Given Haiti's mountainous terrain, population density effectively approached 1,000 per square mile by the 1930s, and it has continued to soar. The overwhelming majority of Haitians have provided for themselves through subsistence farming, cultivating tiny plots with primitive tools. The Haitian government never has registered land ownership. Most peasants with farms have no legal titles to them and little incentive to conserve the soil. Moreover, charcoal has remained the main source of energy in Haitian homes. Over-cultivation and burning of trees for charcoal have stripped the soil from half of the land area, turning the countryside into a rocky desert and creating irreversible ecological disaster.

As a result of the extinction of the indigenous population by the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the population of pre-independence Saint-Domingue was entirely the product of the French colonists' slaveholding policies and practices. The major planters and government officials who constituted the ruling class carefully controlled every segment of the population, especially the majority of African slaves and their descendants. Society was structured for the rapid production of wealth for the planters and their investors in France.

In the colonial period, the French imposed a three-tiered social structure. At the top of the social and political ladder was the white elite (*grands blancs*). At the bottom of the social structure were the black slaves (*noirs*), most of whom had been transported from Africa. Between the white elite and the slaves arose a third group, the freedmen (*affranchis*), most of whom were descended from sexual unions between slaveowners and slaves. Some mulatto freedmen inherited land, became relatively wealthy, and owned slaves; perhaps as many as one-fourth of all slaves in Saint-Domingue belonged to *affranchis*. Nevertheless, racial codes kept the *affranchis* socially and politically inferior to the whites. Also, between the white elite and the slaves were the poor whites (*petits blancs*), who considered themselves socially superior to the mulattoes, even if they sometimes found themselves economically inferior to them. Of a population of 519,000 in 1791, 87 percent were slaves, eight percent were whites, and five percent were freedmen. Because of harsh living and working conditions, many slaves died and new slaves were imported to supply the labor market. Thus, at the time of the slave rebellion of 1791, most slaves had been born in Africa rather than in Saint-Domingue.

The Haitian Revolution (1791–1804) changed the country's social structure. The colonial ruling class, and most of the white population, was eliminated, and the plantation system was largely destroyed. The earliest black and mulatto leaders attempted to restore a plantation system that relied on an essentially free labor force, through strict military control, but the system collapsed during the tenure of Alexandre Pétion (1806-1818). The Haitian Revolution broke up plantations and distributed land among the former slaves. Through this process, the new Haitian upper class lost control over agricultural land and labor, which had been the economic basis of colonial

control. To maintain their superior economic and social position, the new Haitian upper class turned away from agricultural pursuits in favor of more urban-based activities, particularly government.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century Haitian ruling class consisted of two groups, the urban elite and the military leadership. The urban elite were primarily a closed group of educated, comparatively wealthy, and French-speaking mulattoes. Birth determined an individual's social position, and shared values and intermarriage reinforced class solidarity. The military, however, was a means of advancement for disadvantaged black Haitians. In a shifting and often uneasy alliance with the military, the urban elite ruled the country and kept the peasantry isolated from national affairs. The urban elite promoted French norms and models as a means of separating themselves from the peasantry. Thus, French language and manners, orthodox Roman Catholicism, and light skin were important criteria of high social position. The elite disdained manual labor, industry, and commerce in favor of the more genteel professions, such as law and medicine.

A small, but politically important, middle class emerged during the twentieth century. Although social mobility increased slightly, the traditional elite retained their economic preeminence, despite countervailing efforts by François Duvalier. For the most part, the peasantry continued to be excluded from national affairs, but by the 1980s this isolation had decreased significantly. Still, economic hardship in rural areas caused many cultivators to migrate to the cities in search of a higher standard of living, thereby increasing the size of the urban lower class.

Since the nation's birth, it has suffered under a long line of dictators and more than 30 military coups. The most notorious of those dictators were the regimes of François "Papa Doc" Duvalier (b.1907-d.1971) and his son, Jean-Claude Duvalier (b.1951, known as "Baby Doc"). The Duvalier family came to power in the 1950s. During their nearly 30 years in power, they were criticized for their rampant corruption, mismanagement and oppression. An estimated 30,000 Haitians were killed during that period for opposing the regime, in addition to the unknown numbers who died from widespread famine and disease. "Baby Doc" fled the country in 1986 before a series of coups and political oppression that racked the country for four more years.

In February 1991, Roman Catholic priest **Jean-Bertrand Aristide** became Haiti's president after a landslide victory that was declared largely free and fair. But a few months later, Aristide was temporarily overthrown in a coup funded by wealthy Haitian business leaders and political opponents who disliked his platform favoring the poorest Haitians.

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In December 1990, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, a charismatic Roman Catholic priest, won 67% of the vote in a presidential election that international observers deemed largely free and fair. Aristide took office in February 1991, but was overthrown by discontented elements of the army and forced to leave the country in September of the same year. From October 1991 to June 1992, Joseph Nerette, as president, led an unconstitutional de facto regime and governed with a parliamentary majority and the armed forces. In June 1992, he resigned and Parliament approved Marc Bazin as prime minister of a de facto government with no replacement named for president. In June 1993, Bazin resigned and the UN imposed an oil and arms embargo, bringing the Haitian military to the negotiating table. President Aristide and Gen. Raoul Cedras, head of the Haitian Armed Forces, signed the UN-brokered Governors Island Agreement on July 3, 1993, establishing a 10-step process for the restoration of constitutional government and the return of

President Aristide by October 30, 1993. The military derailed the process and the UN reimposed economic sanctions. The political and human rights climate continued to deteriorate as the military and the de facto government sanctioned repression, assassination, torture, and rape in open defiance of the international community's condemnation.

In May 1994, the military selected Supreme Court Justice Emile Jonassaint to be provisional president of its third de facto regime. The UN and the U.S. reacted to this unconstitutional move by tightening economic sanctions (UN Resolution 917). On July 31, 1994, the UN adopted Resolution 940 authorizing member states to use all necessary means to facilitate the departure of Haiti's military leadership and restore constitutional rule and Aristide's presidency.

In the weeks that followed, the United States took the lead in forming a multinational force (MNF) to carry out the UN's mandate by means of a military intervention. In Operation UPHOLD DEMOCRACY US objectives were to foster democratic institutions and to reduce the flow of illegal immigrants into the United States. Despite the pledges of a military-backed regime in Haiti to return power to the democratically elected government it had ousted, the regime did not relinquish authority but became increasingly repressive and presided over a deteriorating economy. As the result of deteriorating conditions, tens of thousands of impoverished Haitians fled the country, many attempting to enter the United States.

The United States responded with Operation UPHOLD DEMOCRACY, the movement of forces to Haiti to support the return of Haitian democracy. The U.S.-led Multinational Force for Haiti (MNF) began on September 19, 1994 with the approval of the Security Council, which, at the same time, approved the follow-on U.N. operation.

Source: [http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/uphold\\_democracy.htm](http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/uphold_democracy.htm)

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The coup eventually led to an intervention by the United Nations, which continues today in limited fashion. Aristide was restored to power in 1994 and disbanded Haiti's military. He was succeeded by his first prime minister, **René Préval**. Aristide won national elections again in 2000, though they were largely criticized as less-than-credible. Political tensions and violence grew over the next few years, which forced Aristide to flee the country again in the face of another coup. He was flown in a U.S. plane in an evacuation organized by the U.S., French and Canadian governments to the Central African Republic in what he later described as a "kidnaping." Aristide, who still faces legal charges if he returned to Haiti, took asylum in South Africa, where he lives in the capital, Pretoria, in a house provided by the South African state. He rarely appears or speaks in public.

In February 2004, an interim government took office to organize new elections under the auspices of the **United Nations Stabilization [Peacekeeping] Mission in Haiti**. Continued violence and technical delays prompted repeated postponements, but Haiti finally did inaugurate a democratically-elected president and parliament in May 2006.

Supported by international UN peacekeepers, an interim government functioned until Préval was elected again in 2006 in elections that were declared legitimate. In the spring of 2008, Préval's Prime Minister, Jacques-Edouard Alexis, stepped down after widespread protests over sky-

rocketing food prices that made staples like rice and beans too expensive for many Haitians to afford.

In early April 2008, riots broke out over the high cost of food; since 2007, prices for a number of essential foods, including rice, had risen by about 50 percent. As the turmoil continued, rioters attacked the presidential palace on 8 April but were driven away by UN soldiers. On 9 April, Préval called for calm; he said that high food prices were a problem around the world, but that the problem would not be solved by destroying stores, and he said that he had "ordered Haitian police and UN soldiers to put an end to the looting." Despite demands for all taxes on food imports to be lifted, Préval said that he could not do so because the money was greatly needed; he pledged to increase food production in Haiti so that the country would not be so dependent on imports, but this fell short of what many protesters demanded.

On 12 January 2010, Port-au-Prince was hit a major earthquake. Initial reports indicated that diplomats were unable to contact President Préval and they feared he might be trapped beneath the rubble of the Presidential Palace. However, later reports – including one quoting the Haitian Ambassador to the United States, Raymond Alcide Joseph – said that the President and First Lady Elisabeth Delatour Préval had escaped unharmed and had been moved to a safe location on the island. The couple were about to enter their quarters at the Presidential Palace when the earthquake struck. Préval and his wife were able to step away from the building before it collapsed, thereby escaping injury.

Much of the Haitian government, including President Préval, was relocated to a police barracks near Toussaint Louverture International Airport. Since the earthquake, President Préval has been criticized at home and abroad for his allegedly weak disaster response.

On 22 October 2010, President Préval reported that an outbreak of cholera had killed at least 138 people in the country's central region and that his government was taking measures to try to stop the disease from spreading. As of 26 October, aid agencies were working desperately to prevent the cholera outbreak from becoming a full-fledged epidemic. So far 259 people had been killed by cholera, and there were more than 3,000 confirmed cases of the disease. Haiti was still struggling to dig out from the massive earthquake damage, with more than 1.3 million people still living in refugee camps.

The outbreak has been largely contained in the Artibonite region north of Port-au-Prince, but some people who had the disease travelled from the affected region to the capital and may have contaminated others. Most aid agencies were dividing their efforts on two fronts: treatment and prevention.

No cholera outbreaks had been reported in Haiti for decades before the earthquake, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Haitian officials, including President Préval, had been pointing to the lack of severe disease outbreaks as a hard-to-see success of the quake response.



## The Roman Catholic Church

Catholicism was established by Spanish colonists as early as the 16<sup>th</sup> century and was the official religion from 1860 until 1960. Don Sebastián Ramírez de Fuente became the first Catholic bishop of the island in 1528. The French settled Tortuga Island and northwestern Hispaniola in 1625, naming their colony Saint-Domingue. The city of Port-de-Paix was founded on the north-west coast by French settlers in 1665. The city of Port-au-Prince was founded by Charles Burnier, the Marquis of Larnage, and named the capital of Saint-Domingue in 1749. French Capuchin and Jesuit priests were involved in missionary activities throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Many Catholic leaders were of French origin or received religious training in France.

Catholicism was established during the Spanish and French colonial periods, 1492-1795. French Catholicism in Saint-Domingue was hampered by a weak and factional priesthood, whose conversion of enslaved Africans was largely a perfunctory gesture required by Article 2 of the *Code Noir* (1685), the royal decree governing the treatment of slaves in French colonies. The arrival of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) in 1704 marked a significant change in this regard. French Jesuits learned African languages and established a more genuine mission for more than half the colony's slaves. Colony administrators and plantation owners soon became suspicious of the Jesuits, however, accusing them of insubordination to the Crown, and had them expelled in 1763.

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On the erection of the Dioceses of Santo Domingo and Concepción de la Vega, in 1511, the whole island was divided between these bishoprics. In 1527 Concepción was suppressed, and its territory united to Santo Domingo, which was the only diocese until 1862. Many regular clergy came with the French into the French territory, especially the Dominicans and the Capuchins. The Dominicans devoted themselves especially to the mission in the western part of the colony, and were for a time supported therein by other orders and secular priests.

The Dominicans were also designated as missionaries to the southern part of the island. The Capuchins, who looked after the northern part of the island, and were likewise assisted by other orders and secular priests, soon were unable to supply enough missionaries. On that account they gave up this mission in 1704 and in their place came the Jesuits, who worked there until their expulsion at the end of 1763. Secular priests followed, but after five years they were superseded by Capuchins.

The Revolution [1795] brought confusion into the ranks of the clergy; several priests took the constitutional oath, and in the northern part of the country Divine worship ceased, while the mission in the west, uninterfered with under the British occupation (1794-1798), was able to improve more and more. But in the south the prefect Apostolic, Père Viriot, was murdered. When Toussaint L'Ouverture came to power in 1800, he restored its rights to the Catholic religion. But meanwhile the council of Constitutional bishops at Paris had nominated a bishop of Santo Domingo, who, however, obtained no recognition either from Toussaint or the Capuchins. In 1802 General Leclere restored the former jurisdictions of Cap-Haïtien and Port-au-Prince, and named as prefects Apostolic Pères Corneille Brelle, O. Cap., and Lecun, O. P., these arrangements being confirmed at Rome. On account of the massacre of 1804 nearly all the clergy left the colony, so that for those two years the only religious services given at Port-au-Prince were held by a former sacristan. After the overthrow of James I in 1806 some missionaries returned.

After many years of fruitless negotiations, a Concordat was signed at Rome on 28 March 1860. In December 1860, Mgr. Monetti arrived as the Apostolic delegate. The Concordat provides that the

Catholic religion shall enjoy the special protection of the Government. The president nominates the archbishop and the bishops, but the Pope can refuse them canonical institution. The clergy receives an annual salary of 1200 francs from the State.

Five bishoprics were erected in 1861; the Archbishopric of Port-au-Prince, and the suffragan Sees of Cap-Haitien, Les Cayes, Gonaïves, and Port-de-Paix. The Archbishop of Port-au-Prince at first administered all the dioceses. A separate bishop was not appointed to Cap-Haitien until 1873, and at the same time was entrusted with the administration of Port-au-Paix. In 1893 a separate bishop was appointed for Les Cayes; while Gonaïves is still administered by the archbishop. On the conclusion of the Concordat, three fathers of the Congregation of the Holy Ghost and of the Holy Heart of Mary were sent to Port-au-Prince. These restored the regular parish organization in the capital. The first archbishop, du Cosquer, and his successor, Quilloux, visited France to enlist new priests. *Owing to the unhealthy tropical climate, death caused serious gaps in the ranks of the clergy; thus, at the beginning of 1906, out of 516 priests who had come from France since 1864, 200 had died, 150 were still at their posts, and the rest were invalided to Europe.* To ensure recruits, Mgr. du Cosquer established at Paris in 1864 the Saint-Martial Seminary, which was united with the Colonial Seminary conducted by the Fathers of the Holy Ghost; it received a State subvention of 20,000 francs per annum, the payment of which, however, was suspended owing to the political troubles of 1867, and in 1869 it was entirely abrogated. When in 1870 owing to the war, the Fathers of the Holy Ghost gave up direction of the seminary, Mgr. Quilloux founded a new seminary in Pontchâteau (*Loire inférieure*) in 1873 under the direction of the Fathers of the Society of Mary. Finally in 1893 the seminary was removed to St-Jacques (Finisterre) and its direction entrusted to the secular priests; Pontchâteau Seminary had sent 196 priests to Haiti, and St. Jacques, in 15 years (down to 1909) 171. In 1864, in the whole of Haiti, there were only 34 priests devoted to the care of souls in the 65 parishes and 7 annexes. The progress which the Church has made in Haiti since then is shown by the fact that there are now (1909) 182 priests and 92 parishes.

Of ecclesiastical seminaries and schools, Haiti has [in 1909]: (1) at Port-au-Prince the "Petit Séminaire-Collège," under the Fathers of the Holy Ghost and of the Holy Heart of Mary. There is affiliated to it a children's school; also a meteorological observatory. A second observatory was founded by the Christian Brothers; (2) in Cap-Haitien, the College of Notre-Dame-du-Perpétuel-Secours, directed by four secular priests. The religious societies include: (1) the Brothers of Christian Instruction, who direct a secondary school at Port-au-Prince, besides nine primary schools elsewhere; (2) the Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny direct a pensionnat at Port-au-Prince, and eighteen primary schools elsewhere (also 2 hospitals); (3) the Sisters de la Sagesse, who direct a pensionnat in Port-au-Prince, 5 primary schools and 3 hospices. Of ecclesiastical benevolent institutions there are: an orphan asylum for girls and two hospitals, of which one is supported at the cost of the clergy, while the other is supported by the Dames Patronesses. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul also labours in Port-au-Prince. Among the religious associations mention may also be made of: the Third Order of St. Francis, and the Confraternities of the Sacred Heart, the Holy Rosary, the Children of Mary, the Christian Mothers, La Persévérance, etc.

Source: <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07114a.htm>

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By the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, persistent slave resistance mushroomed into a national revolt (called "Boukman's Rebellion") following an August 1791 Vodou ceremony at Bois Caiman, led by a slave named Boukman Dutty, a *houngan* or *papa-loa* (Vodou priest). Over the next thirteen years of revolt, the popular Africa-based religion served to unite and inspire the rebel slaves to defeat Napoleon's forces and finally gain Independence for their nation in 1804.

Independent Haiti's first leaders (who declared Catholicism the nation's official religion) struggled to gain the recognition and respect of the rest of the world. The Vatican, for example, refused to send priests until the signing of a Concordat in 1860. The 54-year interim period was one of special importance in Haitian religious history, as Vodou was further crystallized as the "religion of the peasantry" despite new prohibitions against it.

After Independence, the Catholic Church, which had always struggled to survive amidst very poor conditions, reached its lowest point: several priests were killed in the south and all but three churches were torched by revolutionary bands. The chaos that prevailed after Independence led many priests to flee the country, especially those who remained loyal to France.

The few remaining priests in the new republic were joined by clerics who had been expelled from other colonies, and these men provided a dubious and inadequate sacerdotal leadership for Haitian Catholics. In such a disorderly ecclesial climate, "popular Catholicism" developed with fewer restraints in Haiti than anywhere else in the Americas.

Shortly after the signing of the Concordat in 1860, French Catholic missionaries (religious orders) arrived in Haiti and aggressively developed a national educational system. However, not until the 1950s were Haitians ordained to the Catholic priesthood in significant numbers, and even then they only accounted for 20 percent of the country's Catholic priests. Over the course of these one-hundred years, the Roman Catholic Church was transformed into the largest and most functional institution in the country, rivaled in power only by the Haitian armed forces. The Church authorities were respected by all Haitian heads of state, except for the recalcitrant François Duvalier, who ruled as dictator from 1957 to 1971.

Besides fulfilling the important role of educating and ministering to the majority of the population, the Catholic Church hierarchy in Haiti has sought, until very recently, to eradicate Vodou from Haitian society. Three formal "anti-superstition" campaigns were waged to this end in 1896, 1913 and 1941-1942. The last of these saw the Haitian government put the military at the Church's disposal, which resulted in the repression of Vodou practitioners and the destruction of a treasury of national art. This has been called by some as one of the great tragedies in Haitian religious history. Political upheavals in the early 1960s accompanied by the resurgence of African-oriented cultural practices proved to be a major hindrance for Roman Catholic leaders.

Black nationalists and others came to resent the Roman Catholic Church because of its European orientation and its alliance with the mulatto elite. In 1969, there were 420 religious priests and about 1,000 nuns; however, only 21 percent of the priests and 34 percent of the nuns were Haitians. Less than one percent of the priests and 1.3 percent of the nuns were born in other Latin American countries, whereas 79 percent of the priests and 65 percent of the nuns were born in other countries, according to a study conducted by the *Confederación Latinoamericana de Religiosos* (CLAR, 1971).

François Duvalier opposed the Catholic Church more than any other Haitian president. He expelled the French archbishop of Port-au-Prince, the Jesuit order, and numerous foreign bishops and priests between 1959 and 1964. In response to these moves, the Vatican excommunicated Duvalier. When relations with the Catholic Church were restored in 1966, a Haitian archbishop was named for the first time, and the president gained the right to nominate bishops. Duvalier

continued expelling foreign priests and substituting them with Haitian priests who lived under police surveillance. In 1969, he expelled nine Haitian priests whom the President considered too progressive.

The period between 1966 and 1971 is considered “the darkest in the contemporary history of the Catholic Church in Haiti” (Lampe 1997:107), when the Catholic bishops legitimized unconditionally the brutal Duvalier dictatorship. The Church officially remained silent in the face of continued abuses of human rights of the Haitian people by the Duvalier regime.

Tempered by the spirit of the **Second Vatican Council (1962-1965)** and inspired by the force of Liberation Theology, the popular Haitian Catholic Church has changed radically in recent decades, both becoming more acculturated and choosing the “preferential option for the poor.” Vodou rhythms and drums are now common features in Catholic Masses, and Catholic base communities have emerged as a potent political force, known collectively as *Ti Legliz* (Haitian Creole for “Little Church”). Empowered by Pope John Paul II’s March 1983 visit and forceful declaration that “Something must change here,” the *Ti Legliz* movement served to rally the masses against the oppressive Duvalier regime, eventually leading to the dramatic departure of Jean-Claude Duvalier (“Baby Doc”) in 1986 and the election of populist **Salesian priest Jean-Bertrand Aristide** (b.1953) as president in 1990.

In the aftermath of Jean-Claude Duvalier's departure in 1986, the Church took a less active role in Haitian politics. The Church hierarchy strongly supported the suppressed 1987 Constitution, which granted official status to Creole and guaranteed basic human rights, including the right to practice Vodou. The alliance with the lower classes left the Catholic Church with two unresolved problems in the late 1980s: its uneasy relationship with Vodou and its relationship to the more radical elements of the political movement that it had supported.

Aristide, an exponent of **Liberation Theology**, was appointed to a parish in Port-au-Prince in 1982 after completing his studies. He became a focal point for the pro-democracy movement, first during the rule of Jean-Claude Duvalier and then under the military transition regime that followed. He won the Haitian general election in 1990 with 67 percent of the vote and was briefly President of Haiti, until a September 1991 military coup. The coup regime collapsed in 1994 under U.S. government pressure and threat of force (“Operation Uphold Democracy”). Aristide was then President again from 1994 to 1996 and from 2001 to 2004.

Aristide was ousted in a February 2004 rebellion, in which former soldiers participated. He claimed that the U.S. government had orchestrated a coup against him, and received support from, among others, several members of the U.S. Congress and Jamaican Prime Minister P. J. Patterson. Aristide was forced into exile, being flown directly out of Haiti to the Central African Republic, eventually settling in South Africa.

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Aristide became an outspoken critic of Duvalierism. Nor did he spare the hierarchy of the country's Catholic Church, after a 1966 Vatican Concordat granted Duvalier the power to appoint Haiti's bishops. An exponent of Liberation Theology, Aristide denounced Duvalier's regime in one of his earliest sermons. This did not go unnoticed by the regime's top echelons. Under pressure, the provincial delegate of the Salesian Order sent him into three years of exile in Montreal. By 1985, as popular opposition to Duvalier's

regime grew, Aristide was back preaching in Haiti. His Easter Week sermon, "A Call to Holiness," delivered at the cathedral of Port-au-Prince and later broadcast throughout Haiti, proclaimed, "The path of those Haitians who reject the regime is the path of righteousness and love."

Aristide became a leading figure in the "*Ti Legliz* movement" – Kreyòl for "little church." In September 1985, he was appointed to St. Jean Bosco Catholic Church, in a poor neighborhood in Port-au-Prince. Struck by the absence of young people in the church, Aristide began to organize youth, sponsoring weekly youth masses. He founded an orphanage for urban street children in 1986 called *Lafanmi Selavi* (Family is Life). Its program sought to be a model of participatory democracy for the children it served.

As he became a leading voice for the aspirations of Haiti's dispossessed, Aristide inevitably became a target for attack. He survived at least four assassination attempts. The most widely publicized attempt, the St Jean Bosco massacre, occurred in September 1988 when over one hundred armed *Tonton Macoute* wearing red armbands forced their way into St. Jean Bosco Church as Aristide began Sunday Mass. As Army troops and police stood by, the men fired machine guns at the congregation and attacked fleeing parishioners with machetes. Aristide's church was burned to the ground. Thirteen people are reported to have been killed and 77 were wounded. Aristide survived and went into hiding.

Subsequently, Salesian officials ordered Aristide to leave the country, but ten-thousand Haitians protested, blocking his access to the airport. In December 1988, Aristide was expelled from the Salesian order. A statement prepared in Rome called the priest's political activities an "incitement to hatred and violence," out of line with his role as a clergyman. Aristide appealed the decision, saying, "The crime of which I stand accused is the crime of preaching food for all men and women." In a January 1988 interview he said, "The solution is revolution, first in the spirit of the gospel; Jesus could not accept people going hungry. It is a conflict between classes, rich and poor. My role is to preach and organize...." In 1994, Aristide left the priesthood, ending years of tension with the Church over his criticism of its hierarchy and his espousal of Liberation Theology. He married Mildred Trouillot, a U.S. citizen, the following year; they have two daughters.

Source: adapted from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean-Bertrand\\_Aristide](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean-Bertrand_Aristide)

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As in other Latin American and Caribbean nations, the **Charismatic Renewal** movement has had a strong impact on Haitian Catholicism. The direct emotional religious experiences normally associated with Protestant Revivalism and Pentecostalism are now featured in many Haitian Catholic Masses, and the annual national Charismatic convention in Port-au-Prince draws tens of thousands and is allegedly marked by dramatic healings, speaking in tongues, and other charismatic manifestations.

In April 2010, Haiti's three-day outdoor National Charismatic Renewal Congress, one of the country's largest annual gatherings, drew more than 80,000 people, up from about 60,000 last year. An organizer, Antony Jean-Baptiste, said, "People are thirsty for faith."

The very strong and public impact on Haitian Catholicism by the Charismatic movement was in contrast to the largely hidden effect of the Charismatic movement upon the national church in Cuba. Haiti became a major player in the Charismatic movement, with strong connections to its expatriates in the U.S. and Canada. Above all, the Charismatic Renewal changed the practice of Catholicism in Haiti in important ways, reducing ties to Liberation Theology or to Vodou on the part of individual

Catholics. The Charismatic Renewal has shaken and re-formed Catholicism in Haiti and in the Haitian diaspora in the United States and Canada.

The Charismatic Renewal gained a great following in Haiti. In doing so it also is replacing Liberation Theology as the dominant religious discourse (pro or contra) of the clergy and of Catholic activists. The Renewal came later and more quietly to Haiti than to much of Latin America. *A Canadian nun began Charismatic prayer groups in 1972 among upper- and middle-class women in the capital, Port-au-Prince.* Because these meetings of Charismatic groups were conducted mostly in French, language excluded lower-class Haitians who spoke only Creole. But after a few years, the movement spread beyond the upper-level social enclaves of the capital and Creole became commonly used in Charismatic Masses and other services. With this change the movement began expanding with explosive force throughout the Haitian part of Hispaniola, matching similar growth of its larger Spanish-speaking neighbor on the island, the Dominican Republic.

The Renewal thus built bridges across the deeply embedded class divisions of Haitian society. In this social inclusion, the movement contrasted to Liberation Theology for which Haitian Catholic activists were renowned but which largely attracted the poor that formed 80 percent of Haitian society at that time. The main carrier of Liberation Theology was Haiti's version of Base Christian communities. These were called *Ti Legliz*, Creole for "little church." The main person associated with Liberation Theology and the small communities was the former priest Jean-Bertrand Aristide who became president of Haiti (1991, 1994-1996, 2001-2004). (Source: Cleary, October 2010)

**The Archdiocese of Port-au-Prince** was established in 1861 under French Archbishop Martial-Guillaume-Marie Testard du Cosquer. The latest Archbishop of Port-au-Prince was Joseph Serge Miot (1 March 2008 - 12 January 2010, killed in the earthquake) and the position is currently vacant. The current Archbishop of Cap-Haïtien is Louis Kébreaux, S.D.B. (1 March 2008).

In 1980, the number of Canadian Catholic missionaries serving in Haiti was reported as 457, up from 436 in 1975. Ministries were varied, with 20 priests, 48 brothers and 152 sisters involved in education; one brother and 87 sisters involved in providing medical treatment and patient care; one priest, three brothers and 24 sisters providing social services; and 14 priests, five brothers and 29 sisters involved in pastoral care and counseling. The total number of U.S. Catholic missionaries remained constant between 1975 and 1980 at 50 each year.

As of November 2005, the Church hierarchy included 400 diocesan priests and 291 religious priests (total = 691), with 1,789 nuns and 682 religious brothers who served in 296 parishes of the eight dioceses within the two archdioceses. Current Haitian dioceses are Port-au-Prince (archdiocese and suffragans: Anse-à-Veau et Miragoâne, Jérémie, Jacmel, Les Cayes) and Cap-Haïtien (archdiocese since 1988 with suffragans: Les Gonaïves, Port-de-Paix, Hinche and Fort-Liberté).

In 1882, Port-au-Prince and Haiti were dedicated to **Our Lady of Perpetual Help** during a Mass in Bel' Air in the Our Lady of Perpetual Help Chapel. See the article below for details.

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DECEMBER 14, 2007

*The people of Haiti thank Our Lady of Perpetual Help for 125 years and 65 years.*

**1882-2007** marks 125 years of the miraculous healing of the Haitian people from the scourge of [Smallpox], which ravaged the country at that time. According to what we have learned, the bishops of that time gathered in prayer with the faithful in Bel'Air in the Our Lady of Perpetual Help Chapel, and asked for a blessing for the people who had perished from this epidemic. Grace was dropped from the sky and all the people who were infected with this disease were cured.

**1942-2007** marks the 65th years of the official consecration of Haiti. Our Lady of Perpetual Help at that time existed under the term of President Elie Lescot, a mulatto. According to historical testimony, there had been a kind of hunt against Voodoo priests (who were called 'Defeated'), as if this faith prevented the country from continuing on the road of progress. So why do we celebrate this date, 65 years later?

At that time the sons and daughters of Haiti who practiced Voodoo had difficulty explaining their religion. Most of them were black, while the president of that time was a mulatto. Similarly, the current president of the Haitian Conference of Bishops, Mgr. Louis Kébreau, is also a mulatto. He has often harshly criticized the democratically-elected governments but has never lifted a finger to condemn the abuses against the people of Haiti during the reign of de facto government (2004-2006).

To commemorate these important dates in the history of this people, the dates that mark the exclusion of the poorest in Haitian society, the Catholic Church in Haiti, as well as other religions, has often lead processions down several streets of the Haitian capital on December 8th. Many often wear shirts with the image of Our Lady Perpetual of Help during this process, as they did this past Saturday. This date marks an opportunity to celebrate the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary.

On Saturday, several thousands marched and prayed in Port-au-Prince, beginning from the chapel of Our Lady Perpetual of Help in Bel'Air. They were received by Haitian President Rene Garcia Preval at the National Palace, although it could be said that this reception was a purely symbolic gesture, as only the Bishops, priests, journalists, and members of organizations were allowed access to the courtyard of the National Palace. Thousands of others remained outside in prayer.

The closing mass of the day would be celebrated by more than ten Bishops of Haiti as well as a Representative of the Pope, and Mario Jordana, the representative of the Haitian Episcopal Bishop of Haiti's Central Province, Hinche. Louis Kebreau delivered a sermon that seemed to call on the people to demand that the present government take its responsibilities seriously, and that it condemn corruption and drug trafficking.

Source: [http://www.dominionpaper.ca/weblogs/wadner\\_pierre/1574](http://www.dominionpaper.ca/weblogs/wadner_pierre/1574)

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**Catholic Relief Services** began working in Haiti in 1954 after Hurricane Hazel devastated the country and killed about 1,000 people. High population density, severe deforestation and decaying infrastructure make Haiti, the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, particularly vulnerable to the effects of natural disasters such as hurricanes, earthquakes and floods. CRS Haiti is committed to helping the Haitian people in many aspects of their lives. In Haiti, CRS responds to emergencies, provides agriculture assistance, supports education, and works to enhance the healthcare system throughout the country.

On 15 January 2010, **Catholic Relief Services** announced a US\$200 million, five-year relief and reconstruction program that would cover shelter, health, livelihoods and child protection among its program areas in response to the recent earthquake.

## **The Protestant Movement**

Protestantism in Haiti has a long history, beginning with the arrival, in 1807, of English-speaking Methodist pastors from other Caribbean islands who came to minister among English-speaking Negroes who came to Haiti in search of greater freedom. Later, Quakers Etienne de Grellet and John Hancock conducted a series of evangelistic campaigns in Haiti in 1816, and they achieved considerable success. **Alexandre Sabès Pétion** (president of the southern Republic of Haiti from 1806 until his death in March 1818) gave the Quaker preachers his full support, which opened many opportunities for them to preach to multitudes without the interference of civil authorities. However, the Quakers soon returned to New York and there was no left in Haiti to continue their work. The next Protestant workers arrived in February 1817, British Methodist missionaries John Brown and James Catts, who were invited by President Pétion to establish a self-supporting school using the Lancaster system. The Methodist Church of England sent Brown and Catts to Haiti under the sponsorship of the **Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society (WMMS)**, which later established the **English Wesleyan Mission of Haiti** (*Eglise Méthodiste d'Haiti*).

During the 1820s, President **Jean-Pierre Boyer** (ruled from 1818 to 1843) encouraged freed American blacks to immigrate to the Republic of Haiti. His government advertised the opportunities in newspapers, “promising free land and political opportunity to black settlers.” Boyer sent agents to black communities to convince them that Haiti was a sovereign state and open to immigration only for Negroes.

Beginning in September 1824, an estimated 6,000 Americans, mostly free people of color, immigrated to Haiti within a year, with ships departing from New York, Baltimore and Philadelphia. Among the U.S. immigrants to Haiti were some who were Protestants. However, because of widespread poverty on the island and the inability of Boyer's administration to help the new immigrants after their arrival in Haiti, most returned to the USA within a few years.

Despite its favorable beginnings, Methodist work came under persecution soon after it began, and for more that a century that persecution continued under the Roman Catholic Church. The first British Methodist missionaries were expelled from Haiti in 1818 because the civil authorities claimed they could not guarantee the safety of the missionaries, who were faced with organized opposition by Catholic authorities. Nevertheless, Methodist work developed and spread to the eastern part of the island. Until 1932, the Republic of Haiti and the Dominican Republic constituted one district of the **West Indies Sub-Conference of the British Methodist Conference**.

In 1933, the Methodist circuits in the Dominican Republic were handed over to the Board for Christian Work. The Methodist work in Haiti was becoming very expensive to maintain and the WMMS was unsure about how much longer it could continue to support it. This is understandable since England, like the rest of the world, was still suffering the consequences of the Great Depression of 1929. With the arrival of Rev. H. Ormond McConnell, sent to Haiti in 1933



by the WMMS to perhaps witness the closure of the Methodist work in the nation, the Methodist Church of Haiti received a new lease on life.

By 1940, after more than 100 years in Haiti, the Methodist Church reported only five local churches with 703 members and a community of 3,900. Ten years later, there were five churches with 1,177 members and a community of 10,200; by 1960, there were five churches with 2,324 members and a community of 17,850; and by 1968, the Methodist Church reported five churches with 2,764 members and a community of 25,000.

Despite its relative small size, the Methodist Church has made a significant contribution to the education of the country. One of its missionaries together with a local university professor developed a system for writing Creole, which then opened the way for a vast literacy campaign that taught thousands of people how to read and write. Due to the initial success of this literacy campaign, the government took a greater interest in the education of people in Creole, which resulted in a virtual revolution in the country's educational system.

In 1999, the Methodist Church of Haiti had 136 churches and places of worship with 7,257 communicant members; the total number of adherents constituted a total community of about 80,000 people. There were eight British pastors, over 400 national pastors, six rehabilitation projects and a publishing house. There were also 105 schools with more than 17,500 children attending; however, only three of these schools were financially autonomous. The Methodist Church of Haiti (*Eglise Methodiste d'Haiti*) is now part of the **Conference of the Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas** (established in 1967), which is affiliated with the World Council of Churches.

The **African Methodist Episcopal Church** (AMEC, *Eglise Afro-Méthodiste Episcopale*) began work in Haiti in 1823 under the leadership of Bishop Richard Allen, according to Charles-Poisset Romain (2004:432) who reported only seven churches with a total of 1,080 members for this denomination in 1968. Between 1840 and 1930, there was only one affiliated AMEC congregation in Haiti, and two more were added during the 1930s. During the 1960s, four more AMEC congregations were established, bringing the total to seven.

Another Afro-American denomination, the **Christian Methodist Episcopal Church** (with headquarters in Memphis, TN, founded in 1870), reported 800,000 communicant members in the USA in 2005, with 3,000 churches and 3,200 preachers organized into 34 Annual Conferences, which were divided into ten Episcopal Districts with ten active bishops. This denomination has missions and sister churches in Haiti, Jamaica, Ghana, Liberia and Nigeria. However, its date of origin in Haiti is unknown.

Baptist mission work began in Haiti by the **Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Society**, which sent missionary Thomas Paul in 1823; however, the work was abandoned later when Paul withdrew from the field. Mr. James Thomson (b.1788-d.1854), a Scottish Baptist colporteur, briefly toured Haiti in 1834 and was successful in selling Bibles and other Christian literature as an agent of the **British and Foreign Bible Society**. Thomson represented the BFBS in the Caribbean between 1831 and 1838, and helped prepare the way for Evangelical work on many the islands of the region.

For more than a century, additional attempts were made by Baptists to establish work in Haiti, but they produced few lasting results. These efforts included several independent Fundamentalist Baptist missionaries who arrived for brief periods; missionaries of the London-based **Baptist Missionary Society (BMS)** and the Philadelphia-based Home Mission Society of the **Baptist Triennial Convention** organized in Pennsylvania in 1814; as well as missionaries sent out by the **Jamaican Baptist Missionary Society (JBMS)** founded in Kingston in 1842. However, the BMS and the JBMS did help establish the **Jacmel Baptist Church** in southern Haiti in the 1840s. Within 35 years, this Baptist church had grown to over 12,000 members, became a missionary center and established its own mission society. *L'Eglise Baptiste Stricte* ("Strict Baptist Church"), the oldest Baptist church building in Jacmel, built in 1845, was partially destroyed in the January 2010 earthquake. This church has more than 1,000 local members, a rich history as the first Protestant church in the region, and links with more than 100 smaller Baptist churches in Haiti that are affiliated with the Jacmel Baptist Church. According to Baptist historian Justice C. Anderson (2005: 506), in 1964, a group of Baptist churches in the Jacmel area that did not want to join the newly-formed **Haitian Baptist Convention** organized themselves as the **Ebenezer Baptist Tabernacle**. However, Romain (2004:107) states that the **Eben-Ezer Baptist Mission** (*Eglise Baptiste Eben-Ezer*) was founded in Jacmel in 1936 as a split from the *Eglise Baptiste Stricte*. In 1968, the *Eglise Baptiste Eben-Ezer* reported 30 affiliated churches with about 17,000 members.

**The Lott Carey Baptist Foreign Mission Convention** of the Negro Baptist Churches in the USA began work in Haiti in 1920. It currently supports 28 churches of the *Union Strategique des Eglises Baptistes d'Haïti* (**Strategic Union of Baptist Churches in Haiti**), many of whom operate elementary and/or secondary schools for hundreds of children who otherwise would never have opportunities to attend school. In 1968, Romain reported that this denomination had 27 affiliated churches with 2,131 members.

The Lott Carey movement was founded in 1897 by African-American Baptists who were committed to a substantial foreign mission thrust, especially on the African continent. They believed that nothing should distract the church from executing its primary objective of advancing God's mission throughout the world. Since its founding, the Lott Carey Foreign Mission Convention has single-mindedly invested in Christian missions around the world.

It bears the name of the Rev. Lott Carey (1780-1828), who was one of the first American and Baptist missionaries to West Africa. Born a slave in 1780 in Charles City County, Virginia, Lott Carey purchased his freedom in 1813. He led a pioneering missionary team to Liberia in 1821 that engaged in evangelism, education, and healthcare. Rev. Carey became a well-respected and gifted governmental leader as well as missionary until his death in 1828. He was also the organizing pastor for the first Baptist church in Liberia, the Providence Baptist Church in Monrovia.

**The American Baptist Home Missionary Society (ABHMS)** began work in Haiti in 1923, a century after the first Baptist missionary arrived. The ABHMS' first missionary was the Rev. A. Groves Wood, a Jamaican; he surveyed the situation and discovered only about 1,000 Baptists in the whole country, who were led by eight national pastors; the Baptist believers were mainly concentrated in the extreme north and south. Wood decided to join forces with missionary Elie Marc, a Frenchman who came to Haiti as an independent missionary in 1894. Marc pastored a

Baptist church and operated a general store to support himself at Trou-de-Nord, where Wood soon established the ABHMS work.

Young pastor Marc, a former student in Newton Theological Institute near Boston (the oldest Baptist Seminary in the USA, founded in 1831-1836), had been invited to Haiti by an elderly school teacher, Jemima Straight, who had arrived in Haiti about 1880 and settled in St. Suzanne, one of the most remote villages of the interior, to set up her independent mission school for children. Miss Straight was supported by members of the Nicetown Baptist Church of Philadelphia and the Warburton Avenue Baptist Church of Yonkers.

Wood traveled throughout the country by horseback and car and soon developed a comprehensive strategy for the advancement of his work: training leaders, founding primary schools, and setting up medical and agricultural clinics. By 1934, the 10 churches that would later become members of the Baptist Convention of Haiti (known at that time as *Eglise Baptiste du Cap-Haïtien* de la American Baptist Home Mission Society) reported 2,155 members; by 1939, there were 24 churches with 6,733 members; and by 1944, there were 30 churches with 10,090 members. During the next five years, the total membership grew to 16,040 (1949). When the **Baptist Convention of Haiti** was formed in 1964, it reported 34,254 members. By 1968, there were 84 affiliated churches with 35,986 baptized members (Romain 2004: 143-144).

In 1968, about three-fourths of the membership of the Baptist Convention of Haiti was in rural areas. The churches were concentrated in the *Nord* (north = 39), *Artribonite* (18) and *Ouest* (west = 16) regions of the country. In Cap-Haïtien and Port-au-Prince the worship services were conducted in French, but everywhere else they were conducted in Creole. Most of the local churches had been planted as outstations of existing churches. These outstations were usually led by unpaid volunteer lay workers. There were 84 local churches and 585 outstations. **The Baptist Convention of Haiti** is affiliated with the **American Baptist Churches in the USA**, which is a member of the World Council of Churches.

The **Protestant Episcopal Church** began missionary work in Haiti in 1861 under the leadership of the Rev. James Theodore Holly (b.1821-d.1911) who had previously served as rector at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, a black congregation in New Haven, Connecticut. On 2 May 1861, Holly departed for Haiti along with his family and 111 Afro-American members of his congregation at the beginning of that nation's Civil War to become immigrant colonists. Within the first seven months of their arrival in Haiti, Holly's wife, mother, two children and forty-three members of his church had died. The first year in Haiti was a struggle for survival and little time was left for evangelistic work among the Haitians. By the end of the first year, many of the immigrants had left Haiti and it became clear that no colonists would be coming to take their place. At this point, Holly began to focus his energies and efforts on the establishment of the Episcopal Church in Haiti. By July 1863, a little over two years after his arrival, his first congregation, the **Holy Trinity Church in Port-au-Prince**, was organized and formally recognized as a parish under the jurisdiction of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States, which is also a member of the World Council of Churches.

In 1874, the **Apostolic Orthodox Church of Haiti** (under Bishop James T. Holly) became an autonomous province of the **Protestant Episcopal Church**, but reunited with the U.S. Protestant Episcopal Church in 1913. Not only was Holly the first Negro to become an Episcopalian

Bishop, the Orthodox Apostolic Church in Haiti was the first autonomous Anglican Church to be established in a non-English-speaking country. Finally, Holly's commitment to holistic ministry is not without parallels elsewhere in mission history, but his development of an exclusively indigenous Haitian leadership for his churches is commendable in that Holly was very likely the first Protestant missionary in Haiti to achieve such a goal.

In 1923, the Rev. Harry Roberts Carson was named and consecrated the first missionary bishop of the **Haitian Episcopal Church** (*Eglise Episcopale d'Haïti*). Bishop Carson reorganized the Church, rebuilt the Church of the Holy Trinity in Port-au-Prince, and brought to the country the Episcopal missionary order **Sisters of Saint Margaret**, who made an important contribution in the area of education. When Bishop Carson retired in 1943, he left behind an organized church body that was growing at a moderate pace. He was succeeded by Bishop Voegel who led the Episcopal Church in Haiti until the mid-1950s.

The Episcopal Church grew from six affiliated congregations with 4,652 communicant members in 1930 to 13 churches with about 12,000 members by 1940. In 1950, this denomination reported 71 churches with 12,930 members; in 1960, there were 74 churches with 12,430 members; and by 1968 there were 83 churches with 14,755 members, according to Romain (2004: 99).

In 1999, the Episcopal Church had 39,260 adherents, 15,738 of whom were regular communicants in 82 churches served by 43 clergy. In addition, the Church supported 61 private schools with 293 teachers and 8,000 students. College St. Pierre in Port-au-Prince was considered to be one of the best secondary schools in Haiti; and St. Vincent's School, Haiti's only facility for handicapped children, was operated by the Sisters of Saint Margaret.

In 2006, the Episcopal Church of Haiti reported more than 100,000 adherents (of all ages) in 109 congregations; 100 primary schools, 15 secondary schools and a school for handicapped students; as well as vocational and agricultural training efforts, a university and a seminary. The Haitian diocese has many partnerships with Episcopal Church-related organizations, including **Episcopal Relief and Development (ERD)**; the Diocese of Maine, which is helping Haiti solve some of its communications problems; and the United Thank Offering, which has funded three new schools.

The **Seventh-Day Adventist General Conference (SDAGC)** formally began work in Haiti in 1905, but its roots go back to 1879 when a misaddressed box of Adventist books in English fell into the hands of an Episcopal pastor in Cap-Haitien who distributed the books among his parishioners. One of them, a young Jamaican, began to observe the Sabbath; for 20 years he and his wife were the only known Adventists in Haiti. Then, in 1905, a Methodist preacher has given a book about the Sabbath and he became an Adventist minister, which prompted the SDAGC to send a missionary to organize the work. By 1907, there were 71 members.

Adventist church growth has been the most notable of all the Protestant denominations in Haiti. In 1923, there were 704 members; by 1934, 2,647 members; in 1943, 5,356 members; in 1953, 10,659 members; in 1964, 21,767 members; and in 1968, 26,489 members. Historically, the work was organized under two missions, in northern and southern Haiti, with the strongest Adventist presence in the north. By 1980, the Adventists (*Les Adventistes du Septième Jour*) reported 55,000 constituents with church growth at approximately nine percent per year.

The SDAGC **Haitian Union Mission** (organized in 1989) reported substantial growth between 1998 and 2008: from 306 organized churches with 203,899 members in 1998 to 441 churches and 315,548 members in 2008. The breakdown by districts for 2008 was as follows: Central, 123 churches with 97,270 members; North, 108 churches with 92,434 members; Northwest, 103 churches with 76,528 members; and South, 121 churches with 61,797 members.

Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Commits US\$1 Million  
to Earthquake Response in Haiti - Adventist Press Service

Washington, Sunday, January 17, 2010 (ALC) - As the humanitarian crisis continues to grow in quake-hit Haiti, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) has expanded its relief efforts by committing \$1 million worth of emergency aid to assist survivors in the hardest hit areas. "As an organization, we recognize the urgency that this disaster demands, and press forward to meet the most immediate needs of survivors," said Charles Sandefur, president of ADRA International. "We will continue to do everything possible to alleviate the suffering of those affected in this incredible tragedy."

1928 - Alfred Pierce of the **Haitian Gospel Mission** began establishing Baptist churches in and around Port-de-Paix in northwest Haiti.

The first meeting of the **Church of God in Christ** (COGIC, a Pentecostal Holiness denomination with headquarters in Memphis, TN) in Haiti was held on 13 January 1929 at 167 Rue des Fronts-Forts, Port-au-Prince, where its national headquarters is currently located. Upon receiving the water baptism by Leon Mathias Van Alken, a Belgian missionary from Vancouver, Canada, a group of young Haitians including Joseph Saint-Juste and his wife, who had just left the Episcopal Church, embraced this new religious movement, along with Noël Baptiste. Shortly thereafter, Van Alken returned to his homeland and turned over the leadership of the new mission to Haitian brothers. It was not, however, until 1928 that Bishop Charles Harrison Mason, founder of the COGIC in the USA, sent to Port-au-Prince missionary Joseph Paulcéus Léys with the task of formally establishing mission work.

When he arrived in Haiti, Bishop Mason's emissary soon contacted the small group of brothers in the Lord. Afterward, Paulcéus was authorized by the government to preach the word of God in Haiti. The leading group comprising Paulcéus, Jacques Vital-Herne and Joseph Saint-Juste bought property in Bel-Air where they set up a tent that Bishop Mason gave them. It was on that site that the Church of God in Christ's new members began their earliest meetings.

When Paulcéus and Vital-Herne left, new leadership emerged under the direction of Joseph Saint-Juste. This transition lasted four years until the arrival in 1937 of Bishop A. B. McEwen, the COGIC's president of the Board of Missions. During his stay in Haiti, he ordained five pastors including Joseph Saint-Juste. A church constitution was also adopted.

After the death of Overseer Joseph Saint-Juste in 1957, he was replaced by his son Louis Sauveur Saint-Juste who was ordained in 1942. Although he became handicapped, he continued to serve as bishop for several years until his death in 1968, when the Rev. Courtney became the new Bishop of Haiti. In 1968, this denomination reported 51 organized churches and 122 preaching points with a total of 3,339 members (Romain 2004: 154), with the majority of the churches (31) located in *Ouest Département*.

He was succeeded by Elder Lopez Dautruche, a native of Haiti, who was consecrated Presiding Bishop of Haiti in 1974. The work greatly advanced under his leadership. Many churches were planted throughout the country. Bishop Dautruche also established and strengthened several charitable institutions. Among his most remarkable contributions are the construction of its headquarters in Port-au-Prince and the Charles Harrison Mason Auditorium in Latremblay. Today, the *Eglise de Dieu en Christ* administers 120 local churches and preaching points in 15 districts, with an estimated 20,000 members; it also operates 42 schools.

*Between 1930 and 1959, other Protestant denominations and service agencies began work in Haiti. See annotated chronology below.*

**1934 - The Church of God (COG, with headquarters in Cleveland, TN)** began its ministry (Pentecostal Holiness) in Haiti. By 1968, the *Eglise de Dieu* was concentrated in two regions, the area of Les Cayes in the south (*Sud*) and the area of Port-au-Prince (*Ouest*), with scattered churches in other parts of the country. The work of the Church of God in southern Haiti was built on Haitian believers who had returned from working in the sugar fields of nearby Cuba, where many of them had been converted in Baptist churches. Many of the Cuban Baptist churches, especially in the Guantanamo area of eastern Cuba, emphasized praying for the sick, speaking in tongues, and other Pentecostal characteristics. There were 15 COG districts in Haiti in 1968 with 15,896 members in about 200 local churches and preaching points. In addition, several independent Haitian denominations have been started by dissident COG pastors.

**1936 -** Eight years after the nondenominational **West Indies Mission (WIM, later renamed WorldTeam)** began its work in Cuba (1928), founder Elmer Thompson was challenged by the needs in another Caribbean nation, the Dominican Republic. Alexander Mersdorf was sent on a fact-finding mission to the DR and traveled by way of Haiti. When he landed in Port-au-Prince, he discovered that a group of Haitian believers had just been shipped home from working in the cane fields in eastern Cuba (1932-1935). These untaught Haitian believers had spread the good news of the gospel in their homeland, and groups of new believers were springing up. Their leaders knew little more than how to help people become Christians. They did not have a Bible in their native Creole, and did not know how to disciple others.

When Mersdorf returned to Cuba with news of these young converts in Haiti, the WIM leaders agreed that they would send workers there instead of the Dominican Republic. In 1937, the WIM established the **Haiti Bible Institute at Aux Cayes** on the southwestern tip of Haiti. The students who went out from the school organized dozens of preaching points in rural areas that later became churches. The work was complimented in 1958 when David Hartt established the **Christian Radio Network, Radio Light (Radio Lumière)**, which continues today. Medical work grew from a single dispensary in the early years to several dispensaries in different areas, and then developed into a medical ministry called **Hospital of Light** (now Lumière Medical Ministries, Inc). Today the hospital is run by nationals. The national church that grew out of WorldTeam's work, the **Evangelical Baptist Mission of South Haiti** (*Mission Evangélique Baptiste du Sud d'Haïti*), reported 52 organized churches and 282 preaching points with 14,324 members in 1968, all of which were located in Artibonite Department. Today, this denomination has more than 300 churches with almost as many pastors.

**1936 - The Evangelical Baptist Mission of Haiti (EBMH)** resulted from a merger of several existing church associations that were organized under the auspices of nondenominational UK-based **Unevangelized Fields Mission (UFM)**. The first group of churches was organized by missionary Alfred Pierce of the **Haitian Gospel Mission**, who began to establish Baptist churches in and around Port-de-Paix in northwest Haiti in 1928. The first church established was **Eben-Ezer Baptist Church in Port-de-Paix**. Another group of churches was established by the **World Gospel Crusade** in the Port-au-Prince area under the Rev. Florentin Toirac of Cuba who had formerly worked with the West Indies Mission in the south of Haiti. By 1951, all of these churches had merged with UFM, which reported a total of 4,595 members that year. By 1959, the UFM reported a total of 9,609 churches in Haiti. However, during the 1960s, several of these churches had left the UFM and had become associated with other denominations or became independent. By 1968, the UFM reported 7,485 members in 62 local churches, mainly located in the *Nord-Oueste* (28) and *Artibonite* (20) Departments. The Rev. Claude Noel replaced Dr. Orius Paultre as president of the EBMH in 1969. Noel also served as president of the **Evangelical Association of the Caribbean (EAC)**, which coordinated Caribbean-wide activities during the 1970s and 1980s, including the Congress on the Evangelization of the Caribbean, held from 17-24 September 1984 at the Mona Campus of the University of the West Indies in Jamaica. The name EBMH was changed to **Evangelical Baptist Union of Haiti** (*Union Evangélique Baptiste d'Haïti*) in 1977 under national leadership.

**1938 - Church of God of Prophecy** (*Eglise de Dieu de la Prophétie*), a Pentecostal Holiness denomination with headquarters in Cleveland, TN; founded in Haiti by pastor Evêque Jacques Vital-Herne, formerly of the Church of God in Christ; reported 311 churches and preaching points in 1968 with 23,932 members. This denomination has experience numerous divisions.

1940 - **Le Petit Troupeau** (literally, “The Small Herd”), an independent Haitian organization; reported two congregations with 280 members in 1968, all in Oueste Department.

**1941 - Maranatha Apostolic Faith Church** (*Eglise la Foi Apostolique Maranatha*): this denomination began as a split from the *Eglise Baptiste du Cap-Haïtien* de la American Baptist Home Mission Society; it was led by Haitian pastors Archange Christophe and Volvick Ricourt; in 1968, this denomination reported 19 affiliated churches with 5,395 members in the Nord and Nord-Ouest Departments; its doctrinal orientation is Pentecostal. **Note:** This denomination may be related to (1) The Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ of Apostolic Faith, Inc. (Oneness Pentecostal), founded in 1919 by Bishop Robert C. Lawson (an Afro-American), with headquarters in New York City, which reported mission work in Haiti as the result of Bishop Lawson’s evangelistic campaigns in the West Indies beginning in the 1930s; or (2) Church of the Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith (Philadelphia), founded in 1933 by Bishop Sherrod C. Johnson, who left the former church to establish a more conservative denomination (mission work was reported in the Bahamas, Haiti and Jamaica in the Caribbean region).

1942 - **Haitian Baptist Mission:** began as a split from the *Eglise Baptiste du Cap-Haïtien* de la American Baptist Home Mission Society; it was led by Haitian pastors Gerson Toussaint, Osiris Pierre and Misaël Etienne; in 1968, this denomination reported eight affiliated churches with about 2,000 members, mainly in the Ouest Department.

**1942 - Eben-Ezer Mission** was founded by Haitian pastors Remus Arbrouet, Excellent Cassey, Oreste Ambroise and Oton Dambroise, all of whom were formerly affiliated with the Church of God (Cleveland, TN). This association of churches existed for several years before becoming affiliated, in 1960, with **World-Wide Missions** (in Pasadena, CA—now with headquarters in Redlands, CA), which was established in 1950 by the Rev. Basil Miller (a well-known Church of the Nazarene minister) as the Basil Miller Foundation (the name was changed to World-Wide Missions in 1960). In 1968, this denomination reported 110 affiliated churches, 139 preaching points and about 12,000 members, mainly in the Oueste and Sud Departments. Romain stated that this denomination was Pentecostal (2004: 234), although World-Wide Missions is a non-denominational Holiness mission.

- 1943 - **Hepzibah Faith Mission:** The Hephzibah Faith Missionary Association was an Iowa-based Holiness group founded in 1893; several of its components united with the Church of the Nazarene in 1950.
- 1943 - **Wesleyan Church of Haiti** (*Eglise Wesleyenne d’Haïti*), founded by U.S. missionaries Neal Bonner and Arthur Calhoun, affiliated with the Wesleyan Church Department of World Mission in Marion, IN; in 1968, this denomination merged with the Pilgrim Holiness Church in the USA; at that time, there were 34 organized churches with about 2,500 members in Haiti, principally in the departments of Ouest and Nord.

**1943** – Missionary John R. Turnbull founded the **Baptist Haitian Mission** (*Mission Baptiste Haïtienne, MBH*), which later became affiliated with the **Conservative Baptist Home Mission Society (CBHMS)** after it was established in the USA in 1950. CBHMS is now known as Mission to the Americas. The **Conservative Baptist Association (CBA)** was organized in 1947 as a fraternal association of conservative Baptist churches in the USA, with headquarters in Wheaton, IL. The initial core of churches was comprised of those departing from the **Northern Baptist Convention (now American Baptist Churches)** over issues of theological liberalism, abandonment of Baptist polity and centralized denominational control. In 1943 the **Conservative Baptist Foreign Mission Society (now WorldVenture)** had been formed because of similar issues. In 2004, the CBA was reorganized and renamed **CBAmerica** with headquarters in Littleton, Colorado.

Turnbull’s son Wallace and wife Eleanor took over the work in Haiti in 1946, and they were later assisted by Eleanor's mother, Bertha Holdeman. The first church associated with the MBH was established in Baie de Henne in 1949. With few resources more than their determination and ability, the family ventured to remote places in Haiti, strongholds of Vodou, to introduce people to Jesus Christ, sometimes staying months to establish and develop the beginnings of a church. At informal literacy schools, children and adults learned to read so that they could study the Word of God.

In 1968, the MBH reported 58 churches and 47 preaching points with a total of 5,572 members. The total membership grew to 8,000 in 1980; 13,000 in 1990; 16,800 in 2000; and 20,500 in 2010. Today, MBH serves a network of more than 330 churches and schools, a hospital, a number of medical clinics, and many community development programs.

**1944** – **Gospel Crusade** (*Croisade Évangélique*) was founded in 1953 as a nondenominational charitable organization (Pentecostal-Charismatic) to support mission work in Haiti that began in 1944, and later came under the sponsorship of the Rev. Gerald Derstine, founder and president of



Gospel Crusade in Florida, USA. In 1968, the Haitian denomination reported eight affiliated churches with about 2,400 members nationally. Prior to the January 2010 earthquake in Haiti, Bishop Jeune was the overseer of more than 260 churches, 80 schools, feeding programs, clinics and orphanages throughout the nation. **The Gospel Crusade Ministerial Fellowship** is a nondenominational connectional organization and support group for ministers, churches and ministries. This international fellowship has over 900 ministers, 67 affiliated churches and ministries in the USA and abroad. The Gospel Crusade-related ministry in Haiti is now called **Grace International**.

In 1954 and 1955 Gerald Derstine, pastor, and a number of young people of the Strawberry Lake Mennonite Church in Ogema, Minnesota, experienced unusual signs of the Spirit, such as speaking in tongues and being slain in the Spirit. In 1956 the conference withdrew his ministerial credentials and he left. In 1977 the officials apologized for what they had done to Derstine and welcomed him back into the Mennonite Church. He continued his independent ministries from Christian Retreat Center in Bradenton, FL. (source: <http://www.gameo.org/encyclopedia/contents/C4602ME.html>).

Bishop R. Jeune and his wife, Doris L. Jeune, hold credentials with Gospel Crusade Inc., Bradenton, Florida (President: Dr. Apostle Gerald Derstine). The Jeunes now oversee 200 churches, 66 Christian schools, 3 orphanages, and a huge feeding program for over 3,000 street children [December 1997]. They hosted the TBN Haitian PTL aired in Haiti for more than 21 years. Bishop Jeune pastors one of the large churches he founded with over 3,000 members. He also has a powerful radio program heard all over Haiti, part of the Dominican Republic, Cuba, Jamaica, and the Bahamas. He is the National Coordinator of Gospel Crusade and Holy City Missions. Founder and president of the Haitian Pastoral League, he brings together many hundreds of pastors and leaders from differing Evangelical denominations in leadership seminars twice yearly. He organizes major crusades in the biggest stadiums in the country. Source: <http://www.ghchospital.org/BriefBioOfDrJoelJeu.asp>

**1945 - The Evangelical Bible Mission (EBM)** began to minister in Haiti under the leadership of Holiness evangelist G. T. Bustin, the founder of EBM (a nondenominational Holiness mission with headquarters in Summerfield, Florida). His son Charles continued the work from 1963 to 1986. David Bustin, a third generation missionary and grandson of G. T. Bustin, continues the current ministry. Re-New Haiti is a ministry of EBM International, a missionary organization with a worldwide ministry. Founded in 1940 in the Bahamas, EBM has grown and expanded its ministries to 17 countries where teams of missionaries and over 600 national associates are helping to fulfill the mission's objectives. The work in Haiti was originally called the **Bible Mission of the Antilles** and was affiliated with the **Pilgrim Holiness Church**.

- 1946 - **Baptist Mid-Missions** (an independent Baptist and Fundamentalist mission agency with headquarters in Cleveland, OH): in 1968, there were 10 affiliated churches with a total of 570 members.
- 1946 - Child Evangelism Fellowship
- 1946 - Great Commission Crusades
- 1946 - East West Indies Bible Mission

**1947 - Faith Mission** (*Mission par la Foi*) is a ministry founded by Robert Rocourt and his American-born wife, Esther, who “felt the call to discipleship” in the rugged area of southwestern Haiti. They acted on faith and started the work without assurance of outside help at that time. Since that time, Faith Mission has operated on the promise that God’s work performed in God’s way will never lack God’s supply. After the accidental death of Robert Rocourt, his widow

sought assistance from friends in the USA, who eventually organized Faith Mission, Inc., in Needmore, Pennsylvania. Today, its field headquarters are in Jérémie, the capital city of Grand'Anse department, in southwestern Haiti. Local churches are organized in the following districts: Mar-franc, Bon Bon, Ansedainault, Les Anglias, Guinaude, Abricot, Lory, Dame Marie, Les Irois, Leon, Jérémie, Chambelan, Port-au-Prince, and Jérémie Compound (total = 14).

- 1948 - **Faith Evangelical Mission of Haiti** (*Mission Evangélique par la Foi d'Haiti*), originally affiliated with Faith Holiness Mission and since 1962 with World Gospel Mission, an independent Holiness organization with headquarters in Marion, IN; in 1968, there were 16 affiliated churches and preaching points in Haiti with 345 members in Artibonite Department.
- 1949 - **Wesleyan Methodist Church**, World Missions (incorporated part of the work of the Hepzibah Faith Mission that began in 1943).
- 1949 - **Free Pentecostal Church of God Mission** (*Eglise de Dieu Mission Pentecôtiste Libre*), an independent Haitian organization founded by Etienne Desroche, formerly associated with the Church of God (Cleveland, TN); reported five affiliated churches in 1968 with about 1,000 members in Ouest and Artibonite departments.
- 1950 - **The Salvation Army** (*Armée du Salut*), founded by Swiss missionary Jacques Egger; reported 12 affiliated churches with 1,053 members in 1968.

**1950 - The Church of the Nazarene** (World Missions Division, Kansas City, MO) arrived in 1950 under the leadership of missionary Dr. Paul Orjala and incorporated part an earlier work begun in 1943 by the Hepzibah Faith Missionary Association. The *Eglise du Nazaréen* reported three congregations in 1950, 32 in 1960 and 67 in 1968 with 6,279 members. Although it reported more than 21,000 adherents in 1980, only about 6,000 were baptized church members; there were 117 churches, 56 primary school and 219 mission stations with 10 related medical facilities.

In 2001, the Haiti Mission Field Director was the Rev. Bill Dawson, who reported 11 districts, each led by a Haitian District Superintendent; three districts were self-supporting; a total of over 62,400 members; and 477 established churches, all with Haitian pastors. The Haiti Hot Lunch Program provided nutritional support to 20,000 children. One-hundred twenty-seven pastors' children received financial support for schooling through the "PK" Sponsorship Program. The Bible College trained Holiness pastors for ministry in the Haitian context. Medical facilities included two clinics with pharmacies.

- 1951 - **Army of Christ** (*Armée du Christ*), an independent Haitian organization founded by Carrié Guillaume who formerly was associated with The Salvation Army; reported five congregations in 1968.

**1952 - The Pentecostal Church of God, World Mission** (Joplin, MO), began work in Haiti in 1952 under missionaries Homer Specter and Charles Wise. By 1968, there were 68 affiliated local churches and 28 preaching points with a total membership of 3,253, up from 1,500 members in 1960. However, most of these churches and members previously had been affiliated with other denominations. Between 1980 and 1990, *l'Eglise de Dieu de la Pentecôte* grew from 4,500 members to 8,250 members, and between 2000 and 2010 from 10,700 members to 13,200 members. This denomination founded the **Pentecostal Church of God Bible Institute in Port-au-Prince** for training church leaders prior to 1968. In 2009, there were 83 affiliated churches and many Christian schools.

- 1952 - **The Missionary Church**, World Partners (incorporated the earlier independent work in Pignon led by Elie Marc and a group of churches that split from the UFM in 1949)
- 1953 - **Gospel Crusades World Wide Mission Outreach**
- 1954 - **Janz Teach Ministries**, Canada
- 1956 - **World Evangelistic Crusade** (*Croisade Evangélique Mondiale*), with headquarters in Chula Vista, California; founded in Haiti by Harold and Esther Burger in Port-au-Prince; reported 22 affiliated churches and preaching points in 1968.
- 1957 - **Société d'Unité Spirituelle Evangélique**, an independent Haitian organization founded by the Rev. Patrick Pierre, who formerly served as a pastor in Methodist and Baptist churches; reported two congregations in 1968.
- 1957 - **United Pentecostal Church** (*Eglise Pentecostale Unie*), founded in Haiti by the Rev. Dominique Guerrier who formerly served with the Free Methodist Church; the denomination in Haiti is affiliated with the United Pentecostal Church with headquarters in Hazelwood, MO; in 1968, there were 23 organized churches and 29 preaching points with 1,113 members in Haiti.
- 1957 - **Assemblies of the Holy Spirit** (*Assemblées du Saint-Esprit*), founded in Haiti by the Rev. Bernardin J. Saint-Pierre, who formerly served with the Church of God (Cleveland, TN); reported 26 churches and 31 preaching points with 1,075 members in 1968.
- 1958 - **Assembly of the Elect Evangelical Mission** (*Mission Evangélique Assemblée des Élus*), founded by Haitian nationals under the leadership of Hermann S. Célestin; reported seven congregations and 30 preaching points in 1968 with 930 members.

**1958 - The Assemblies of God, General Council (Springfield, MO)**, incorporated a group of independent Pentecostals that was founded in the mid-1940s in the hills near the port city of Miragoane in southwestern Haiti. The first U.S. missionaries were Laurence Perrault and Robert Turnbull and their families. Although in 1959 there were only 399 church members, by 1962 the membership had increased to 849, in 1965 to 1,240, and in 1968 to 1,683 in 34 congregations. In 1980, the *Assemblées de Dieu* reported a community of 30,500 with 6,300 baptized members, who were led by 67 credentialed ministers with assistance from 78 national workers. However, this denomination suffered from internal disputes between missionaries, from church splits, and from outside interference, according to Harmon Johnson (1970:32-45).

**1958 - OMS International** (formerly the **Oriental Missionary Society**), an independent Holiness organization, incorporated the work begun in Haiti in 1945 by the Evangelical Bible Mission, founded by evangelist G. T. Bustin (formerly with the Pilgrim Holiness Church). This included the ownership and management of **Radio 4VEH (The Evangelistic Voice of Haiti)** that offers Christian programming on AM (830 Khz) in French and Creole and on FM (94.7) in French and English to an estimated audience of 300,000. Since that time the ministry has expanded to include the Bethesda Medical and Dental Center, Emmaus Vocational Bible College, and Cowman International School. Medical and dental clinics minister to the needs of 150+ patients a day. Emmaus Vocational Bible School is training approximately 35 students for ministry, with as many more involved in professional training. **Every Creature Crusade** evangelism teams have established preaching points and planted churches, which are now organized and registered with the government as the **Emmaus Fellowship of Churches** (called *Eglises Evangéliques d'Haïti* by Romain [2004: 285], organized in 1965 with seven churches).

- 1959 - Mennonite Central Committee
- 1959 - Greater Europe Mission, Canada

- 1959 - World Vision International

*Between 1960 and 1979, other Protestant denominations and service agencies began work in Haiti. See annotated chronology below.*

- 1960 - **Baptist Convention of Haiti**, formed by the American Baptist Convention in the USA and other affiliated groups; however, a group of Baptist churches in the Jacmel area did not become part of the Convention; these independent Baptist churches were later organized as the Ebenezer Baptist Mission.
- 1960 - **World-Wide Missions**, affiliated with **Eben-Ezer Haitian Church of God** (*Eglise de Dieu Ebenezer Haïtienne*) founded in 1946 (see previous).
- 1960 - Bethel Foreign Mission Foundation
- 1962 - **World Gospel Mission**
- 1962 - **Haitian Church of God** (*Eglise de Dieu d'Haïti*), a national church body founded by former pastors of the Church of God of Prophecy who disagreed with the new missionary supervisor; reported five congregations in 1968.
- 1963 - CSI Ministries
- 1964 - Missionary Flights International
- 1964 - **Free Methodist Church of North America** (*Eglise Méthodiste Libre*), founded in Haiti by missionaries Nahum Perkins and Maxine Riddle; reported 16 affiliated congregations and 44 preaching points in 1968 with 694 members.
- 1966 - Have Christ Will Travel Ministries
- 1966 - International Child Care
- 1966 - **Church of God (Holiness)**
- 1967 - **Churches of God, General Conference** (founded by John Winebrenner, Findlay, Ohio)
- 1967 - **Macedonian World Baptist Missions**
- 1968 - Friends for Missions, Inc.
- 1968 - Compassion International
- 1968 - **Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities**
- 1968 - Elim Fellowship
- 1969 - Friends For Missions
- 1969 - **Church of God (Anderson, IN)**
- 1969 - For Haiti with Love, Inc. (Methodist tradition)
- 1969 - **Allegheny Wesleyan Methodist Missions**
- 1970 - Ministries in Action (Men in Action)
- 1970 - Global Outreach Mission, Canada
- 1970 - International Gospel League
- 1970 - United Missionary Fellowship
- 1971 - Food for the Hungry International

**By 1971, the following additional groups had begun work in Haiti, although their date of origin is unknown as this time** (source: *Annuaire Protestante*, 1972-1973, CISE): Christ Gospel Churches, Church of God in Christ-Mennonite, Churches of God in North America, Gedeon's Evangelical Band (now known as the International Evangelical Church Soldiers of the Cross of Christ), Church of God (Original), God's Missionary Church, Gospel Messengers Crusades, Haitian Independent Baptist Mission, Maranatha Baptist Mission, Mountain Faith Mission Association, National Baptist Convention of America, Pentecostal Assemblies of the World, World Ministry Outreach, World Ministries Commission, World Neighbors, and World Missionary Evangelism.

The 1971-1972 *Annuaire Protestante* reported the existence of 458 local churches and 1,125 outstations (preaching points) with 72,852 members; also, there were 321 schools and 40 clinics operated by Protestant missions and denominations.

Harmon Johnson's study, *The Growing Church in Haiti* (1970), mentioned that "no one knows how many different denominations there are" in Haiti, when he conducted his fieldwork during August-September 1969, which was sponsored by Men in Action (known as *Christ Pour Tous* in Haiti) and the West Indies Mission. Johnson stated that the USAID reported the existence of 145 Protestant denominations and foreign missions in Haiti, whereas the Minister of Cults reported only 87 denominations and their respective foreign missions. Johnson stated further that both of these lists were incomplete because they did not include a great number of free-lance missionaries who go to Haiti regularly as tourists, and their missions are not registered with the government. Also many national denominations were not registered with the government, which meant that the leaders of these churches were not allowed to perform marriages for their own people or enjoy other prerogatives of registered religious organizations, but which continue to function without legal sanctions.

Johnson mentioned another complicating factor, which was the relative isolation of most mission agencies and national church bodies. The larger denominations and missions enjoyed good fraternal relations for the most part and cooperated in inter-church projects of various kinds, whereas the free-lance missionaries and independent national church bodies had very little to do with other denominations.

- 1972 - Haiti Gospel Mission
- 1974 - Presbyterian Church in the USA
- 1975 - Mission to the World, Presbyterian Church in America
- 1975 - Apostolic Overcoming Holy Church of God
- 1975 - Bethany Fellowship Missions
- 1975 - Christian Aid Mission
- 1975 - Evangelical Scripture Mission
- 1975 - FARMS International, Inc.
- 1976 - International Pentecostal Holiness Church
- 1976 - Open Bible Standard Mission
- 1976 - World Concern - Crista International
- 1976 - AMG International (Advancing the Ministries of the Gospel)
- 1977 - Campus Crusade for Christ, International
- 1978 - Emmanuel International
- 1978 - Baptist International Missions
- 1978 - Southern Baptist Convention (International Mission Board)
- 1979 - Gospel Outreach, Ltd.
- 1979 - Mission Possible
- 1979 - Bible Holiness Movement

**1979 - The Northwest Haiti Christian Mission (NWHCM)** is related to the independent Christian churches and churches of Christ, which are part of the Restoration Movement. In 1977, a young preacher from a small town in rural Indiana took his first trip out of the country. Alfred Helms joined a group of others from nearby churches to visit North-west Haiti on an evangelistic mission trip. Once in Haiti, they drove north from Port-au-Prince in a blue Volkswagen van,

working their way through Gonaives to Port-de-Paix, where they began assessing the potential for ministry. They preached there and bought land to build a small church.

They were overwhelmed by the physical, spiritual, economic, and social poverty they found. The trip was hard — at times, Helms thought he would never return to Haiti again. But in 1978, he did return, and he did it again in 1979, and nearly every year after that.

Helms and the group grew in number, and together they made a commitment to ministering to people in Northwest Haiti. In 1979, the group formed Northwest Haiti Christian Mission, and many of them would continue to serve on the board of directors for decades.

From the start, NWHCM's mission was to establish churches and reach communities for Christ by helping meet human needs through humanitarian aid and education. The group named Larry Owen, then a preacher from Calhoun, Kentucky, as the mission's first executive director. It began with a small orphan-age in Port-de-Paix (Chalet) and a fledgling church nearby in La Pointe. But within a few short years, the mission had grown rapidly to include primary schools and multiple churches, and it was attracting increasing numbers of visitors from North America.

In 1989, Pat Hamilton joined the mission as its first long-term, full-time residential missionary in St. Louis du Nord, a few miles to the east of Port-de-Paix. In 1990, the mission added a feeding program for children and the elderly. The program's enrollment grew exponentially, and visits from crowds of people in desperate need of medical care quickly gave rise to the addition of a free clinic in St. Louis du Nord.

By the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, NWHCM's ministries encompassed multiple primary schools, nearly two-dozen churches, multi-faceted surgery programs, a 24-hour maternity ward, a Bible college, and residential pro-grams for orphans, special-needs children, and indigent seniors. The organization employed more than a dozen full-time missionaries and staff, and more than 100 national staff.

In 2007, Janeil Owen succeeded his father, Larry, as executive director. Under Janeil's leadership, NWHCM greatly expanded its work in the "Far West," the region of the Haiti's northern peninsula that lies west of Port-de-Paix. That area is among Haiti's most impoverished and unreached. To date, NWHCM has planted or supports more than 25 churches in Northwest Haiti and more are being added each year.

**In 1980, the Protestant community in Haiti (adherents)** was estimated at between 600,000 and one million, or 10 to 20 percent of the total population. The estimated church membership was between 275,000 to 300,000 or approximately five percent of the population. In 1980, there were more than 1,600 protestant congregations, 4,000 mission stations and 5,600 other informal meeting places (preaching points). In 1983, there were at least 26 Protestant seminaries and Bible institutes in Haiti.

Baptist churches had the largest constituency (adherents) among Protestants in 1980 with a community numbering more than 200,000 distributed among five major mission-related Baptist conventions. The largest single group, the **Baptist Convention of Haiti**, is affiliated with **American Baptist Churches in the USA**. It reported a community of 80,000 of which 38,000

were members who were under the direction of 58 national pastors and worshipped in 86 church meeting centers, only one of which was self-supporting. The churches associated with **West Indies Mission-World Team**, the **Evangelical Baptist Mission of South Haiti**, reported nearly 40,000 adherents, of which approximately 50 percent were members.

*Between 1980 and 1999, other Protestant denominations and service agencies began work in Haiti. See annotated chronology below.*

- 1981 - International Church of the Foursquare Gospel
- 1981 - Habitat for Humanity International
- 1981 - Medical Ambassadors International
- 1981 - Missionary Aviation Fellowship
- 1982 - Baptist Bible Fellowship International
- 1982 - Harvest
- 1982 - International Partnership Ministries
- 1983 - Childcare International
- 1983 - Hope for the Hungry
- 1983 - New Missions to Haiti

**The *Annuaire Protestante, 1983*** (published by CISE) listed 1,097 Protestant organizations in Haiti, of which 212 reported that they were engaged in evangelism and church planting; the rest of these organizations were involved in one or more of the following activities: agriculture, artisans, audio-visual, aviation service, camping, clinics, canteens, communications, development, education (schools), education (theological), education (professional), education (for handi-capped), healthcare, hospital, library/bookstores, nutrition, printing, orphanage, radio and work-teams. However, statistics were not included regarding the number of churches or members for the respective denominations.

- 1985 - Rehoboth Ministries, Inc.
- 1985 - STEM Ministries
- 1986 - Elim Fellowship World Missions
- 1986 - FOCAS

**1986 - The Christian Reformed Church (CRC) of Haiti** became formally organized after nearly 13 years of struggle and held its first national assembly in 2000. CRC World Missions provides limited financial and consultative support to help the Haitian CRC develop as a truly indigenous denomination in the Reformed tradition. The Haitian CRC currently reports 17 church groups with 1,007 baptized and another 1,431 attendees in 826 families.

- 1987 - World Concern
- 1988 - Global Strategy Mission Association
- 1988 - Reciprocal Ministries International

#### *A Summary of Protestantism in Haiti in 1988*

In 1988, almost half of Haiti's Protestants were Baptists, and Pentecostals had the second largest number of adherents. Many other denominations were present, including a large number of Seventh-Day Adventists. Widespread Protestant evangelistic and church planting efforts began in the 1950s. By 1988, about 20 percent of the population had identified itself as Protestant.

Protestantism has appealed mainly to the middle and upper classes, and it played an important role in educational life. However, Protestant churches focused their appeal on the lower classes long before the Roman Catholics did. Protestant churches and clergy were found even in the smaller villages, where the clergy used Creole rather than French. Schools and clinics provided much-needed services. Protestant congregations encouraged baptisms and marriages and performed these ceremonies free of charge.

For many Haitians, Protestantism represented an opposition to Vodou. When people converted to Protestantism, they usually did not reject the reality of Vodou, but they often came to view the folk religion as diabolical. Most Protestant denominations considered all *loua*, including family spirits, as demons. Some Haitians converted to Protestantism when they wanted to reject family spirits that they felt had failed to protect them. Others chose to become Protestants merely as a way to gain an alternative form of protection from misfortune.

François Duvalier, in his struggle with the Roman Catholic Church, welcomed Protestant missionaries, especially from North America. Dependent on the government for their presence in Haiti, and competing with each other as well as with the Roman Catholics, Protestant missionaries generally accepted the policies of the Duvalier regimes. Numerous Protestant leaders did, however, join with Roman Catholics in their public opposition to the government during the last days of Jean-Claude Duvalier's dictatorship.

- 1989 - Global Missionary Evangelism
- 1989 - International Teams of Canada
- 1991 - Christian Aid Ministries
- 1992 - Mission to the Americas, formerly known as the Conservative Baptist Home Mission Society.
- 1993 - Barnabas Ministries, Inc.
- 1993 - ECHO
- 1993 - Evangelical Free Church Mission
- 1994 - TEAM of Canada
- 1995 - Mission Society for United Methodists
- 1996 - FEBInternational (Far East Broadcasting)

**ESTIMATED MEMBERSHIP OF  
LARGEST PROTESTANT DENOMINATIONS IN HAITI, 1960-2010  
(Sorted by estimated membership in 2010)**

	<b>DENOMINATIONAL NAME (DATE OF ORIGIN)</b>	<b>1960 MEMBERS</b>	<b>1968 MEMBERS</b>	<b>1980 MEMBERS</b>	<b>1990 MEMBERS</b>	<b>2000 MEMBERS</b>	<b>2008-2010 MEMBERS</b>
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1	Seventh-Day Adventist Church (1905)	16,229	26,489	30,500	146,094	244,388	328,029
2	Haitian Baptist Convention (1939, ABC)	34,254	35,986	38,000	63,000	85,000	91,300
3	Church of the Nazarene (1946)	6,421	17,101	19,826	30,800	62,472	81,600
4	Church of God (1934, Cleveland, TN)	1,200	16,000	29,400	38,600	53,800	65,900
5	World-Wide Missions - Eben-Ezer Church of God (1960)	500	8,180	18,000	25,000	33,900	42,400
6	Haitian Episcopal Church (1861)	10,615	13,867	15,658	25,300	28,600	33,300
7	Evangelical Baptist Mission of South Haiti (1936, WIM-WorldTeam)	10,000	10,556	20,500	24,000	25,300	26,700
8	Evangelical Church of Haiti (1958, OMS)	240	688	2,500	13,000	18,200	23,500



9	Baptist Haiti Mission/Conservative Baptist (1943)	2,800	5,572	8,000	13,000	16,800	20,500
10	Faith (Holiness) Mission (1947)	1,500	2,250	5,430	10,000	14,800	19,500
11	Church of God in Christ (1929)	6,000	10,697	12,000	14,000	16,700	19,200
12	Assemblies of God (1957)	400	1,683	5,500	8,000	13,400	16,800
13	Evangelical Baptist Mission (1951, UFM)	9,598	7,485	10,700	13,800	14,800	16,400
14	Wesleyan Methodist Church (1949)	1,500	2,572	3,500	7,780	12,500	14,800
15	Free Methodist Church (1964)	160	950	3,578	7,780	12,500	14,800
16	Church of God of Prophecy (1931)	16,208	23,932	16,800	15,700	15,500	14,200
17	Pentecostal Church of God (1952)	1,500	2,940	4,500	8,250	10,700	13,200
18	The Missionary Church (1952)	799	1,212	4,400	7,500	10,100	12,600
19	United Pentecostal Church (1962)	--	4,300	5,240	5,600	7,530	8,940
20	Wesleyan Church (1969)	1,456	2,572	3,944	5,440	6,610	7,930
21	Haitian Methodist Church (UK, 1834)	2,324	2,764	2,757	4,740	6,410	7,620
22	Ebenezer Baptist Tabernacle (1894)	3,000	4,000	4,800	5,600	6,660	7,560
23	Pentecostal Holiness Church (1976)	--	--	1,250	2,910	4,740	6,570
24	National Baptist Convention (1970s)	500	1,000	2,000	3,000	4,000	5,000
25	Church of God (Anderson, IN – 1969)	600	1,300	1,750	2,500	3,230	3,870
	<b>SUBTOTALS</b>	<b>127,804</b>	<b>204,096</b>	<b>270,533</b>	<b>501,394</b>	<b>728,640</b>	<b>902,219</b>
	Independent churches	2,000	4,000	6,000	10,000	15,000	20,000
	All other denominations	4,000	6,000	7,000	15,000	20,000	25,000
	<b>ESTIMATED TOTALS</b>	<b>133,804</b>	<b>214,096</b>	<b>283,533</b>	<b>526,394</b>	<b>763,640</b>	<b>947,219</b>

#### SOURCES:

- (1) Clyde W. Taylor and Wade T. Coggins. *Protestant Missions in Latin America: A Statistical Survey*. Washington, DC: Evangelical Foreign Missions Association, 1961.
- (2) Johnson, Harmon A. *The Growing Church in Haiti*. Coral Gables, FL: West Indies Mission, 1970.
- (3) Holland, Clifton L. (editor). *World Christianity: Central America and the Caribbean*. Monrovia, CA: MARC-World Vision, 1982.
- (4-6) Brierly, Peter. *World Churches Handbook*. London: Christian Research, 1997; supplemented by denominational sources.

**The Lutheran Church of Haiti** (*l'eglise Luthérienne D'Haiti, ELH*) began with the ordination of three pastors on 30 January 2009. Formerly known as the *Federation Evangelique Luthérienne d'Haiti*, was officially registered as *L'Eglise Luthérienne d'Haiti* in 22 October 2009. The Rev. Joseph Livenson Lauvanus was elected as president. He is one of four pastors that currently serve the denomination, which includes eight congregations, some in Port-au-Prince and surrounding areas extending through the countryside to the city of Jacmel in southern Haiti. The work of the church also includes theological training, women's programs, scholarships, as well as other programs. This denomination is affiliated with the **Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**, with headquarters in Chicago, Illinois.

**Other Protestant denominations and mission agencies reported to exist in Haiti during the mid-1990s include:** American Evangelistic Association (Latter Rain Pentecostal Movement); Church of God (World Headquarters); Church of Jesus Christ (Kingsport); Congregational Bible Churches International; Deliverance Evangelistic Church; First Church of Jesus Christ; Pentecostal Churches of Apostolic Faith; Pentecostal Fire-Baptized Holiness Church; Salvation and Deliverance Church; United Church of the Living God, The Pillar and Ground of Truth; and Wesleyan Tabernacle Association (J. Gordon Melton 1996: 1028).

## *Theological Education*

The *Annuaire Protestant, 1983* (published by CISE) listed 17 organizations that were involved in theological education, but most of these were Bible institutes that operated at the primary or secondary education levels and not as university-level programs.

The roots of the **Evangelical Theological Seminary of Port-au-Prince** – Séminaire Théologue Evangélique de Port-au-Prince (STEP) – can be traced to the **Evangelical School of the Bible** (EEB), founded in 1942, and recognized as one of the oldest theological institutions in the Caribbean. EEB's success is evidenced by the fact that the majority of its more than 600 graduates are currently involved in Christian ministry throughout Haiti and abroad.

As the evangelical community in Haiti has grown, so has the need for more advanced studies. To that end, the Evangelical Theological Seminary of Port-au-Prince (STEP) was established in 1981 to provide a higher level of theological training. Ninety-two men and women were graduated from this new school from 1985 to 1977, more than 75 percent are currently involved in Christian ministry.

In an effort to improve the organization's performance, 1997 marked the merger of the two institutions, EEB and STEP, under the STEP name. The unified STEP is better able to manage its human, physical and economic resources with the goal of better meeting the needs of the church in Haiti. Counting former and current programs together, STEP now has more than 1,100 graduates.

STEP operates under the auspices of the *Union Evangélique Baptiste d'Haiti (UEBH)*, an association of more than 100 already-established and 300 developing churches. The UEBH is committed foremost to the development of local churches, but addresses a wide range of societal issues through its education, literature, medical and community development ministries.

Current programs of theological education in Haiti that are in partnership with the World Council of Churches include the following: Christian Institute, Port-au-Prince; École Biblique de Bethel, Port-au-Prince; Free Methodist Bible Institute, Port-au-Prince; Le Séminaire Théologique Baptiste d'Haiti Limbe, Cap Haitien; Christian Institute & College, Port-au-Prince; and Institut Biblique Bethel, Port-au-Prince.

**The International Council for Evangelical Theological Education (ICETE)** lists the following affiliated institutions in Haiti: Berean Evangelical Theological Seminary, Ecole Emmaus Biblique et Professionnelle, Free Methodist Bible Institute, Seminaire Theologique Evangélique de Port-au-Prince, Seminaire Theologique de l'Eglise de Dieu en Haiti, and Seminaire Theologique Nazaréen d'Haïti.

**Concordia Theological Seminary.** The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Haiti (ELCH) has 13 ordained pastors that serve its members in a circuit rider type role. Lay preachers assist the ordained men. The intention is to require a full course of theological study and a vicarage prior to ordination for all of the lay preachers. The ELCH and her seminary are committed to a solid program of theological education for every pastor, and will not ordain "willy-nilly." Concordia Theological Seminary - Haiti was officially recognized by the Haitian government in November

2008. The seminary can grant the officially-recognized degree of Bachelor of Divinity to students that complete the full course of study. The seminary classes are taught as intensives; there is no physical seminary campus; it is a "seminary without walls." Four Haitian men earned or are pursuing Ph.D's in Missiology at CTSFW (Fort Wayne, Indiana) to return to Haiti equipped to teach new pastors. These men are also pastors of their own churches. These classes take place in four regional centers: Port-au-Prince, Cap Haitien, Jacmel, and Les Cayes.

**The Episcopal Church of Haiti** operates its own Theological Seminary to provide theological education and leadership training. A revised B.Th. curriculum has been implemented, using international standards in theological training; and local lay leadership training in business and community development is taking place in two regions of the Diocese.

Most of the Protestant denominations in Haiti operate their own Bible schools, institutes or short-term programs, but the majority of these function at the pre-university level.

**The Church of the Brethren Mission in Haiti** began in the early 2000s, led by Haitian Brethren living in the USA. The first Brethren were baptized in Haiti in May 2003. Five years later, in 2008, there were five active Church of the Brethren congregations in Haiti and 10 more preaching points. Ten ministry candidates were ready for licensing in 2009, and one Haitian Brethren member has graduated from seminary. The Church of the Brethren holds an annual theological training in Haiti to assist with leadership development for the new mission. The church's Ministry Office also will be supporting licensing of Haitian ministers.

#### *Major Protestant Relief and Development Organizations at work in Haiti prior to 2010*

- Compassion International
- Food for the Hungry International (since 1971)
- Mennonite Central Committee
- Samaritan's Purse
- *Sant Kreyen pou Devlopman Entegre* - Christian Center Integral Development (Christian Church – Disciples of Christ)
- *Sous Espwa* – Source of Hope (Christian Reformed World Relief Committee, CRWRC)
- Tearfund-England
- World Concern
- World Hope
- World Relief (an agency of the National Association of Evangelicals in the USA)
- World Vision International (since 1959)

#### *Ecumenical Organizations*

**The Council of Evangelical Churches of Haiti** (*Concile des Eglises Evangeliques d'Haïti, CEEH*) is affiliated with the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA). The Rev. Claude Noel was one of the founding leaders who served as its president for many years. The current membership is unknown.

**CONASPEH - National Spiritual Council of Haitian Churches**, based in Port-au-Prince, includes approximately 3,500 grassroots churches throughout the country. Founded in May

1986, this organization of churches, associations and protestant missions is engaged in confronting the problems in Haiti from which congregations are not exempt. It is directed by a national committee of departmental coordinators and coordinators representing the communes.

The National Committee is made up of Reverend Patrick Villier, President; Francoise St. Vil Villier, General Secretary; Mario Depestre, Counselor and Director of Health Projects; Guy Romeus, Public Relations; Raymond Duracin, General Coordinator; Sister Bathelemy, Counselor; and Rodrique Pascal, Public Relations.

Its purpose is to fight against social, economic, political and religious problems; to consolidate the ministries of the national leaders, represent them, publicize their work on a national level, as well as an international level, contribute to the formation of churches, facilitate dialogue and respect among them, and promote unity and equality among the social classes and institutions. Also, it has a focus on education, which is considered an urgent priority in society, particularly in the local congregations.

CONASPEH is the means by which one can live in peace and justice and where one can know real development and the integration of the poorest. CONASPEH is joined by several organizations and churches from overseas: Global Ministries (a common witness of the Christian Church-Disciples of Christ and the United Church of Christ), Church World Service, World Council of Churches, the Wisconsin Conference of the Christian Churches-Disciples of Christ, the Pentecostal Churches of Venezuela, the University of Costa Rica, the University of Cuba, and the World Council of Handicapped People. Thanks to these contributors and partners, CONASPEH has been able to set up and maintain its projects and activities.

**The Protestant Federation of Haiti** (*Fédération Protestante d'Haïti, FPM*) was founded in 1986. Its Vision is: "That all Haitians may experience the love of Christ, and that Haitian Protestantism may be one, united in solidarity, and strong, so as to promote the Christian and Protestant values within a holistic vision of the human being, men and women, and have an impact on the major national decisions."

Its Mission statement is: "that all may be one, the Protestant Federation of Haiti, expressing the unity of churches, missions and protestant organizations, devotes itself to promoting evangelical and social activities within the large family of Haitians, in Haiti and in the Haitian communities abroad, so that each one of its members may become an effective agent of reconciliation."

Its current members include: Apostolic Faith Mission, Assemblies of God, Baptist Convention of Haiti (also a member of the World Council of Churches), Baptist Missionary Fellowship of Haiti, Church of God in Christ, Church of God Mission, Church of the Evangelical Community of Haiti, Church of the Nazarene, Conservative Baptist Mission, Evangelical Baptist Mission of the South of Haiti, Evangelical Baptist Union of Haiti, Evangelical Mission in the Callebasses Region, Evangelical Tabernacle Mission of Bethel, Free Methodist Church in Haiti, Independent Christian Alliance, International Evangelical Mission, Methodist Church of Haiti (MCCA, also a member of the World Council of Churches), National Council of Evangelical Missions, The Salvation Army, Union of the Seventh-Day Adventists, and the Wesleyan Church of Haiti.

The U.S.-based **Church World Service (CWS)**, founded in 1946 with offices today in Elkhart, Indiana, is supported by 36 Protestant, Orthodox and Anglican denominations in the USA, which are members of the National Council of Churches as well as the World Council of Churches. CWS is an ecumenical organization that works with partners to eradicate hunger and poverty and to promote peace and justice around the world, including Haiti.

### **Other Religions**

Included in this category are other Christian denominations of Eastern Orthodox and Western Catholic traditions.

**The Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia (ROCOR)** sponsors the Orthodox Church in Haiti. The Orthodox community in Haiti has grown to seven parishes under the pastoral leadership of its two Haitian priests, Fr. Jean Chenier-Dumais and Fr. Gregoire Legoute. The Chapel de St. Moises in Port-au-Prince is led by Fr. Gregoire. Since 1995, seven parishes have been established in Haiti, but only two have permanent church buildings. Both of these churches were damaged in the January 2010 earthquake. The remaining parishes hold their services either in rented buildings or, in several cases, in open-air tents.

Father Tony Cortesi, an Eastern Orthodox deacon, is founder of Holy Angels Hospice and Orphanage in Port-au-Prince, sponsored by **Holy Angels Children's Society**, a nonprofit charity based in Whiting, NJ.

**The Byzantine Catholic Church** assumed its present form in 1984 by a merger of the **Byzantine Old Catholic Church** and the **Holy Orthodox Catholic Church, Eastern and Apostolic**. The Byzantine Old Catholic Church, Inc., was an Old Catholic jurisdiction and now an Orthodox Catholic Jurisdiction whose history is intimately tied to the career of its leader, Mar Markus I [aka, Mark I. Miller], the duly-elected Patriarch, in 1967. In 1997, the BCC reported over 500 congregations worldwide, with affiliated congregations spread throughout the USA as well as in Great Britain, France, Italy, Congo, Nigeria, Liberia, Haiti, South America, and with a reported membership of over 100,000.

### **Independent Western Catholic jurisdictions include the following.**

The Daughter's of God Girl's Home (*Foyer des Filles de Dieu*), located in Croix des Bouquets, is a mission of several congregations affiliated with the **Catholic Apostolic Church in North America (CACINA)**: Resurrection Catholic Church in Moneta, VA; and Holy Trinity Parish in Reston, VA. CACINA's history as an independent, progressive Catholic Church begins with the founding of *Igreja Católica Apostólica Brasileira* (The Catholic Apostolic Church of Brazil) in 1945, which was established by the late Bishop Carlos Duarte-Costa as a result of ecclesiastic and civil persecutions in Brazil in the 1930's and 1940's. The Catholic Apostolic Church was brought to the USA by the late Bishop Estefan Meyer Corradi-Scarella who had been consecrated a bishop for that purpose in 1949, from which date CACINA traces its establishment. Today CACINA has Catholic Apostolic jurisdiction in all of the USA and Canada, together with their respective territories, protectorates and possessions.

In 1897, Msgr. **Joseph René Vilatte** (b.1854-d.1929) prepared for an **Old Catholic Mission** in Haiti and ordained the Rev. Paul François priest, at St. Louis-de-France Catholic Church in Green Bay, Wisconsin, to head the work in Haiti. It is not known if this mission actually was established. Archbishop Vilatte founded the **American Catholic Church** in Chicago in 1915 in the tradition of the Old Catholic Movement. Vilatte is considered to be the first independent Catholic prelate in North America, who founded more than 20 churches.

**Marginal Christian groups.** The Jehovah's Witnesses grew from 209 congregations and 13,849 members in 2005 to 220 congregations with 15,214 members in 2008; the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Utah Mormons) claimed 16,322 members and 31 congregations in 2009 (began in 1977); the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Missouri Mormons); the Philadelphia Church of God (a split from the Worldwide Church of God in the USA); Unity School of Christianity (Association of Unity Churches International); Christian Science (there is a society and reading room in Port-de-Paix); and the Holy Gospel Church IV, Inc.

**The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints** (aka, **The Community of Christ**) was established in Independence, Missouri, between 1853-1860 by Jason Briggs, Zenos Gurley and William Marks. Joseph Smith III was ordained as its president in 1860, when the current name was adopted. This group rejected the practice of polygamy and some of the doctrines associated with the Utah Mormons. In 2000, its name was changed to **The Community of Christ**.

**The Holy Gospel Church IV, Inc.**, was founded in 1977 in New Port Richie, Florida, by the Rev. Mario J. Sautte, the church's patriarch. It is described as a liberal church organization without any traditional doctrine. It is the belief of the church that each clergy person has a right to serve god in their own way according to their own religious convictions. It is Christian, interfaith, and nondenominational. The Church accepts belief in God, the divinity of Christ, and the power of prayer, but these are not required beliefs by those ordained by the church.

This so-called “mail order church” is prepared to ordain anyone who professes a call to the ministry. There are no educational or creedal requirements. The church also issues doctor of divinity degrees upon application. The church charters congregations, but does not cover individual congregations with its tax-exempt umbrella; local churches must gain tax exemption on their own. Affiliated congregations are listed in the United Kingdom, Ireland, Germany, France, Spain, Italy, Ghana, Lebanon, Haiti and Mexico.

### *Non-Christian Religions*

Although small numbers of **Buddhists**, **Muslims**, and members of the **Baha’i Faith** can be found in Port-au-Prince, by far the most influential religious movements besides Christianity and Voodoo in Haiti are **Freemasonry** and **Rosicrucianism**, both of which date to the colonial era. Although the esoteric nature of these movements precludes any estimation of their numbers, many Haitian heads of state have been Masons, and historically the Catholic Church hierarchy has been troubled by the attraction of its flock – and especially of upper-class Haitian Catholics – to Freemasonry and Rosicrucianism.

**Islam.** There is a small Muslim community in Haiti, mainly residing in Port-au-Prince, Cap-Haitien and its surrounding suburbs. The history of Islam on the island of Hispaniola (which Haiti shares with the Dominican Republic) begins with the history of slavery in Haiti. Many Muslims were imported as slaves and were forced to abandon Islam over time; however, their Islamic heritage has persisted in the culture of native Haitians. In 2000, Nawoon Marcellus, a member of *Fanmi Lavalas* (a populist leftist political party in Haiti, founded by former Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide; it has been a powerful force in Haitian politics since 1991) from San Raphael, became the first Muslim elected to the Chamber of Deputies of Haiti.

**Bahá'í National Spiritual Assembly.** The first known Bahá'í to visit Haiti was Leonora Armstrong in 1927. Louis George Gregory visited in January 1937 mentioned a small community of Bahá'ís operating in Haiti. The first long-term pioneers, Ruth and Ellsworth Blackwell, arrived in 1940. The first Bahá'í Local Spiritual Assembly of Haiti was formed in 1942 in Port-au-Prince. Beginning in 1951 the Haitian Bahá'ís participated in regional Bahá'í organizations until 1961 when Haitian Bahá'ís elected their own National Spiritual Assembly and soon began reaching out into neighboring islands. In 1963, there were Bahá'í Local Spiritual Assemblies in 10 towns, including Cap-Haitien, Port-au-Prince, and Saint-Marc; there was a registered group of Bahá'ís in Petionville and isolated Bahá'ís in five other locations. The 1964 national convention had 19 delegates from across Haiti representing thirteen local assemblies. The Anís Zunúzí Bahá'í School near Port-au-Prince began holding classes in 1980. The Association of Religion Data Archives (relying mostly on the *World Christian Encyclopedia*) estimated that there were about 21,000 Bahá'ís in Haiti in 2005.

**Chinese Buddhists, Chinese Traditional Religions:** Haiti is one of the 23 countries that recognize Taipei rather than Beijing. There are few known Chinese residents in Haiti. However, eight Chinese U.N. peacekeepers were buried in the rubble of the January 2010 earthquake, according to press releases. Prior to the earthquake, there were 125 Chinese in Haiti as part of the U.N. stabilization mission. Buddhist websites gave no listings for Haiti.

**Hinduism.** Transcendental Meditation (TM), International Sri Sathya Sai Baba Organization. Hindu websites gave no further listings for Haiti.

**Judaism.** Although the Jewish population of Haiti remained as high as 200 in 1957, the political climate, lack of economic opportunity and longing for a Jewish community on the part of Haitian-born Sephardim, as well as the refugees, quickly took their toll. By 1970, around 75 percent of the Jewish population had left, mostly for the USA, Argentina and Panama. According to the World Jewish Congress', in 1997, the permanent Jewish community of Haiti numbered 25, mostly still centered in Port-au-Prince. For historical information, see the following:  
<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/vjw/haiti.html>.

#### *Ancient Wisdom Tradition*

**The Ancient Wisdom Tradition includes:** Freemasonry, Ancient and Mystical Order of the Rosae Cruz (A.M.O.R.C.), Église Gnostique de France (1890, later Ecclesia Gnostica Catholica), l'Église Gnostique Apostolique, Ecclesia Gnostica Spiritualis, Martinist Order (1891, Ordre Martiniste Traditionale), Ordo Templi Orientis Antiqua (O.T.O.A.), La Couleuvre Noire

(L.C.N.), Albigensian Gnostic Rite of Haiti, Société Voudon Gnostique, among others (sources: Ordo Templi Orientis History - Phenomenon at <http://user.cyberlink.ch/~koenig>; French Gnostic Documents at <http://www.gnostique.net/documents/>).

**Freemasonry** in Haiti is governed by the Grand Orient d'Haiti (founded in 1824), which in 2008 reported 48 subordinate Lodges with a total membership of about 6,000. The mailing address indicates Port-au-Prince as the Grand Lodge home. The *Fédération Maçonnique Haitienne* was founded in June 1997. See the following websites for more information: <http://goh1824.net/> and <http://www.publitel.com/fmh/members.htm>).

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Estienne Morin, who had been involved in high degree Masonry in Bordeaux, France, since 1744, founded an "Ecosais" lodge (Scots Masters Lodge) in the city of Le Cap Francais, on the north coast of the French colony of Saint-Domingue (Haiti) in 1747. Around 1763, Morin compiled a Masonic Rite consisting of twenty-five degrees known as "The Rite of the Royal Secret," or "Morin's Rite." This Rite became quite popular in the New World and its Degrees would be incorporated into the 33 Degree Scottish Rite in 1801.

Jean Baptiste Delahogue, a French Plantation owner in Haiti, who would become Comte de Grasse's father-in-law, and Haitian born Jean Pierre Boyer were practitioners of the Morin Rite.

De Grasse, arrived in Haiti in 1789 just in time to witness the opening battles of the Haitian revolution. Both he and his family, including Delahogue, were forced to flee the island for Charleston, South Carolina, four years later in 1793. For the next few years he was forced to bide his time while he waited for an opportunity to rejoin the battle.

By 1799 news of the arrival from France of General Hedouville in Haiti reached de Grasse and he volunteered his services and immediately set sail for the island. Upon his arrival in Santo Domingo he was informed that the General had been driven off the island and de Grasse was taken captive and cast into prison shackled hand and foot. Only the intervention of the American Consul prevented his death and he was released on the condition he return directly to Charleston.

The next year the French Schooner *La Vengeance* arrived in Norwich from Haiti. An 1856 article written in the *Magazine of American History*, Vol. 13, entitled, "An Old Masonic Charter," describes the Masonic regalia and documents found on a young prisoner on board. The following is a short excerpt from that article.

"Among the prisoners sent to Norwich was a mulatto who had been a lieutenant under Rigaud. His name was Jean Pierre Boyer, a native of Port-au-Prince . . . In his possession, at the time of his capture, were found a complete set of the regalia and jewels of a Masonic Lodge and a variety of Masonic documents, such as forms for admission to the Fraternity, catechisms of the various degrees from an Entered Apprentice up to Perfect Master, communications from the Grand Orient at Paris, and a Warrant, or Charter, (for the Morin Rite) signed by none other than Estienne Morin . . . Boyer made his way to France, where he was well received by Napoleon, then First Consul, and from whom he obtained a commission in General LeClerc's expedition, which sailed for St. Domingo in January, 1802."

In February 1802, General Charles Leclerc arrived with tens of warships and 12,000 French troops to bring Saint-Domingue under more control. Gens de couleur Petion, Boyer and Rigaud returned with him in the hope of securing power in the colony.



At the same time, de Grasse was appointed the Grand Inspector General and Grand Commander of the French West Indies for the Scottish Rite with his father-in-law serving as Deputy. Within 30 days de Grasse, now under orders from General LeClerc, sailed for Haiti once more.

For about eight months Boyer and de Grasse fought along side each other but in October, Petion, Boyer, and Rigaud joined with the nationalist forces. In 1803, the few remaining French were forced to surrender and de Grasse was again facing death. However, someone in the Petion regime spared his life and allowed him free passage to France. The candidates for granting such clemency in Haiti in 1803 are few indeed and the most likely would have been Boyer.

In 1804 Haiti was actually a divided country with two presidents. Six years later, however, most of the country was loyal to Petion with Boyer as his aid and heir.

Source: <http://freemasonacademy.com/Blog/tabid/77/EntryId/19/The-Masonic-Importance-of-Haiti-in-the-New-World-by-Jack-Buta-P-M.aspx>

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**The Ancient and Mystical Order of the Rosae Cruz (A.M.O.R.C.)** began in Port-au-Prince in the 1950s and spread throughout the country among those with an inclination toward the mystical experience. Currently, the following lodges exist in Haiti: Cap-Haitien, Jeanne Guesdon Pronaos; Gonaives, Akhenaton Pronaos; Les Cayes, Des Incas Pronaos; Port-au-Prince, Phoenix Lodge; and Saint-Marc, Aton Pronaos.

In 1954, a group of influential occultists, Freemasons, Rosaecrucians and kabbalists met in Port-au-Prince to form an inner circle for the purpose of Esoteric Studies, which they called *Cénacle Alpha et Oméga*. Later, due to a dispute, Roger Víctor Hérold left the group and founded the **Ordre Martiniste de Papis** (the name of the international founder of Martinism), which later was renamed *Cercle Martiniste Lux No. 1* (Circle of Martinist Studies Lux No. 1) in 1961, under the presidency of François Avin.

**Michael Paul Bertiaux** (b.1935) is an American occultist and Old Catholic Bishop, perhaps best known to the general public via the publication of his massive *Voudon Gnostic Workbook* (1988), a 615-page compendium of various occult lessons and research papers spanning the sub-fields of Voodoo, Neo-Pythagoreanism, Thelema and Gnosticism. Long considered by occultists one of the underground classics of 20<sup>th</sup> century occultism, the book was out of print for many years and brought increasingly high prices in the antiquarian market before it was reprinted in paperback by Red Wheel/Weiser in 2007. Note that the unique spelling of “voudon” is an innovation of Bertiaux's (though it is similar to the traditional spelling of vodun). Bertiaux also coined the term *vudutronics* to refer to his idiosyncratic interpretation of this religion.

Bertiaux was born in Seattle, WA, on 18 January 1935. His father was a captain in the merchant navy and his mother was a prominent Theosophist. Bertiaux served as an Episcopalian minister in the Seattle area before traveling to Haiti in 1964, where he was initiated into the system of Haitian Voodoo. He settled in Chicago in 1966, where he formed (among other bodies) the **Neo-Pythagorean Gnostic Church**. Bertiaux's interpretation of Voodoo has been strongly influenced by **Martinism**, a Francophone version of esoteric Christianity and Masonry that became established in Haiti in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Bertiaux has long been associated with the **Ordo Templi Orientis Antiqua (O.T.O.A.)**, an initiatic gnostic-magical order supposedly founded in 1921 in Haiti by the gnostic patriarch and voodoo high-priest **Lucien-Francois Jean-Maine**. The O.T.O.A. tradition comes from the gnostic voodoo, as practiced in secret societies. There a synthesis was developed of European gnostic-hermetic currents, being the heritage of the ancient western initiatic tradition, with the Haitian metaphysics. Both the O.T.O.A. and the **Monastery of the Seven Rays** cooperate with the **Ecclesia Gnostica Spiritualis**.

**La Couleuvre Noire (L.C.N.)**, “The Black Snake,” founded in 1922 but with much older, direct roots; the tradition is believed by its members to be a society derived from an adept who died in Leogane, Haiti, in 1774) is an independent order, closely cooperating with the O.T.O.A. It is dedicated to the practice of advanced techniques of gnostic voodoo, considered a powerful system of afro-atlantean magic in its traditional and purest form. Today, Courtney Willis (Tau Ogdoade-Orfeo VIII) is the Hierophant and the Sovereign Grand Master Absolute (S.G.M.A.) of the L.C.N. as well as the S.G.M.A. of the O.T.O.A.. Michael Bertiaux (Tau Ogdoade-Orfeo IV) is the Grand Conservateur of the L.C.N. and the Hierophant of the O.T.O.A.

This tradition also entails teachings derived from African mysticism and spiritism, as these teachings were developed in two hundred years of occult work and casework practice in esotericism and a type of psychology within Haitian culture and the wider Vodou diaspora, which grew out of the occult practices of the members of this order. It is in this growth of occult practices that the **Black Snake School** has been shown to possess an identifiable presence of teaching and has demonstrated the evidences of its tradition and forms of spiritism, fused with a peculiar type of Catholicism and aspects of the French mystical and spiritist traditions.

**The Société Voudon Gnostique (Voudon Gnostic Society)** is an international body of advanced magical specialists who work in an initiatory context. This group has been formed specifically to conduct individual experimental and progressive research into the vast field known as Esoteric Voodoo or Voodoo Gnosis.

A great need was felt for a very select, intimate and focused magical vehicle for experienced adepts and students within the **Voudon Gnostic Continuum**. Existing groups fall short of this specific goal for various exoteric and esoteric reasons while they still may have their place and validity in the gnostic Universe of Les Mysteres. Thus a number of experienced and individualistic Voodoo Gnostic initiates, including David Beth, the former Sovereign Grand Master of the **Ordo Templi Orientis Antiqua (O.T.O.A.)** and the **La Couleuvre Noire (L.C.N.)**, decided that structures needed to be made available which are new and unique but are also simultaneously deeply rooted in ancient mechanisms of primordial gnosis and sorcery. The goal was to manifest flawlessly the more powerful, inner revelations and transmissions of the Gods of Esoteric Voodoo as well as to push evolution and research of Voodoo Gnosis freely beyond all frontiers of orthodoxy. This led to the creation of the **Voudon Gnostic Society** together with a number of artists and advanced adepts from various esoteric disciplines.

Sources: [http://otoa-lcn.org/en\\_historiaotoa.php](http://otoa-lcn.org/en_historiaotoa.php) [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael\\_Bertiaux](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Bertiaux)  
<http://www.voudongnosis.org/> [http://www.techniciansofthesacred.com/new\\_page\\_1.htm](http://www.techniciansofthesacred.com/new_page_1.htm)  
<http://user.cyberlink.ch/~koenig/sunrise/otoa.htm>

**The Confraternity of Oblates of the Monastery of the Seven Rays** is the organizational umbrella given to the various magical activities focused in the person of Michael Bertiaux, a

noted Chicago occultist-magician. Bertiaux is the inheritor of the French Martinist tradition, which he received through his magical training in Haiti and by his ordination and consecration as bishop of the **Neo-Pythagorean Church**.

**The Monastery of the Seven Rays**, which became widely known through its advertisements in *Fate Magazine* in the 1970s, is a magical order drawing upon modern thelemic magick (derived from the writings of Aleister Crowley), Vodou, and the 19<sup>th</sup> century French gnostic-occult tradition. Bertiaux wrote the lessons that teach a basic magical system and lead the student into the higher levels of magical working.

**Louis Claude de Saint-Martin** (b.1743-d.1803) was a Roman Catholic raised in France. As a soldier, he met Marlines de Pasqually, a disciple of Emanuel Swedenborg and Rosicrucianism. De Pasqually founded an occult order, the **Order of the Elect Cohens**, which Saint-Martin joined in 1768. After de Pasqually's death in 1774, Saint-Martin became the focus of a group of occultists in Haiti, called Martinists. He began to write books (published posthumously), and a movement, the history of which is still known only in fragments, was born.

By the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, a branch of the **Martinist Order** (named after Louis Claude de Saint-Martin) had been established in Haiti. This group continued to function after Haiti gained its independence. It tended to blend with Vodou. In the 1890s, there was a revival movement in the Martinist Order, emphasizing a purist strain of Gnostic philosophy. In the years between the world wars the **Gnostic Church** was established in Leogane, Haiti, and was brought to the USA after World War II. In general, the Gnostic philosophy emphasizes a secret knowledge that humans can attain, and affirms the esoteric identity of Catholicism and Vodou.

**The Neo-Pythagorean Gnostic Church** is the ecclesiastical structure that, along with six other fraternal and psychically-oriented structures with which it is interlocked, focuses on the Martinist occult/mystical tradition in North America. The tradition began in France, was brought to Haiti, and from there came to the USA in the mid-1950s. Bertiaux was consecrated by Bishop Hector Francois Jean-Maine, a Haitian who had received orders from the **Spanish Albegensian Church**, which in turn had orders from the French gnostics. The famous French occultists Joseph-Antoine Boullan (b.1824-d.1893) and Eugene Vintras (b.1807-d.1875) are included in the lineage.

The Neo-Pythagorean Gnostic Church is a ritual theurgic body in which the eucharist is the center of initiation. Through it, the invocation of angels and planetary spirits is made, and spirit communication often takes place during the mass. Purity of ritual is emphasized, and no tallow (i.e., nothing that carries the suffering of animals) is used in the candles. All members of the clergy are clairvoyant and often have visions during mass. Also, during worship a mystical language is intuitively (i.e., clairvoyantly) perceived and mystically spoken.

A Gnostic hierarchical system is headed by the Absolute, similar to the Kabbalist Ein Soph. The Absolute emanates a Trinity, which in turn is the source of Lucifer and Sophia, the basic male/female polarity. Lucifer is the morning star, inferior to Christ but not to be confused with Satan. Sophia is paid homage in the cult of the Virgin, the archetypical divine being. She is often revered as Our Lady of Mt. Carmel. Satanism and black magick are strongly opposed.

The church is subject to a supreme heliophant (in 1984, Dr. Hector Francois Jean Maine, who resided in Madrid). The American jurisdiction is under Bishop Pierre-Antoine Saint-Charles of Boston, who has direct authority over all Haitian-American members. Michael Bertiaux in Chicago is over the Caucasian-American members and Bishop Marc Lully of Chicago heads overseas development in South America and the West Indies. In 1979, Bertiaux exchanged consecrations with Bishop Forest Barber of the **Catholic Apostolic Church in America**.

Associated with the church are the Ancient Order of Oriental Templars, the Arithmosophical Society, Zotheria, and the Esoteric Traditions Research Society. The Ancient Order of Oriental Templars is a lodge with credentials derived from the pre-Crowleyite Ordo Templi Orientis in Germany. It teaches a 16-degree system of magick. The Arithmosophical Society concentrates on Saint-Martin's philosophy of numbers. Numbers form a key to Saint-Martin's system of magical correspondences and tie Saint-Martin to Pythagoras. Both Zotheria and the Esoteric Traditions Research Society are outer courts of the various esoteric structures.

Sources: [http://www.techniciansofthesacred.com/new\\_page\\_5.htm](http://www.techniciansofthesacred.com/new_page_5.htm)  
[http://www.novelguide.com/a/discover/ear\\_01/ear\\_01\\_00150.html](http://www.novelguide.com/a/discover/ear_01/ear_01_00150.html)

### *Animistic Tradition*

**Vodou** has gained greater respect since the mid-1900s and is widely regarded as a source of Haitian pride and identity and a driving force behind Haiti's rich artistic culture. During the 1980s, the Vodou religion came out of the closet, thereby offering its members the possibility to affirm publically their identity, beliefs and practices. Vodou encompasses several different traditions, and consists of a mix encompassing African, European and Amerindian *Taino* religious elements. It is very similar to other Latin American syncretistic movements, such as the Cuban Santería, and it is more widespread in rural parts of the country, partly due to negative stigmas attached to its practice.

The exact number of Vodou practitioners is unknown. However, significant numbers of the population practice it, often alongside their Christian faith. This mix of religious practices is controversial, and most Christians shun Vodou as demonic and idolatrous and forbid its practice. The different versions of Protestantism tend to emphasize Christianity as a refuge from evil spirits and freedom from the often considerable economic burdens of Vodou practice.

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### **Rara as a Religious Obligation in Vodou**

While Rara seems like a country Carnival, the festival consists of an outer, secular layer of Carnival "play," that surrounds a protected, secret inner layer of religious "work." Most Rara bands have a lwa (spirit) who serves as its patron in the Afro-Creole religion of Haiti (called Vodou). Often it is the spirit who has asked for the band to be formed, and the Rara is itself a gift to the spirit.

The inner core of Rara leaders is made up of leaders of Vodou societies. They are going about the business of performing serious ritual obligations to the lwa. Rara bands work to "heat up" and activate their instruments, and they perform ceremonies to the spirits. Then, the bands go out to salute important

religious sites-graves of ancestors, and trees, rocks, and intersections where other inherited spirits are said to live.

The Rara spirits can sometimes be from the Rada branch, which is historically Dahomean and Yoruba. But most often, they belong to the Petwo branch, which is rooted in the Kongo civilization. The rituals, rhythms, colors, and dances of Rara are close to the Petwo and Kongo rites. The festival is a spiritually "hot" festival, and by necessity takes place mostly outdoors, and not inside the Temple itself. Occasionally, Rara bands will even go to the cemetery to ask permission to capture the spirits of the recently dead-called zombie – and bring them in the Rara to "heat up the band."

(Excerpted from Elizabeth McAlister, *Rara! Vodou, Power, and Performance in Haiti and its Diaspora*. University of California Press, 2002, p. 31, 85-90. )

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Vodou is an African-derived ancestral religion that emerged in Haiti during the mid-to-late 1700s among African-born slaves who were forced to convert to Roman Catholicism by the colonial authorities. The *Code Noir* (promulgated by Louis XIV in 1685) prescribed baptism and instruction in Roman Catholicism for all slaves, but it is doubtful that the new religion had much meaning for the transplanted Africans. The Code Noir prohibited assemblies of slaves for purposes other than Catholic worship, and their masters could be punished for permitting such gatherings. Meetings of slaves were potentially dangerous to the colonists because of the possibilities they offered for plots and revolts. However, it was impossible to prevent all slave assemblages, and secret meetings during the night occurred frequently where old men kept alive elements of African culture and religion through tales, discussions and magical rituals. Different groups of slaves worshipped different intermediary gods, while believing in a Great God above these secondary spirits. According to George Eaton Simpson (Horowitz 1971:494):

...it would appear that the new cult took definite form about 1790. At this time the first part of the ceremony consisted of the officiant's interpretation of the wishes of the divinity, symbolized by a snake. The dance followed this service, and included singing, fainting, intense nervous excitement and some rather violent behavior. At this point the Catholic elements of the ritual were practically non-existent... the slaves continued to rely upon old tribal beliefs for their spiritual needs. During the later half of the eighteenth century revolutionary leaders utilized nocturnal rites to dramatize their cause and to weld together diverse slave groups. Gradually, a more or less standardized set of rites emerged. During the next one hundred and fifty years the beliefs and rituals of the cult became more elaborate, the Catholic components increased, and regional differentiation developed.

Popular images of Vodou (vodoun or voodoo) have ignored the religion's basis as a domestic cult of family spirits. Today, adherents do not perceive themselves as members of a separate religion rather they consider themselves Roman Catholics. In fact, the word for "voodoo" does not even exist in rural Haiti. The Creole word *vodoun* refers to a kind of dance and in some areas to a category of spirits. Roman Catholics who are active voodooists say that they "serve the spirits," but they do not consider that practice as something outside of Roman Catholicism. Haitians also distinguish between the service of family spirits and the practice of magic and sorcery.

The belief system of Vodou revolves around family spirits (often called *loua* or *mistè*) who are inherited through maternal and paternal lines. *Loua* protect their “children” from misfortune. In return, families must “feed” the *loua* through periodic rituals in which food, drink and other gifts are offered to the spirits. There are two kinds of services for the *loua*. The first is held once a year; the second is conducted much less frequently, usually only once a generation. Many poor families, however, wait until they feel a need to restore their relationship with their spirits before they conduct a service. Services are usually held at a sanctuary on family land.

In Vodou, there are many *loua*. Although there is considerable variation among families and regions, there are generally two groups of *loua*, the *rada* and the *petro*. The *rada* spirits are mostly seen as “sweet” *loua*, while the *petro* are seen as “bitter” because they are more demanding of their “children.” *Rada* spirits appear to be of African origin while *petro* spirits appear to be of Haitian origin.

*Loua* are usually anthropomorphic and have distinct identities. They can be good, evil, capricious, or demanding. *Loua* most commonly show their displeasure by making people sick, and so Vodou is used to diagnose and treat illnesses. *Loua* are not nature spirits, and they do not make crops grow or bring rain. The *loua* of one family have no claim over members of other families, and they cannot protect or harm them. “Voodooists” are therefore not interested in the *loua* of other families.

*Loua* appear to family members in dreams and, more dramatically, through trances. Many Haitians believe that *loua* are capable of temporarily taking over the bodies of their “children.” Men and women enter trances during which they assume the traits of particular *loua*. People in a trance feel giddy and usually remember nothing after they return to a normal state of consciousness. Voodooists say that the spirit temporarily replaces the human personality. Possession trances (“spirit possession”) occur usually during rituals such as services for *loua* or a *vodoun* dance in honor of the *loua*. When *loua* appear to entranced people, they may bring warnings or explanations for the causes of illnesses or misfortune. *Loua* often engage the crowd around them through flirtation, jokes, or accusations.

Ancestors (*le mò*) rank with the family *loua* as the most important spiritual entities in Vodou. Elaborate funeral and mourning rites reflect the important role of the dead. Ornate tombs throughout the countryside reveal how much attention Haiti gives to its dead. Voodooists believe the dead are capable of forcing their survivors to construct tombs and sell land. In these cases, the dead act like family *loua*, which “hold” family members to make them ill or bring other misfortune. The dead also appear in dreams to provide their survivors with advice or warnings.

Voodooists also believe there are *loua* that can be paid to bring good fortune or protection from evil. They also believe that souls can be paid to attack enemies by making them ill.

Folk belief includes zombies and witchcraft. Zombies are either spirits or people whose souls have been partially withdrawn from their bodies through the use of drugs and poisons. Some Haitians resort to *bokò*, who are specialists in sorcery and magic. Haiti has several secret societies whose members practice sorcery.

Voodoo specialists, male *houngan* and female *manbo*, allegedly mediate between humans and spirits through divination and trance. They diagnose illnesses and reveal the origins of other misfortune. They can also perform rituals to appease spirits or ancestors or to repel magic. Many voodoo specialists are accomplished herbalists who treat a variety of illnesses. Vodou lacks a fixed theology and an organized hierarchy, unlike Roman Catholicism and Protestantism. Each specialist develops his or her own reputation for helping people.

**Rastafarians.** The Caribbean Rastafari Organisation has members throughout the English, French, Spanish and Dutch Caribbean.

**Psychic-Spiritualism-New Age Traditions.** Little is known about these movements in Haiti because Vodou has dominated the mystical religious landscape outside of Christianity.

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\*TRAVESTY IN HAITI is an anthropologist's personal story of working with foreign aid agencies and discovering that fraud, greed, corruption, apathy, and political agendas permeate the industry. It is a story of failed agricultural, health and credit projects; violent struggles for control over foreign aid; corrupt orphanage owners, pastors, and missionaries; the nepotistic manipulation of research funds; economically counterproductive food aid distribution programs that undermine the Haitian agricultural economy; disastrous social engineering by foreign governments, international financial and development organizations -- such as the World Bank and USAID -- and the multinational corporate charities that have sprung up in their service, CARE International, Catholic Relief Services, World Vision, and the dozens of other massive charities that have programs spread across the globe, moving in response not only to disasters and need, but political agendas and economic opportunity. TRAVESTY also chronicles the lives of Haitians and describes how political disillusionment sometimes ignites explosive mob rage among peasants frustrated with the foreign aid organizations, governments and international agencies that fund them. TRAVESTY recounts how some Haitians use whatever means possible try to better their living standards, most recently drug trafficking, and in doing so explains why at the service of international narco-traffickers and Haitian money laundering elites, Haiti has become a failed State. TRAVESTY reads like a novel. It takes the reader from the bowels of foreign aid in the field; to the posh and orderly urban headquarters of charities such as CARE International; to the cold, distant heights of Capitol Hill policy planners. The journey is marked by true accounts involving violence, corruption, appalling greed, sexual exploitation, disastrous social engineering, and the inside world of drug traffickers. But TRAVESTY it is not a novel. It is founded on 15 years of academic and field experience, research, and hard data. It entertains the reader with vivid first hand accounts while treating seriously the problems inherent not only in international aid, but the sabotaging effects of the drug war on economic development in remote and impoverished areas of the hemisphere.

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