

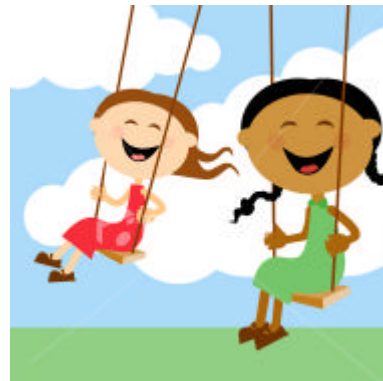
The Bishop's Harvest Appeal

2007

Ideas for Collective Worship

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Sowing Seeds of Hope



This year the Bishops Harvest Appeal is supporting projects that are sowing seeds of a better future for communities in the Dominican Republic and the Diocese of Blackburn. This material focuses upon the Oné Respé Christian Aid project in the Dominican Republic.

*I am certain that God treats all people alike. God is pleased with everyone who...does right, no matter what nation they come from.
(Acts 10:34 - 35, CEV)*

*All photographs taken by Sophie Richmond - Christian Aid
With thanks to Max Khanna - Christian Aid*

Background Information

Haiti

- The poorest country in the western Hemisphere with 80% of the population living under the poverty line and 54% in abject poverty.
- Two-thirds of all Haitians depend on small scale subsistence farming and are vulnerable to frequent storm damage.

"In the south west of Haiti, hundreds of farmers have seen their entire bean, plaintain and yarn crops destroyed. Christian Aid will be providing seedlings to help people replant." (Christian Aid website)

- Haiti lies in the middle of the hurricane belt and is subject to severe storms.
- Extensive deforestation has led to soil erosion.

"Since Elamene Valcin's horse was killed in a storm, she can no longer take her potatoes, corn and beans to market. Instead she must sell them in front of her house for much less money. To make up the difference, she has resorted to chopping down her trees." (Christian Aid website)

- There are inadequate supplies of clean drinking water.
- Life expectancy in Haiti is 52 years.
- For decades the people of Haiti have crossed the border looking for a better life in the Dominican Republic.

Dominican Republic

- A Caribbean island, it is the eastern two thirds of the island Hispaniola.
- It is to the east of Haiti which makes up the remaining third of Hispaniola.
- Exporter of sugar, coffee and tobacco.
- Growing tourism industry.
- Among the people there is a marked inequality of income. The richest 10% enjoy nearly 40% of the national income.

- There are half a million Haitians living in the Dominican Republic and around two million Dominico-Haitians (people of mixed parentage) out of a total population of 8 million.
- There is widespread discrimination in the Dominican Republic against Haitian immigrants, who have crossed the border to look for work.
- Most Haitians in the Dominican Republic work on sugarcane plantations, in construction or in the informal economy. All are poorly paid, temporary jobs, but they pay more than they would in Haiti.
- The Dominican government organises mass deportations of suspected illegal immigrants, but many deported people no longer have any links to Haiti; others are picked up simply because they are dark-skinned, even if they are Dominican.
- The illiteracy rate in the Dominican Republic is 13.4 per cent, but this rate is far higher among Haitian children there, as thousands of children of Haitian or mixed heritage are denied the right to go to school at all.

Display Ideas

- Maps
- Photos from this pack
- The words Oné Respé and honour and respect

The following list are things that we take for granted but the poor communities in the Dominican Republic do not have easy access to them:

- A bottle of water
- Picture of the school and street
- Pictures of houses
- A newspaper
- A telephone
- A Stamped envelope
- Coins
- Shopping Bags e.g. Supermarket Bag for Life

Fundraising Ideas

- Ask each child to bring 50p to school instead of a harvest basket, 50p could pay for an exercise book for a child at an Oné Respé school.
- Challenge each class to cover a map of the Dominican Republic in coins. The size of the map is up to you!

- Collect money in a giant flower pot emphasising the idea of sowing seeds of hope.
- In addition to raising money for the appeal why not recycle your old ink cartridges? For more details go to www.christianaid.org.uk



Oné Respé (Pronounced "on-AY resp-AY")

Oné Respé, which is the traditional Haitian greeting when entering a house meaning "honour", and the reply "respect".

Begin by discussing the greetings the children use, greetings they have heard others use and those they have learnt in other languages.

- Why do we greet one another?
- What does it mean?
- Would it matter if we didn't greet each other?
- What does the greeting reveal about the relationship between the people?

After the resurrection Jesus appeared to his disciples and said "Peace be with you". Why? What does that mean? He didn't just say "Hi" he used a phrase that is much more meaningful.

The Harvest Appeal is raising money to support a project in the Dominican Republic called Oné Respé. This phrase is traditionally used by the people of Haiti as a greeting. When entering a house one person would say oné meaning honour and the other person would reply respé meaning respect.

- What does this really mean?
- What does it mean to honour and respect someone?
- What does the word honour mean?
- When do we use it?
- What does the word respect mean?
- When do we use it?
- Who do you honour and respect?
- Why?

If you heard someone using this greeting what would that tell you about their relationship?

Is saying *oné respé* better than just saying hello? Why?

The project is called *Oné Respé*. What does that tell you about the project?

Reflection and Prayer

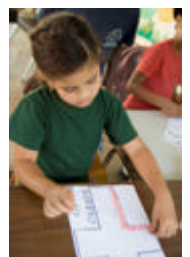
Reflect upon the concept of respecting and honouring other people. People we know and those we only know through reputation and because of their position or status.

Create a collage of people (names and faces) whom the members of the school community honour and respect. Give thanks to God for these people, the example they show us, what we can learn from them and in some cases their courage, skills and talents. Ask for God's blessing on them and upon the school community. May this school community be one of honour and respect.

Discovering more about *Oné Respé* through meeting the People

Oné Respé is based in the Dominican Republic's second city Santiago and works in areas where Haitian immigrants and their families live closely with poor Dominicans. *Oné Respé* works to improve relationships, living conditions, healthcare and education. For example, *Oné Respé* runs 'escuelitas' - little schools - where Haitian and Dominican children can study, learn and play together. As well as providing an education for many children who would otherwise miss out altogether, the schools also actively help foster an atmosphere of friendship and respect between the children and their families. These schools also provide all their pupils with a free school lunch. For many children in these very poor neighbourhoods, this may be the best meal of the day.

Meet Yismell Mercedes Vera Torre (7 yrs)



Introduce Yismell to your school

Yismell attends the Oné Respé school in the poor neighbourhood of Los Platanitos. At school she can learn, eat a square meal and play with children of all different backgrounds. The schools aim to break down problems of racial discrimination in the Dominican Republic. She enjoys studying. Her favourite subject is drawing. She likes playing dominoes and football.

Discuss

What do you enjoy doing at school?

What do you enjoy doing when you are not at school?

Yismell enjoys playing dominoes. Use or make a large set of dominoes and then have a quick game asking children to come out to the front and hold the pieces and 'join' them together.

Prayer

Turn the children to stand in a line one behind the other. How quickly can the row 'fall' down? Explain that the children are now standing like a row of dominoes that are ready to be pushed over i.e. touch the front one and the rest follow and topple over. The way to get this row to fall down (sit carefully) is by calling out different activities that we enjoy doing that we want to thank God for. How many can we think of? How quickly can the row fall? You may wish to allow the children to just call out, you may wish to collect ideas and then you call out the list. This may need practicing! It may cause chaos but would be fun.

Reflect

This is Ana Cristine Pener (13 years old)

Ana says that if Oné Respé did not run the school she would not be able to go to school. She likes leaning about colours and colouring in pictures.

Imagine not being able to come to school at all. Imagine not having the opportunity to learn. What would you miss? How would life be different?



Without Oné Respé children in the poor community of Los Platanitos would have no school to go to.

"If the school wasn't here the community would be bad there would be lots of children on the streets with nowhere to go. The escuelita was the best thing they could do for us. I like going to school and want to learn lots of things so that I will be able to get a good job" (Claudia Martinez - 11 years old).

Prayer

Place pictures of your school and school life on your display table. Take time to pray thoughtfully about your school giving thanks and asking for God's blessing upon everyone and the learning that takes place there.

"I like going to school because I've learnt to read and now we're learning to do joined up writing." (Amiasa Abrahán Higallo - 11 years old).

Pray for the children in the Oné Respé School in Los Platanitos. Pray that the school will continue to grow, for the teachers, equipment and the hope for the future it gives the children.

Hopes and Dreams

What do you want to be when you grow up? What do you want to do when you are older? Ask the children to share ideas. Have the adults in the room fulfilled their dreams?

Reflect

Hopes and dreams are important. What would life be like if we had no hope?

"I would like to be a lawyer or a policeman or a fireman. I would like to catch a thief."
(Amiasa Abrahán Higallo)

"I would like to be a paediatrician. I like children a lot." (Yismell)

Without the Oné Respé School these children would have no hope of fulfilling their dreams. Add the word hope to your display.



Prayer

Leave a basket and stack of small cards on the display and ask the children to write their prayers of hope on the small pieces of card and place them in the basket as a prayer. Some of these prayers could then be added to your display.

Meet Elida

Elida Perez works in the Oné Respé school in the poor community of Los Perez. She cooks breakfast each day for the children that attend classes in the morning and lunch each day for the children that attend classes in the afternoon. For many of the children this is the best meal they get. Many have learning difficulties because of the poor conditions they live in.



"It's very important that we give the children food because lots of them don't get food at home. Many of them haven't eaten by the time they get to school because there is no food at home for them. The children are often very hungry because many of their parents don't have work." (Elida)

Discuss what the children have eaten for breakfast, foods they enjoy and school lunches. Who makes their lunch?

"We give them different food each day. Today we are giving them milk with oats, sugar and cinnamon in it. We are also giving them break rolls with butter and cheese. Other days we might give them pasta or rice pudding or rice and beans. They get different things each day." (Elida)

What is on the menu today? In what ways is it different to the children in the Dominican Republic? Why? Which lunch would you prefer?

"For breakfast I usually have juice and break or hot chocolate or rice pudding. For lunch we normally eat rice, black beans and meat. In the evening we sometimes eat meat and also rice and lettuce." (Yismell)



Reflect upon the wide variety of foods available to us. You could use breakfast cereal as an example. Have a collection of empty cereal boxes. Names and pictures of favourite foods could be placed inside the boxes or stuck onto the boxes as thank you prayers.

Reflect and Pray

Think of all the people involved with providing food for us farmers, supermarket, workers, parents, school kitchen staff etc. Remember all these people in your prayers.

Meet Dani

Haitian men in particular face a lot of discrimination, they are often blamed for crimes they didn't commit.

"The main problems for Haitians are that they have no rights. The majority of Haitians face discrimination. No one worries if Haitians are blamed for things they didn't do." (Dani)



Oné Respé hope to break down problems of racial discrimination in the country. The Oné Respé schools teach the children that people from Haiti and the Dominican Republic are equal. Haitian and Dominican children play together. The founders of Oné Respé believe that identifying commonalities and shared goals between nationalities is a key to overcoming racism.

This is a difficult subject but a very important part of the work of Oné Respé.

"There is less discrimination against Haitians at this school because Oné Respé did a lot of work in all of the classes here at the school. The children no longer use pejorative names for Haitian immigrants or people of Haitian origin."
(Julissa Rosario)

Prepare a group of children beforehand and then ask them to come out to the front of the hall. Begin to share out sweets, unfairly according to hair colour, eye colour, shoe colour etc. Is this OK? Why not? How do the children feel? How should things be shared? Why? Next ask the children to sit in certain places in the hall because of hair colour, eye colour, birthday month etc. Is this a good thing to do? Sensible thing to do? Strange thing to do? Why?

This is what happens in the Los Platanitos Community. People are unfairly treated simply because they are Haitian. Why is this wrong?

Reflect

Ask the children to look at the colour of the skin on the back of their hand. What colour is it? Compare the colour of their hand to the people around them. What do they notice? They are all different. We are all different but all the same. We are also all special, unique and loved by God

I am certain that God treats all people alike. God is pleased with everyone who...does right, no matter what nation they come from.

(Acts 10:34 - 35, CEV) (Add this quote to your display)

Therefore we must oné respé.

"To be a good friend you shouldn't fight with other people. You should respect older children so that younger children will respect you. If you respect others they respect you." (Claudia Richer Dominguez Martinez 11yrs)

Prayers

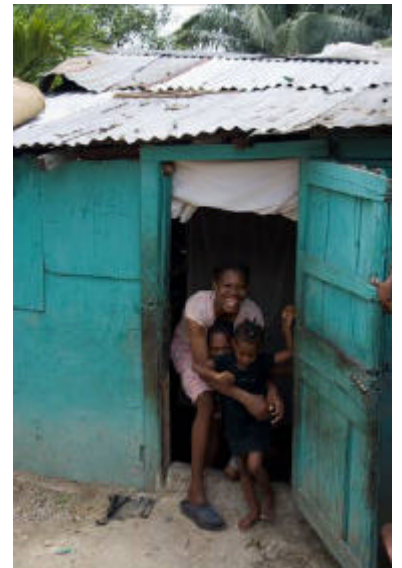
Sing the song "I am fearfully and wonderfully made" (Jim Bailey) or a song celebrating that God has made us all special, unique and loved by him.

Living Conditions

Meet Cristina and her children

Ask the children to sit quietly and close their eyes then using the information below take them on a journey to the community of Los Platinitos in the Dominican Republic.

"Here the community has a mixture of residents: Haitians, Dominico-Haitians and poor Dominicans. It has unpaved roads and the houses generally have one or two rooms where the whole family lives and sleeps. The houses are built of wood with corrugated iron roofs. The roads are unpaved and become very muddy if it rains. Many of the houses are built alongside the polluted rivers that run through the area. The rivers are used for disposing rubbish and consequently smell very unpleasant." (Sophie Richmond, Christian Aid)



"We haven't got water, that's the biggest problem here. They come here selling water we have to buy a tank for 30 pesos (60p) but that water is no good to drink. Sometimes ten days can go buy before the water truck comes again and sometimes they come but the truck is already empty." (Luz Maria Toledo)

Think about life in the Dominican Republic compared to life in the U.K.

Oné Respé makes a big difference to the lives of the people living in the poor communities in the Dominican Republic.

"I can't measure how much my life has changed: so many things have made it different. Also the children that go to the school will grow up more integrated. The future is more positive for them, they have respect." (Luz Maria Toledo 35yrs)

We can help them to make a difference.

Song "Make a Difference" by Fischy Music.

Reflect

Light a large candle

"Many people see Oné Respé as a light in the darkness".
Ivrance Martine - Oné Respé Health Worker

Add this quote to your display along with a picture of a candle flame.

Prayer

Use the Diocesan Harvest Appeal Prayer:

Almighty God,

We pray for those whose lives are neither honoured nor respected,

Whose needs are unmet and whose voice is unheard.

May our giving help to sow seeds of hope which will transform the lives of these,
your children.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord,

Amen

*Thank you for supporting
this year's appeal.*

Lisa

Please send all donations and money raised to:

Diocesan Board of Finance (Harvest Appeal)

Church House

Cathedral Close

Blackburn BB1 5AA

"I would like to send my greetings to all the supporters. I believe it is God revealing Himself to them to help us. The whole community is grateful for this support."
Cristina Alexime
Haitian Migrant

Please make cheques payable to Blackburn Diocesan Board of Finance Limited