



To our friends and Members of the Sovereign Order of St. John of Jerusalem, Knights Hospitaller, Commandery of the Palm Beaches:

We want to bring you up to date with the most current status of our Belle Glade project which has been the focus of the Palm Beach Commandery for the past two years.

Our efforts have been so blessed! Since May, 2018, we have hosted many events and have made presentations to various individuals and foundations. We are proud to announce that \$443,177 has been raised! Yes, this project truly has been blessed!

The First Haitian Baptist Church, our partner in this effort, has also been active and has raised close to \$70,000. With these resources they were able to purchase the adjacent parcel of land which recently became available. The original plan was to tear down the current home of the Development Center, which lies behind the church, and construct the new facility on that parcel of land. This change in plans provides so many benefits, among them: The Development Center will now have great exposure being right on one of the main streets in downtown Belle Glade, and there will be no disruption in the Center's operation as the children will move directly into their new space as soon as complete. The original site will provide much-needed additional off-street parking and a playground for the church and the Center.

This new parcel of land already has a concrete building which will be incorporated into the new design as adjacent kitchen facilities. The Church has already replaced the roof on this structure.

In April of last year, an Architect came forward with an offer to create the plans *pro bono*. He provided initial renderings for the proposed building, and we understood he was moving forward on the final plans. Next phase plans were to be submitted to the Board of Directors of the Church by the end of October, 2019, but they were delayed. Just before the end of the year, we learned that the architect would not be able to follow through on the remainder of the work due to personal circumstances. We keep him in our prayers.

We have now undertaken the process of finding a new architect, and have already approached four to request they submit bids. Soil tests and percolation tests have been completed, and we await the results. These are necessary before architectural and engineering drawings can be finalized. Once received we can move forward to obtain quotes from Architects.

The Board of Trustees of the SOSJ PB have been active with the Church Board every step of the way. Although we feel we have lost a few months, we are still striving forward toward our goal.

Once the architect is selected, we hope to pick up the momentum in getting City approval, then permitting, selecting contractors, etc., and then... put shovels in the ground! That will be a glorious day! And the first of many for the new Youth and Children Development Center!

We will keep you updated on the progress and ask that you continue to keep us in your prayers as we help the Lord's sick and the poor.

Additional donations are welcome to reach our initial goal of \$500,000. We realize it is very likely to require a bit more, but we continue to work hard to complete the fund raising for this worthwhile project.