

September 1, 2021

Looking for the Good

“It is dark. I am alone.” And so began a fictional memoir in the form of an epistolary novel that I wrote years before the Light was turned on in an empty man seated alone in an empty church in Rome in March 1995. The quote of the two very short sentences began a letter the novel’s protagonist, Christopher Ryan, wrote to his daughter, Kate, on July 11, 1990 at 8:30 at night.

In many ways I am still in the dark, still alone. But there is a big difference in the man who wrote that dreadful novel and the man who types these words. The last twenty-one years of filming brutal poverty that culminated in essentially living in Haiti for the last six years has taught me a very hard to learn lesson. I learned that it is imperative to look for the goodness even in the absolute darkness of a place such as Haiti where cruel violence and intense hatred are planted deep within the culture. In looking for the good, we are in reality looking for God.

The world is awash in problems. Some at the indiscriminate hands of nature, but most from the cold, unloving hearts of humanity that sow seeds of division. We see love emerge in the aftermath of a destructive hurricane or earthquake, as good people rush in to help hurting people. The problems generated by humans can only be resolved through a God-like love—a love that is abundant, generous, and restoring...a merciful, self-emptying love that lifts up all and not pushes down anyone, a love that seeks to unite not destroy, a love that looks for the good, not the bad. In looking for the good, we actually begin creating goodness.

Seeing the Goodness

I was really surprised we were able to raise over \$10,000 to rebuild the school in Les Cayes run by Sr. Roselore. Many kind words accompanied most of the donations. I wish to share just one hand-written note from a couple in Michigan.

Dear Mr. Gerry Straub,

Please know that your brothers and sisters in Christ pray for God’s mercy on Haiti. We cannot begin to fathom the misery and heart-aching loss. Enclosed is a check for \$100 to use for earthquake relief in whatever way is needed most. We wish it could send more.

May God bless, strengthen, and encourage you as you care for the precious children in your keeping.

Blessings,

Without the help and prayers of all the *Journal* readers who support us, Santa Chiara could not be a force for good.

SANTA CHIARA
Children’s Center