

### The Holy Spirit is Here, Working in our Midst

APRIL/MAY 2015

by Janet A. Greidanus.

“Regardless of how you figure it out theologically,” says one theologian, “the question to ask yourself is: Has what happened to the disciples at Pentecost happened to you? Are you on fire to share the Gospel?”

A few weeks after this issue of *EMASSARY* is published, it will be time to celebrate Pentecost, the amazing event that happened more than two thousand years ago when the early followers of Jesus were filled with the Holy Spirit.

As described in Acts 2, the disciples began to speak in many languages. The power of the Holy Spirit was such that these simple, down to earth individuals gave a message to those around them that touched the very heart of each person there. One writer suggests, for the first time in their lives, a varied and motley mob

of people were hearing God in a way that they could understand. Not everyone, he emphasizes, heard the message the same way.

This is interesting to consider in light of medical missions. God does not speak to everyone the same way. The hearts of patients may be touched more by actions than words - that is, knowing that we have travelled far to offer them free surgery and dental care in the name of Christ. The hearts of team members may be touched by seeing the care and respect of colleagues towards patients as well as towards each other, through the words of an evening devotion, or from witnessing the joy of a life changed as a result of surgery.

Through it all, the Spirit of God is active, as alive now as He was in the beginning. It is this Spirit that moves

us to go to work for the kingdom in the first place and makes us want to set our sights on being like Jesus. It is this Spirit that energizes us and gives us strength through the long days in the operating room and on the ward. It is this Spirit that makes us try harder to be more kind, more loving and more generous.

Has what happened to the disciples at Pentecost happened to you? Are you on fire to share the Gospel? These are two great questions. Pentecost is a time to ask God to fill us afresh with the Spirit so that we might join in the ministry of Christ with gusto. It’s a good time to renew our commitment to fulfilling our role in the ministry of God’s people in the world.

*Janet is on the EMAS board and has been part of EMAS teams for 18 years.*

### Reflections of a First-timer 2015 EMAS Ecuador Mission

by Arlene Scheibner  
(Operating Room Nurse)

As a team member for the first time, I really had a very limited understanding of the immense impact that the team would have on so many lives. And I don't just mean the lives of the people of Ecuador. I came away with a true sense of gratitude for having been included and welcomed warmly into a group of dedicated people whose sole purpose was to work together to make a difference.



By combining the specific talents, knowledge, experience and compassion of the individual team members, we stood together, formed a strong bond, and worked as one to improve the lives and circumstances of others. It was an honor and a privilege to have been a member of the team. My own life has been changed forever.

Photo: Paediatric team in the operating room prepare a child for surgery



**EMAS**  
CANADA

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# Operation Esperanza

In the accompanying photo, Arlene Scheibner holds a patient while she receives her spinal anaesthetic. The photograph has touched the hearts of many of Arlene's friends who have exclaimed, "Now I understand why you went!"

Ecuador 2015



## PLEASE GIVE

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## Theory Based Learning vs Off-Shore Experience

### An Interview with Roger Berrington

By Melony Teague

*Roger Berrington is a Regional Director and VP of the Navigators of Canada and he is also a Baptist minister in Winnipeg. He has graduate training in Theology and Student Development.*

Roger has worked with university students for the past 29 years. He has specialized in faith and leadership development as well as innovative approaches to ministry in a variety of leadership roles with the Navigators. Roger has also been working with medical students since 1999. Through his work and as a member of CMDS (Christian Medical & Dental Society) in Manitoba, Roger met EMAS Haiti Team leaders Dr. Pierre Plourde, Krista Waring and Rachelle Briere. Dr. Plourde has led the EMAS healthcare mission team to Haiti annually since 2003.

We asked Roger about his experiences with medical students and the EMAS Haiti Team:

**A:** Many things have impressed me about what Pierre and his team are doing. Certainly one of them is the consistency and the length of time that they've been investing their time, hearts, souls, and lives in Haiti. Another is the level of commitment they have had for so many years to make a difference there. This is not just a "project" for them, they genuinely love and look for practical ways to serve the people of Haiti and have been generous and have invested much of their personal time and financial resources into the many projects that they've launched and overseen. They have exercised great wisdom in how they run the projects by inviting and welcoming partnerships.

Recently Pierre and I have worked to make the trip to Haiti an elective experience for medical students, which create multiple benefits for the student. The students not only receive an amazing cross-cultural medical aid experience, but also academic credit for an elective. Pierre has a unique ability to work with and lead others and the manner in which he treats people, encourages partnership, and brings dignity and practical help to a country with great needs is truly commendable.

**Q:** What do students get out of practical experience in the field?

**A:** When one is taken out of their comfort zone, across cultures, into a setting with different economics and religious environments; students are not only given the opportunity to make a contribution by serving, but are also given the opportunity to learn. This is a transformative

## HAITI MEDICAL STUDENT STORIES

An added benefit of student experiences such as those in Haiti with the EMAS Team means that you may just come back transformed by the experience. In recent years Christopher Moore, now a resident, went down to Haiti with the EMAS Team and his experience in Haiti prompted him to pursue some of his training in the French language. He was fired up about the idea of having a bigger impact and plans on doing more of this kind of work in the future.

Three 4th year medical students (two from University of Manitoba and one from University of Ottawa) and two Université St. Boniface nursing students served in Haiti with Pierre and his team in the midst of a two day general strike related to the high price of fuel. Despite the initial obstacles, these students did a great job at leading the medical clinic in Port-Au-Prince in the midst of all the social unrest. What an experience!

experience, and the students who have had the privilege of this kind of experience develop a deeper understanding of the challenges others experience. Hearts and souls are touched.

Students in the field are placed, professionally, in a situation that enhances their medical training and also in a situation where they might not have the same resources or equipment available to them that they would have here in Canada. These students have to be creative, to problem solve and to work above their level of experience with the help of mentors and supervisors. These situations encourage students to step up as leaders, to raise their game and rise to a challenge. Pierre is brilliant at creating an experience and an environment that brings great benefit to, not only the people in Haiti, but also his medical team. He leads the team like a family and students have a unique and life-changing faith, community service, leadership and career-related medical aid experience.

Theory based learning is inherently limited. When students have the opportunity to experience all the different variables that go into this medical training opportunity translate into an amazing educational experience.



Photo: 4th Year Medical Student, Kristina Joyal.

What the EMAS team create in Haiti is truly so much more than an educational experience. What they have done is an innovative story of humanitarianism and medical missionary work. Not only in the context of what they do, but their longevity in doing so. They have persevered through unimaginable obstacles including hurricanes, floods, natural disasters, earthquakes and poverty. Pierre and Krista have an incredible commitment and love for the Haitian people. I know that people that have the privilege of sharing these experiences with them do not go home unchanged.

**Q:** Has student culture changed in the last 20 years?

**A:** Many things have changed among young people in terms of

their attitudes towards organized or institutionalized religion. Attitudes towards giving and mission work have changed. Most students no longer find it sufficient to have a narrow evangelistic-type mission experience, students today really want to include practical expressions of love and service as a way in which they communicate and share their faith. Young people seem to be more loyal to causes than to institutions. Pierre and Krista have navigated the changing world of student culture and have successfully adapted to new challenges in medical mission work. They have adjusted their methodologies and have effectively partnered with the University of Manitoba in gaining academic accreditation for the students who participate in the Haiti projects.

Having been around these kinds of things for 30 years, rarely have I witnessed this kind of commitment and leadership. Dr. Plourde is a world leading infectious disease expert and a public health expert, yet he has chosen to spend at least two weeks every year in Haiti volunteering his time and leading teams of others who are volunteering their time. I see a selflessness, a competency, a standard of excellence and a great love for God, and Pierre and Krista have done this together with the support of their children and family. Both of their children, Daniel and Nadine, have collectively made several trips to Haiti as part of EMAS Haiti teams. This is truly authentic, it is the real deal for them, for their families and for their marriage.

I would encourage and trust any of my students to partner with EMAS Haiti. It is an amazing opportunity and privilege to do this.



Photo: Dr. Pierre Plourde and the Haiti 2015 Team.

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for  
your support.

For more student stories or information about EMAS HAITI go to our website.  
[www.emascanada.org](http://www.emascanada.org)  
Or email  
[rogerberrington@gmail.com](mailto:rogerberrington@gmail.com)



# Inaugural EMAS India North Mission

By Drs. Stephen and Stephanie Milone

We travelled with our three children and Dr. Peter Agwa to this beautiful area at the foothills of the Himalayas. Our visit to Herbertpur Christian Hospital was a success. We achieved our goals of establishing new friendships and a plan for the educational advancement of the staff. Working closely with newly graduated Family Medicine staff and residents, we discussed patient care during morning report and we also joined them on daily hospital ward rounds. We observed the outpatient clinic which runs most days of the week.

We provided twice-daily didactic teaching sessions on various core topics in Family Medicine including management of chronic pain, anti-

biotic stewardship, common conditions, and ECG interpretation.

The local family physicians appreciated our coming alongside as Family Medicine mentors and teachers for the first time in their careers as they are otherwise trained by specialists. They were enthusiastic to learn as much as they could from us



Photo: The EMAS India Team with the Herbertpur Christian Hospital staff after group discussion.

and commented how their practice will change. We left Herbertpur with an understanding that we would be welcomed back in the future not only to provide Family Medicine mentorship, but to also include mentorship in: Surgery, Radiology, Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, and Mental Health Counselling, to name a few.

In turn, they taught us about Malaria, Typhoid fever and other tropical diseases. Our Team was well looked after with delicious traditional Indian meals. Our children made many local friends in the village and are already asking when we can return to assist at the home for children with special needs.

We look forward to our next visit which is tentatively planned for mid-December 2015.

## UPCOMING MISSION TRIPS

### CHINA SOUTH

May 10 - 21, 2015 (Surgery)  
May 17 - 28, 2015 (Post-Op)

### VIETNAM

Oct. 17 - Nov. 1, 2015

### CHINA SOUTH SURGICAL

Nov. 8 - 21, 2015 (Surgery)  
Nov. 15 - 27, 2015 (Post-Op)

### GUANGDONG

May 24 - 30, 2015

### CHINA EAST

Oct. 30 - Nov. 14, 2015 (Urban)  
Nov. 6 - 14, 2015 (Rural)

### CHINA SOUTH MEDICAL

Nov. 3 - 12, 2015

Thank You for praying for these teams as they serve. For more dates go to: <http://www.emascanada.org/join-us/upcoming/>

## GIVE THE GIFT OF SERVICE

If you would like to volunteer to go on an EMAS missions trip there are several opportunities available to serve with our teams to heal and teach in a Christ-like manner.

To volunteer, please contact Peter Agwa: [peter@emascanada.org](mailto:peter@emascanada.org)



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