



The Anne Clémante Julien Foundation's Story Histoire de la Fondation

When I was in high school in Haiti, Sister Rita a nun from the religious community of the sisters of wisdom from time to time gave me some money from a benefactor in Canada, the Gagnon's family. Later as a seminarian Fr. Benoit Deblois a Friar of St. Viator did the same. Both were Canadian missionaries who worked in Haiti, May their souls rest in peace. Around that time, having an extra \$50 to \$100 Canadian dollars every three months was very helpful because in Haiti there is not student loan.

In the late seventies, with the help of some neighbors, my mother Anne Clémante Julien bought a piece of land and built a little community center to help some adults with literacy, among them she was also a student who learned how to read and write at the age of 62-65. My father died in 1976 and my mother passed away in 1988. At that time, I was in transit in Miami to Canada to complete my studies in theology in Ottawa.



In November 1996, I was ordained to the Holy Order of Priesthood for the Diocese of Bridgeport in Connecticut. In July 1997, I went back to Haiti to celebrate my first Mass in my home town at Saint Maria Goretti parish in Chambellan.



During my time in Chambellan, I visited the School Community Center that was founded by my mother which was completely abandoned and neglected. Since then, I started thinking of a way to continue my mother's work and payback to my community the same way that father Deblois and Sister Rita have helped me!

In August 2002, while on vacations in Chambellan, my hometown, to start rebuilding my mother's old house as a way to remember her. One morning, Mr. Labonte Renel (Executive counselor), the Principal of the only high school of Chambellan (a public school) came to my house to say hello, he is a long time friend. As we were discussing the school situation in Chambellan, I told him my great desire to contribute to help some young people to go to high school. My plan was to pay for or sponsor ten teens in memory of my mother. His first reaction was laughing loudly, and he told me: "*Father it is a great idea but a little bit crazy*" I asked him why? He said "*you know Father: "Five among them will go to school for about two years and then quit, maybe only three will really take advantage and stay in school. From my experience as a teacher and Principal, I suggested that you pay instead for a teacher for many abandoned and orphans children in the neighborhood that have never been to school."* So, I welcomed his idea, I started to meet with some people in the community and opened "The Anne Clémante Julien Foundation for the orphans and the poorest.

A month after, our first class started with thirty kids, a year later we grew from thirty children to sixty and forty young adults. In September 2004 we welcomed 160 kids, sixty adults and a staff of eight employees. We also opened a special class for young adults that have never been to school. **Among them an eighteen-year-old girl who had the opportunity to go to school for the first time.**

The school was totally free, and we also provided books, uniforms, one meal a day and three days a week. If one of our students becomes ill, we had to send him/her to a clinic and pay also for the expenses. We have tried to do our best helping others in the community as my mother did.

Our ultimate goal was to build step by step a School House and an Orphanage in the next five years with the help of God and the generosity of good-hearted donors. Presently, in 2020 we are still working to finish our nine classes' school built in 5 steps because of a lack of appropriate fund to finish the work we had started. With God's Grace we expect to have a complete school house finished and designed to celebrate our 18 years of services and constructions.

We are just at the beginning; we have the permission of his Excellency, Bishop Joseph Gontrand Décoste, SJ, Bishop of Jérémie in Haiti, to look for a congregation of sisters to continue the work and dream of Anne Clémence Julien and ACJ Foundation: "giving an helping hand to members of our community and especially the unprivileged children of Chambellan".

We are looking also for some professionals like: doctors, nurses, dentists, musicians, teachers, technicians and other people with the idea just to do something to help the needy; to organize a yearly health Mission to help the population of Chambellan, in Haiti.

"I assure you, as often as you did it for one of my least brothers and sisters, you did it for me. (Jesus) (Mat 25, 40) » « Je vous le dis en vérité, toutes les fois que vous avez fait ces choses à l'un de ces plus petits de mes frères et sœurs, c'est à moi que vous les avez faites ». (Mt 25,40)

Thanks you for your attention, merci beaucoup and May the Lord bless you.

Peace and Love

Fr. Jean Ridly Julien, M. TH, BCC
Founder