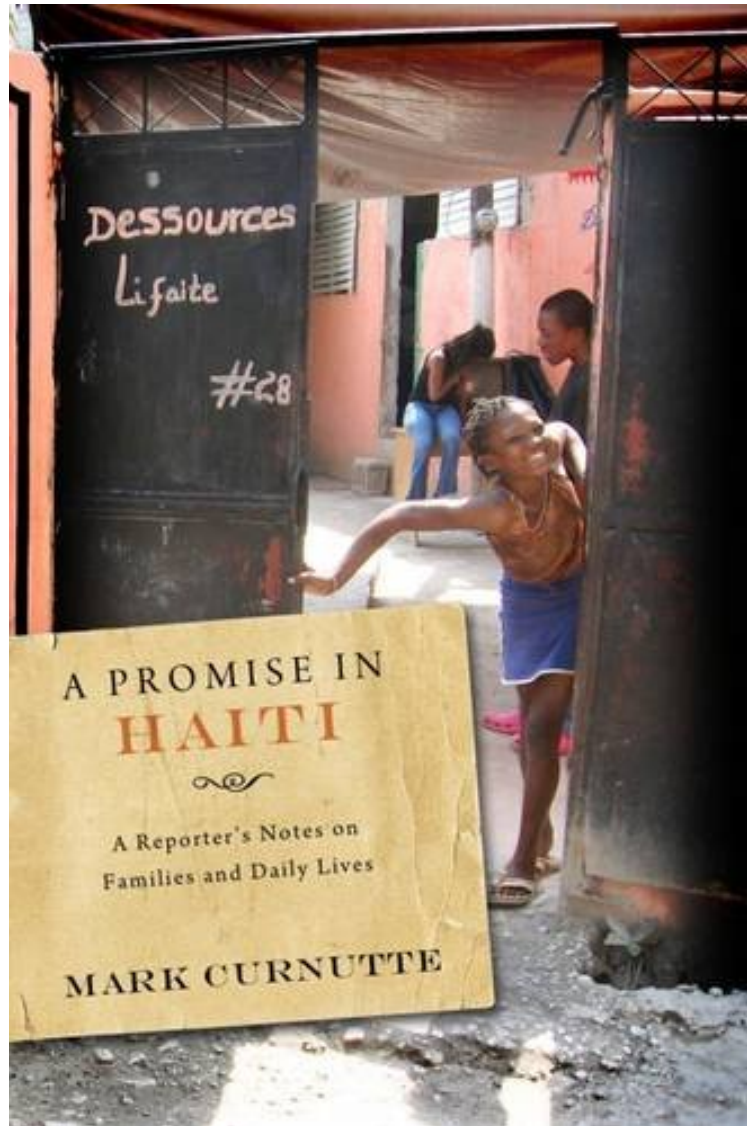


(Pdf free) A Promise in Haiti: A Reporter's Notes on Families and Daily Lives

## A Promise in Haiti: A Reporter's Notes on Families and Daily Lives

Mark Curnutte

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**Mark Curnutte : A Promise in Haiti: A Reporter's Notes on Families and Daily Lives** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Promise in Haiti: A Reporter's Notes on Families and Daily Lives:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Heartbreaking, Heartwarming.By MollyMagooA beautiful, yet often difficult, sharing of the author's post-earthquake visit to Haiti. You share the dismay over the tremendous obstacles to recovery and the enduring hardships faced by the people there. Their incredible courage and endurance in the face of

apparently insurmountable tragedy is as inspiring as the need for it is depressing. By telling the stories of individuals he met there, Mark Curnutte makes the aftermath of the disaster, and the people it affects, real and personal. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Haiti and the Poorest of the Poor By martha t stephens IVE JUST FINISHED reading *The Promise of Haiti*, and I feel absolutely submerged in the lives of the Haitian families Mark Curnutte describes. I'm thinking of a certain family the author has come to know rather well. On a certain day when he arrives again -- he travels to Haiti every few years -- he finds that the family are hungry, with nothing much to eat for several days. Curnutte is a reporter for the Cincinnati Enquirer, but he has come to feel he must help out the families he covers for his paper. On this occasion, he gives the mother of the family, Louisilia Louis, a twenty-dollar bill, and she heads right out to the market to buy the family a good supper. She feeds all of the thirteen guys who live with her in her two-room shack, and on this day she buys beans, rice, one chicken, some vegetables. Everyone in the family is full of expectation, and we see the preparing of this evening meal in the shanty home in Gonaive. The stove is brought out to the side porch where cooking takes place in the open air; this stove is nothing more than a thin metal frame with three indented baskets on top for the charcoal (which also has to be bought). The children help sort the beans, and soon they're boiling in a pot over the charcoal, and the mother is sitting on the floor in the front room cutting up vegetables, then frying the chicken very carefully on the porch. It takes almost two hours for everything to get ready, and finally Louisilia spoons up a dish for each adult and child, who line up and are provided for according to size. A bamboo pan of utensils is brought out, but there's not enough for all, and some eat with their fingers. But how we enjoy watching this family eat! There's no such thing, were told, among most Haitians as breakfast, lunch, and dinner -- a good day is when there's actually a meal of any kind. Half of Haitians cannot read and write, though some of the poor children the author knows go to Catholic schools, as Louisilia's do, and are even provided good uniforms. In the book's many pages of color photos, we see that the two young girls of this family are very skinny kids, almost emaciated, but pretty ones even so, in their school clothes, and smiling for their pictures. Curnutte attempts to summarize the reasons for the abject poverty on this island, which Haiti shares with the Dominican Republic, a country somewhat better off. In Haiti agricultural lands are disappearing, river flood plains that once were farmed have been dammed, hurricanes destroy, and for many, many years, no Haitian government has existed for long that cares about its people -- only about the island's rich and powerful. In 2010 a terrible earthquake took the lives of 230,000 people in Haiti and wiped out a great many of the shanty homes. Curnutte visited again after the quake but could not get back to Gonaive to see Louisilia. We in the U.S. need to know the Haitian story, and this is a narrative we can trust, I feel. Curnutte comes across as a person of conscience. He's a long-time Catholic himself, and he likes to visit and revisit the churches, hospitals, and orphanages of this faith on the island. Somehow the presence of the many individuals there, Catholics and non-Catholics, who strive to stay loyal to the poorest of the poor gives us a little hope that people can come together for each other even in the worst places of the earth's degradation. THE LARGER ISLAND of Cuba lies just off the shores of Haiti. In Cuba the literacy rate is close to 100%, and no child is without a school. There is hardship, but no one is starving or without medical care. Some in the U. S. feel that a socialist system is always an evil development, but can anyone doubt but that Haiti has desperately needed its own people's revolution -- like the one that evolved in Cuba in 1959? On Cuba, some readers may wish to see "A Crucified Cuba -- Still Lives" at [marthastephens.wordpress.com](http://marthastephens.wordpress.com) 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Unforgettable By Susy Flory Mark Curnutte's book, *A Promise in Haiti*, grabbed me. I'm currently involved in a book project revolving around Haiti and my desk is stacked with books on Haiti--nonfiction, novels, travel books, and even children's. Out of that stack, Curnutte's story is the one that touched my heart by introducing me to three amazing families struggling to make a happy and satisfying life for themselves in the poorest country in the world. Mark is a reporter for the Cincinnati Enquirer newspaper, and not only did I find his detailed reporting to be excellent, but I was touched by his soul searching as he responds to the people he meets, the poverty he's overwhelmed by, and his own spiritual journey that comes out of his visits. I wanted to cry along with him as he realizes some of the families he meets eat just one meal a day, and often skip a day or two during the week when they can't even get enough food for that one meal. I found myself slowing down as I read to soak in every sentence. I truly felt I was there alongside the author falling in love with these brave and resilient people in a chaotic and often hopeless place. I loved this book.

When a devastating earthquake struck near Port-au-Prince, Haiti, on January 12, 2010, the world reacted with a collective, yet distant, horror. For Cincinnati Enquirer reporter Mark Curnutte, hearing the news provoked a far more visceral response. Curnutte had grown to love Haiti and its people as only someone who had lived with Haiti's families could. *A Promise in Haiti* is Curnutte's story of his time, spanning the last decade, living among several families in Gonaives, a city of 200,000 people a hundred kilometers north of Port-au-Prince. He began traveling to Haiti as a volunteer with the aid organization Hands Together, eventually building trust and credibility with many Haitians. Curnutte introduces the reader to the Cenecharles family, strained by entrenched unemployment and the need to continually travel for work. He is invited into the home of the Henrisma family, and is forced to reconcile journalistic detachment with basic compassion as he contributes financially to help them. The reader is confronted with a complicated, conflicted written and photographic record of a worldview that evolves right on the page. As a reporter,

Curnutte found parallels between the lives he encountered in Gonaives and the world of the Great Depression recounted in James Agee and Walker Evans's *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*. Agee and Evans loom large as a challenge and inspiration to Curnutte. The result is equal parts homage to that historic chronicle, on-the-ground reporting, and introspective narrative on the lessons Gonaives taught Curnutte about his own life and family. In late February 2010, Curnutte went back to Haiti on assignment, but conditions made it impossible for him to return to Gonaives. The resulting frustration provoked a meditation on the monumental challenges that face Haiti -- and on the destructive cycle of international attention that constantly moves on to "The Next Big Story."

"A truly useful and thoughtful 'life-on-the-streets' view of life in Haiti both pre and post the apocalyptic events of 2010."--*People In Aid* Named a 2011 *ForeWord s Silver Book of the Year*"That the book's description of conditions in Haiti will elicit expressions of concern, perhaps outrage, from readers, is certain. More heartening is the prospect, even if slender, of material change that a future visitor, retracing Curnutte's steps fifty years from now, may be able to detect."--*Foreword*"Beautifully written, and very moving"--*Miller-McCune*"Despite Haiti's history of natural disasters and ongoing economic and political problems, Curnutte highlights the strength and resiliency of these families, paying particular attention to their faith and religion. ... The author's reflections on his internal struggles as a privileged American journalist in Haiti are honest, sincere, and refreshing."--*Library Journal*"Mark Curnutte is the conscience of Cincinnati. As a newspaper reporter, he can be found in prisons with immigrants facing deportation, among the homeless in shelters and the hungry in food pantries, and in the houses of mothers with sons on death row or those of still others who've lost sons to street violence. He doesn't let readers forget the forgotten. *A Promise in Haiti* finds Curnutte in the city of Gonaives, where he has lived among three poor families in this hemisphere's poorest country. What emerges is a tender written and photographic portrait of daily life, absent of material trappings but rich in faith. Curnutte documents in gritty detail the resilience that allows people to move forward -- dignity intact -- in the face of crippling poverty that's complicated further by natural disasters and epidemics. And like his literary hero James Agee, Curnutte reveals the great commonalities of human life despite surface differences of race, nationality and social class."--*Sister Helen Prejean, CSJ**From the Inside Flap**Understanding Haiti, up close and personal**About the Author*Mark Curnutte is a reporter with the *Cincinnati Enquirer*.