

Jerry the Time Capsule

DOMINICA | July 27

Antonia



On the first day of school, Teacher Antonia stood before her third-grade class with a cookie box wrapped in festive white, pink, black, and gray wrapping paper.

The children watched curiously as the teacher passed out yellow and green pieces of paper.

“This is a time capsule,” Antonia said, pointing to the box.

Motioning to the papers, she added, “On your paper, write your name and something that you would like to pray about this school term.”

She said the papers would be placed in the box, and the box would be sealed. At the end of the year, the class would throw a party to open the box to see how God had answered their prayers.

The children excitedly wrote down their prayer requests at Ebenezer Seventh-day Adventist Primary School.

Antonia said she also would put a prayer request in the box.

“This is serious for me,” she said. “I believe God can change my life.”

After the time capsule was sealed, a boy’s hand shot up.

“Can we name the time capsule?” he asked, excitedly.

When the teacher nodded her head, he exclaimed, “Jerry, the time capsule!”

All the children burst into applause and cheered.

Then the boy prayed over the box.

“Thank You for Jerry,” he said.

The time capsule was a teaching tool that Antonia had heard about from a teacher from another Adventist school just a few days before the opening of the new school year in Dominica. She liked the idea of incorporating a spiritual lesson into the social activities that usually marked the first day of school at Ebenezer Seventh-day Adventist Primary School.

As the weeks and months passed, children took turns holding Jerry and praying.

“Help us to achieve our goals,” one prayed.

“Make our wishes come true,” prayed another.



When guests like the school principal, pastors, and church leaders visited the classroom, the children asked them to hold the box and pray for their requests.

Halfway through the school year, a little girl waved her hand in the air.

“Miss! Miss! I have something to say,” she said.

She said God had answered her prayer request. She had written on her piece of paper that she wanted to read better, and now she could.

Then a number of little hands shot up. Children spoke about praying for high grades and achieving them.

Two children said they had been able to spend time with their fathers, who lived on other islands.

A girl said she had prayed for a baby brother or sister, and an aunt who had a baby had moved to a house close to her home.

When the children’s praises ended, Antonia bowed her head and offered a prayer of thanksgiving. She quoted from Mark 9:23.

“As Jesus said, ‘All things are possible to him who believes,’” she said. 🌐

Part of this quarter’s Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help Ebenezer Seventh-day Adventist Primary School expand in a new and larger building. The school, which opened in 1976, consistently ranks in the top 10 list of the 62 elementary schools in Dominica. But the school building is crowded with 160 children from kindergarten to fourth grade. Several blocks away, another 40 fifth and sixth graders study in a makeshift classroom in a separate building. More parents want to send their children to the school, but there simply isn’t room. Thank you for planning a generous offering on September 28.

By Andrew McChesney

Story Tips

- Show Dominica on the map. Then show Dominica’s capital, Roseau, where the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help construct an elementary school.
- Watch a short YouTube video of Antonia: bit.ly/Teacher-Antonia.
- Download photos for this story from Facebook: bit.ly/fb-mq.
- Share Mission Posts and Fast Facts from the Inter-American Division: bit.ly/iad-2024.
- Know that this mission story illustrates the following objectives of the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s “I Will Go” strategic plan: Spiritual Growth Objective No. 5, “To disciple individuals and families into Spirit-filled lives”; Spiritual Growth Objective No. 6, “To increase accession, retention, reclamation, and participation of children, youth, and young adults”; and Spiritual Growth Objective No. 7, “To help youth and young adults place God first and exemplify a biblical worldview.” For more information, go to the website: IWillGo2020.org.

Fast Facts

- Dominica is located in what is referred to as the hurricane region and is especially vulnerable to hurricanes.
- Dominica is the last major stronghold of the critically endangered Lesser Antillean iguana (*Iguana delicatissima*).
- Dominica has only four amphibians, and one of the largest in the world, called the mountain chicken, is only found in Dominica and Montserrat.
- The Boiling Lake is a flooded fumarole in a volcanic crater on the island of Dominica. It is 200–250 feet (60–75 m) across and is the second-largest hot lake in the world.
- The vast majority of Dominicans are of African descent.