



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **MEDICAL MISSIONS TO VISIT DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**

#### *Will Provide Vital Care*

(HARTFORD, Conn.) -- This is a busy time of the year for the “red” and “blue” teams of *Saint Francis International Medical Missions*, who are headed for the Dominican Republic to bring the miracles of modern medicine to one of the poorest countries in the world.

The “red” team, led by Ibrahim Daoud, M.D., will leave on Oct. 16 for a one-week trip to San Jose de las Matas, a community located in the northwestern part of the country. Using donated medical supplies, the team of 33 general surgeons, anesthesiologists, nurses, technicians, surgical residents, medical students, and nurse anesthetists will work out of the Hospital of San Jose de las Matas, which has been the scene of past visits by Dr. Daoud and his team.

“This is a town of 30,000 people that has no general surgeon at its hospital, so the residents look eagerly forward to our visits,” noted Dr. Daoud.

This is Dr. Daoud’s 15<sup>th</sup> international medical mission since 2001. All participants on both teams pay their own air fares and use personal vacation time on the

trips, which are coordinated by Medical Ministry International, a Texas-based Christian organization that arranges medical missions around the world.

Meanwhile, the “blue” team, lead by Michael Bourque, M.D., is scheduled to leave on Nov. 6 for Los Almacigos, a community located on the Haitian border. Fifty medical professionals and other volunteers will spend a week there, providing surgical and other medical services to local residents.

In addition to obstetrician/gynecologists and general surgeons, nurses, and surgical technicians, Dr. Bourque’s team will, for the first time, include family practitioners, pediatricians, a dentist, and an ultrasound technician. A participant in the team’s last mission, Laura Ficks, R.N., a former Saint Francis nurse who now works for Abbott Laboratories, has arranged for the donation of the company’s *i-STAT* handheld blood analyzers for use by members of the surgical team.

“This portable device allows us to check a patient’s simple blood work before and after surgery so we can better assess a patient’s condition,” explains Dr. Bourque.

This is Dr. Bourque’s sixth trip to the Dominican Republic, starting as a member of Dr. Daoud’s team in 2006, and now leading his own team.

Both surgeons say their reasons for taking part in the trips is best summed up in the motto of Saint Francis International Medical Missions: “See the World, Make a Difference, Change Your Life.”

Founded in 1897, Saint Francis is a major teaching hospital licensed for 617 acute inpatient beds and 65 bassinets. It is the largest Catholic hospital in New England.