Looking up, the chaplain raised his hands and began. “Loving God...” his prayer offered for those crowded on the steps of the medical clinic. The first who would receive surgery in the new OR suite at Hospital Hilario Galindo. Soon after these initial words, however, his prayer was overcome by the prayers of those who surrounded him.

It began quietly and then began to swell. Individual prayers that flowed in and among the others. A hum, a rhythm, a pulse of prayer. “All powerful God, protect these doctors who have come to help us.” “Lord Jesus, I pray for each nurse, each doctor, for their families.” “Jesus, thank you for these people. Keep them safe. Bless them.” Prayer after prayer. I strained to isolate one
from the other to listen to their words. All of them, prayers for the volunteers who had come to serve. Not one prayer for themselves.

This pulse of prayer grew, strengthened, soared. Before it, the chaplain lowered his hands and bowed his head, accepting the blessing. Seeing his example, I, too, stopped. No longer straining to hear each word, each prayer, I allowed all of the prayers to flow over me. The prayers that transcended words. That touched the place in our hearts that is beyond words. Living, breathing, moving prayer, the presence of God, before which we all bowed our heads.

Today is Ash Wednesday. Many of us will gather in churches and bow our heads to receive the sign of the cross on our foreheads and to hear the words, “From dust you have come, to dust you shall return.” Today, a time of personal reflection, recognition of our mortal state. The beginning of Lent, the time when we journey yet once again with Jesus to his Cross. As this deeply personal and quiet night descends, my thoughts return to the crowd that morning. With the hot sun blazing.

For there, on that crowded threshold of the clinic, in the messiness and honesty of suffering, God’s presence was made known. There, in the midst of injustice and challenge, the stark reality of “from dust you have come, to dust you shall return,” the hum and rhythm of God’s presence, palpable in the crowd. In their faces, among the scars of hard lives lived, God made visible. All around us, God’s Love that reaches into our hearts to touch the raw and tender place that words cannot grasp. The Love that was there before we were born. The Love that shall welcome us home the day we die. The Love that shall journey step by step to the Cross to lay down his life for you. For me. For us all.

May your Ash Wednesday and Lenten Season be blessed.

Rev. Linda McCarty
President & CEO

*On February 3, 2018, we inaugurated Hospital Hilario Galindo. Thank you to all who made this dream a reality. For creating the space through which God’s love flows. See photos of the Hilario Galindo Inauguration

*On February 4, the Hartz/Hecht/Coke Surgical Team sat before patients and their family members and scheduled surgeries. Thanks to all of you who are part of the healing that flows through this mission every day. View the Hartz/Hecht/Coke Team photos and blog
Thank you for being a part of this work that is not of our hands.

Volunteer in 2018

We are seeking volunteers to fill key spots on upcoming trips this season. Do you know someone who might be interested in the life-changing experience of serving in Guatemala? Would you be up for that opportunity?

Learn more!

We Met the Challenge!

Thanks for your generosity and support. We met our part of a $20,000 challenge grant from the SG Foundation, which will go to support our Guatemalan volunteers and our life-changing medical mission in Guatemala.

Find out more

opportunities at the 6th annual Global Health Conference in Houston on March 9-10.

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