Where He Wants Me to Be

“The little old man was dirty. Smelly,” Dominga says. “I had just left the hospital. I was sick to my stomach, exhausted. I had just realized that I had lost the last 20Q (about $2.50) that I had.” Dominga stops for a moment and then says, “I will never forget meeting that little old man.”

Dominga, one of our 1,000 Guatemalan volunteers, sits in the Obras hospital as she tells her story. Sprinkled among the triage clinics are Dominga’s nearly 40 patients she has brought from El Petén, some of them traveling for more than 15 hours to arrive in Antigua. One of our medical clinic teams had seen them months earlier and had referred them for surgery.

In those remote clinics, our medical teams had promised patients that they would be taken to the hospital, hours from their home, for their surgery. A promise the volunteer physicians could make because of Dominga. Because of her commitment, the commitment of all our Guatemalan volunteers, to journey beside...
the patients from the villages to meet our surgical teams in Antigua and Retalhuleu.

“I had told myself that I was not going to continue to volunteer for Faith In Practice. It was too hard. Two years was enough. My roof was caving in. My children needed me. But, here I was in Antigua with patients. I thought, now I’ve lost the little money I have. No, I’m done.”

Dominga continues, “The little old man called out, and I thought, ‘He wants money.’ He said, ‘Niña (little girl), you need something to eat. Let’s eat together.’ I told him I was not hungry; I thought he wanted me to buy him food. He said, ‘Don’t lie to me. I know you are hungry.’ I told him I didn’t have any money. Then the old man said, ‘Come. I will buy you something to eat.’

“He said we had to hurry, because he needed to be in the operating rooms. He bought me a chuchito and then left. I remember thinking, how is it possible that this little old man, so dirty, so smelly, is expected in the operating rooms?”

Dominga’s eyes are now moist and filled with wonder. “I finished my chuchito and returned to the hospital to see my patients. As I entered, I was overcome with a feeling that is hard to explain. It physically overpowered me. And I knew. That little old man was Jesus. No one else. I knew it was him, telling me I needed to continue. This is where he wanted me to be. That was eight years ago. And I continue volunteering, because I know that this is where I meet Jesus. I have seen so many miracles. So many.” Her face is now glowing. “This is where he wants me to be.” She smiles, “So here I am.”

Dominga and our Guatemalan volunteers make sacrifices to volunteer with Faith In Practice. They leave their homes, serving hundreds of patients each year. They give abundantly, fully, even though they have few possessions.

One of Faith In Practice’s greatest blessings, I believe, is to provide an avenue through which our Guatemalan volunteers can respond to Jesus’ call in their lives.

Another of Faith In Practice’s greatest blessings, I believe, is how we in the United States might learn from our Guatemalan brothers and sisters. To see in their faces, their rich faces, the glow of one who can joyfully say, in spite of the cost, or possibly because of the cost, “This is where he wants me to be. So here I am.”

Four Stars 14 Consecutive Years Top 1%

Faith In Practice has been awarded four stars by Charity Navigator, an independent evaluator of charities for transparency and efficiency.

This is the 14th consecutive year we have received this distinction.

This places Faith In Practice in the top 1% of all charities rated by this prestigious organization that is trusted by donors across the U.S.

View the official letter from Charity Navigator

Zimmer Biomet, Faith In Practice: Elevating Care & Spirits in Guatemala

Orthopedics This Week recently featured the new agreement between orthopedic implant manufacturer Zimmer Biomet and Faith In Practice.

Read the full article here
“Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith?” James 2:5

Dominga has been serving as a Faith In Practice volunteer for ten years. She shepherds, and becomes family, to hundreds of patients each year. She is among 1,000 Guatemala volunteers who serve annually.