

Faith In Practice

Life Changing Medical Mission



Promises

The first surgical patients in more than fourteen months lie in pre-op. Miguel Angel, a new hip. Oscar, a reconstructed leg. Julio, a new knee. Surgeries which would allow them to provide for their families, take up their live again, after years of hoping, of praying, for this miracle. The day had come.

My eyes filled with tears as I listened to their stories, because of the pain and the waiting, because of their gratitude and their faith. But mostly because of how they spoke of Santos and Armando and Aroldo.* Of how these, their Faith In Practice volunteers, had never abandoned them, not before and not during the pandemic. These faithful volunteers who waited just on the other side of the wall. The ones to jump up when the nurse would soon shout from the OR door, "Family of Miguel Angel C__! Family of Oscar O__! Family of Julio G__!" Jumping up as family to hear how each surgery went, because that is exactly who they are now. Family.



Rev. McCarty praying with Oscar before surgery



Armando waiting for news of Oscar's surgery

Promises Made

The tears came because I know the sacrifices that Santos, Armando, and Aroldo make, how they serve out of a deep and abiding sense of call and commitment to God. How they have done this for years and years not asking for any recognition, and in fact shying away from it. How they served their communities throughout the pandemic and had promised them that we would return. And I knew they had made this promise because, just as they would not abandon their patients, they trusted we would not abandon them. Family.

There were many things that caused my heart to overflow with wonder and gratitude throughout the first week of teams' return, but none greater than seeing the eight Guatemalan volunteers accompanying their patients. None greater than to encounter four more of our volunteers at the Obras Hospital as they prepared for the Robinson Surgical Team's arrival. None greater than hearing of how these volunteer leaders were not only accompanying patients for the first surgical weeks, but also busily planning their upcoming medical clinics. They never lost faith in this mission. They continued to believe in us, trust in us, and pray for us through it all.



Promises Fulfilled

How is it possible for me to convey what this first week of surgeries held within it? The Parsley/Woolf Team gently holding the depth of meaning and purpose of being the first team to serve in more than fourteen months. Honoring our Guatemalan volunteers who struggled and believed and served while awaiting our return.** Honoring all in Guatemala who trusted that U.S. volunteers would be back. The first of twenty-one teams to serve in 2021, they also held the future of promises to be kept, with open hands and hearts, illuminating the days to come.

Miguel Angel, Oscar, and Julio were referred to the Parsley/Woolf Surgical Team by the Thompson, Johnson, and Chenault medical clinics, respectively, pre-pandemic. All of us, called together to serve as the family of God.

Wonder and Gratitude

How is it possible to fully express my, our, gratitude for your faithfulness? How you, too, never lost faith in this mission, continued to believe in us, trust in us, and pray for us through it all. How you have held unfulfilled promises, promises that surely shall now be fulfilled, in your hands and hearts, all these months.

Of course, the need is greater now than before the pandemic. Challenges remain. But for now, I am simply giving thanks for the blessing that is Faith In Practice. Giving thanks to God to whom this mission has always and always shall belong. Giving thanks for the privilege of knowing Santos, Armando, Aroldo and all of our Guatemalan volunteers. Giving thanks for being blessed to have their witness change me. Giving thanks for the witness of all our U.S. volunteers, our staff, and all of you. Overflowing with deep and abiding thanks for the Faith In Practice Family, to whom God has called us to be.

Humbly and with a full heart,

Rev. Linda L. McCarty

President and CEO

**Many of our Guatemalan volunteer leaders once received care through Faith In Practice. Many have not. All are leaders in their communities or have become leaders because of Faith In Practice. All are extraordinary individuals of faith. Before the pandemic, Faith In Practice had approximately 1,000 Guatemalan volunteers serving annually. We expect to resume full operations by early 2022.*

***While US volunteer teams could not serve during the pandemic, Faith In Practice continued to serve on the ground. Please see how at <https://faithinpractice.org/welcome-home-teams>.*

Cervical Cancer

Screening: Xela Aid



Cervical cancer is a preventable disease that takes the lives of women across Guatemala especially in communities such as San Martín. Together Faith In Practice and Xela Aid save lives.

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Mobility Clinic: Health Talents



Wheelchairs, canes, walkers. Medical checks, distribution of medicines, physical therapy consults. Surgical referrals, referrals for specialty wheelchairs. All at Health Talents, another Faith In Practice partner, as we continue to leverage relationships and resources to serve as many as efficiently as possible.

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Guatemalan Leaders' Conference



For months, our Guatemalan volunteers have been preparing for the return of the Faith In Practice U.S. volunteer teams. As part of the preparations, they participated in the very first Virtual Guatemalan Leadership Conference.

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Vaccinations in Guatemala



COVID-19 vaccines are slow in coming to Guatemala. The news continues to report the impending arrival of vaccines, but so far, the promises have not been fulfilled. Fortunately, the Faith In Practice staff and staff at our partner hospitals have been able to receive the vaccine.

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Mark Schomer: In Memory



Hilario Galindo board member Mark Schomer dedicated his life to the hospital and his community of San Felipe, Retalhuleu. On May 7, Mark succumbed to COVID-19. There are no words to express our sadness or to fully express our gratitude for Mark's compassion, wisdom, and dedication. Well done, good and faithful servant. Please pray for Ana Maria, Mark's wife, and Hilario Galindo as we all try to absorb this loss.

Save the Date:

Encouraged
by Faith

Faith In Practice 2021 Gala
Friday, October 8

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