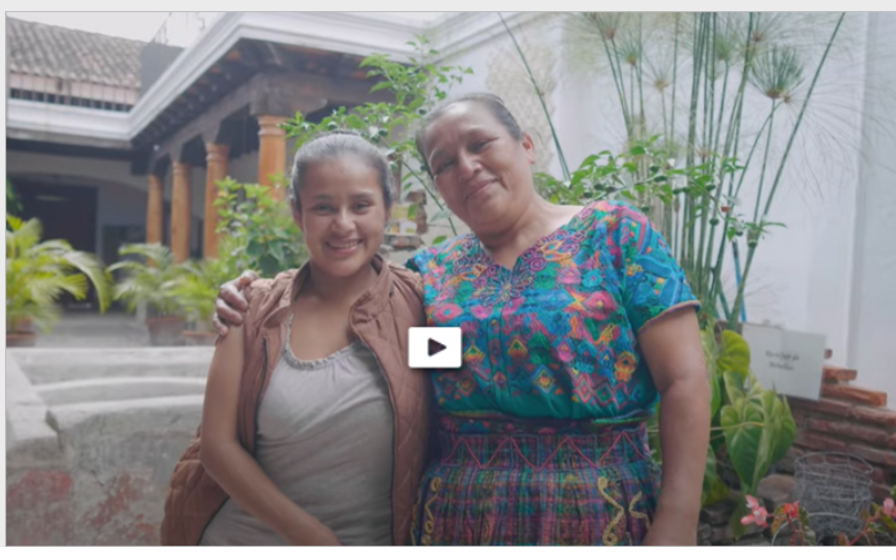


Faith In Practice

Life Changing Medical Mission



A Clear Voice

A clear voice rang out across the plaza at the Obras Hospital in early November. Doña Linda, Doña Linda! As I turned, I saw her running toward me. Carla, *running* toward me. She looked like a different person. She told me she was a different person.

Three months ago, Carla struggled to walk, to sleep, to move. Her tumor was slowly but surely overtaking her body, her life. Three months ago, Carla could not run. Now she was *running* toward me.

I Have Faith: Carla

In September, we shared Carla's story with you. We shared the story of her entire family who struggled as they watched the tumor grow on their daughter's back, year after year for twenty-years. As they watched it slowly take over their daughter's body. Until the miraculous day in July when the Boutros Surgical Team offered their hands and their trust to God to remove it. But more than this, we shared Carla's strength, faith, and hope that outshone—that overshadowed the tumor. [I Have Faith: Carla](#)

And now we are sharing the next chapter of Carla's story.

Surgery and Recovery

The surgery took more than eight hours of painstaking care to remove the more than 30-pound tumor, more than 30% of Carla's body weight, from her back. Eight hours to harvest skin and graft her entire back from the top of her neck to the base of her spine. A difficult and dangerous surgery that easily could have cost Carla her life. The Boutros Team is excellent, but everyone knew that this surgery needed more. Everyone knew that the surgery went well because it had been bathed in prayer, because everyone had lifted the surgery, the team, and Carla up to God in prayer. Of that there was no doubt.

Because of the extent of the grafting, there was an assumption that all grafts would not take. So we had a plan and Dr. Boutros was in contact with Dr. Piñeda of the Obras and our Jaime de Leon to manage any follow up care. But, every single skin graft took. Every single one, and Carla healed more quickly than anyone thought possible.

Everything is Different, One Thing Remains the Same

And there she was, *running* toward me. The words poured out of her, sparkling with joy. Carla looked like a different person, her faced transformed. Her body transformed. A different life now lay before her. A life stretched out before her that she once felt was beyond her reach.

Together, we recorded a short selfie video for Dr. Boutros. I was struggling to keep up in translation as Carla exuberantly thanked him for completely changing her life. But first, she said, "God worked through your hands." There it was. As I knew it would be. God first. In all things, God first.

Everything had changed for Carla, but there was one thing that would not change, that will never change. Before her surgery, through all the tribulation, the rising hopes, and the crashing disappointments, God's presence in her life is what oriented her, what anchored her. Now that the tumor is gone, God's presence continues to orient her life, continues to be her anchor. Carla's commitment for her future is to witness to God's presence in her life. Her one desire is to give thanks to God in all circumstances and to be a witness to God's faithfulness as she continues to remain faithful to God in the times of darkness in the times of light.

Thanksgiving

There are so many ways in which the people of Guatemala humble, guide, and teach me. One of these ways is how they continually give God thanks in all circumstances. How they never forget. They do not pray to God for deliverance, making promises that will fade once their health is restored. Like I do. Rather they give God thanks in their suffering, and they give God thanks in their deliverance—for the rest of their lives. They trust that God will fulfill His promise for their lives and then, they live into those fulfilled promises by keeping the promises they made to God in their darkest night. No matter how many times I witness this, I am in awe.

In Carla's case, I have no doubt that she will continue to give God thanks all the days of her life by serving others in gratitude to God. God who is her North Star, who is her anchor. And, I have no doubt that she will continue to be a beacon of light for those whose hope and faith might waver. Carla, who on the afternoon before the surgery that could have taken her life pointed out to us the words, "Oh God, your word is a lamp unto my feet." I know that I will continue to look to Carla and those like her who God has given me as a light to guide my way. Who show me what it means to give God thanks in all circumstances, come what may.

In Thanksgiving to all of you through whose hands God is at work in this mission,

Happy Thanksgiving,

Rev. Linda L. McCarty

**Rejoice always, pray continually,
give thanks in all circumstances;
for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.**

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Thanksgiving



In 2021, **twenty** Faith In Practice teams served in Guatemala, nothing short of miraculous in the face of the pandemic. In this time of Thanksgiving, we give God thanks for every single volunteer who stepped out in faith to serve, all of you who supported and continue to support this mission, and every patient whose blessings are forever changing our lives. All to God's honor glory and praise.

[READ TEAM BLOGS](#)

Encouraged: Our Guatemalan Leaders



Praising God for sustaining them through the pandemic and for the return of the U.S. Teams, our Guatemalan volunteer leaders' voices rang out. Gathered for our Retreat in early November, they drew from their faith and their love for each other, and they left renewed, re-energized as we prepare for 2022. Listen to their voices by clicking the button below.

[WATCH VIDEO](#)

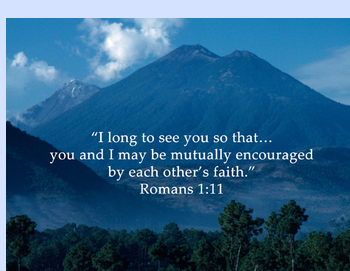
Giving Tuesday



Make your gift to support your favorite team through November 30 and double your impact!

[PLAN YOUR GIFT](#)

Gala 2021: Encouraged In Faith



Featuring Carla, this Gala raised more than \$800,000. More than this, it encouraged thousands in their faith. U.S. and Guatemalan volunteers and patients alike as we prepare for 40 teams to serve in 2022. Thank you so much!

[GALLERY OF PICTURES](#)



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