



Advent: Standing in Faith

Blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.

Luke 1:45

Advent Darkness: 2020. One year ago, we remained huddled in our homes, separated from our families and our Guatemalan family. One year ago, we had no idea whether our aggressive plans to return to Guatemala on May 1, 2021 would come to fruition. No clear sense of what stage the pandemic would be in, what the regulations for entry into Guatemala might be, whether our U.S. leaders could recruit volunteers to serve not only because of the risks presented in Guatemala, but because healthcare workers were exhausted.

One year ago, I watched as one leader then the next and the next signed on to the Zoom call. I listened as they spoke of missing Guatemala, as they asked thoughtful questions about our plans to keep volunteers and patients safe, of their plans to return to Guatemala in spite of so much uncertainty. The meeting was filled with logistics, thoughtful questions, contingencies. A strong and productive 'working meeting'. But for me there was much more represented on that cold night as the snow silently fell just outside my window.

It was the beginning of Advent 2020, and I had been thinking of how the Advent darkness of 2020 was bringing into relief the true meaning of this sacred season. The time of waiting in the darkness. The waiting-time as we strain, hope against hope, to catch a glimmer of his light. The time that requires our belief that his promises shall be fulfilled even though the world tells us that the darkness shall prevail.

Advent Light. On that cold night, in the faces of our U.S. team leaders, all of us on staff who were on the call saw that glimmer of light in our Advent darkness. And it strengthened and encouraged us as we continued to work toward anticipating pitfalls, creating contingency plans, and as we, too, prayed that God's promises would be fulfilled. Our volunteer leaders' trust continued to sustain us as we stepped each day into the darkness believing in the light, as we boldly acted with certainty into a very uncertain time. And, on May 1, 2021, our very first team returned to Guatemala, where we were received by our beloved Guatemalan family as a prayer answered, as a glimmer of his light, and a promise fulfilled.

Promises Fulfilled. The Woolf/Parsley team was followed by team after team, each trusting in God's promises, embodying God's promises fulfilled. Twenty teams served in 2021. Each and every one of them, an answer to prayer, a promise fulfilled. Forty teams will serve in 2022. Even though the pandemic continues to threaten, we are ready, prepared, and trusting still in his light as we step into his future.

Something New. The promise of homecoming was fulfilled with the return of teams, surely, but God's promise was, and is, much bigger than a return to the past. Rather, God's promise fulfilled is the beginning of a new and bright future. The Obras hospital, one of our longest standing partners, is expanding the operating suite that Faith In Practice built in 2006 (see right). With our support and that of many faithful donors, the expansion is helping us to serve even more as we continue to deepen and expand our continuity of care. Hilario Galindo Hospital is also expanding its private hospitalization capacity, x-ray and ultrasound services, and clinics, as it continues to work toward becoming more sustainable and serving more in need in their community. We are broadening our clinic partnership network to provide better services in more remote areas as well. Teams are no longer serving during a season - - we are year-round with a mix of surgical and medical volunteer teams interwoven with stand-alone clinics and patient case management. The partnership with Zimmer Biomet is flourishing, and we are expanding the ways in which we can reach those in greatest need of orthopedic care. We will have one orthopedic surgical team serving nearly every month to meet this need. Our partners have remained true and additional partnerships are on the horizon. Charity Navigator continues to recognize our efforts in spite of the challenges we faced during the pandemic. We are poised to enter into God's new future in so many exciting ways.

Advent Gratitude: 2021. This time of Advent, however, is a time to sit in the darkness and look back before we rush forward into that future. It is a time to remember how God is always present with us in the darkness even as we seek God's light. It is a time to give quiet thanks before we hurry into the joyous celebration of Christmas.

So, before we leave this year behind, I am sitting with the memories of how, only one year ago, we did not know what would happen. My heart is filled with gratitude for our U.S. team leaders who stepped out in faith when logic dictated against it. Our Guatemalan volunteers who promised municipalities that they could trust Faith In Practice not to place their communities at risk with a clinic and moved forward to plan medical clinics throughout the countryside. Our staff both in Guatemala and the U.S. who worked tirelessly to live into God's promises in a time of darkness, burdened and blessed with the call of this mission. And, my heart is filled with gratitude to each and every one of you, our Faith In Practice family, who believed in this mission and God's presence through it in our darkest of days. Through it all, in both the days of darkness and light, may we give God all the glory, honor, and praise. May we give God thanks for this mission through which we meet the Christ Child all year long.

Humbly and with deep gratitude,

Merry Christmas

Rev. Linda L. McCarty



Zimmer Biomet

Faith In Practice and all our ortho patients give God thanks for Zimmer Biomet, one of the largest manufacturers of orthopedic implants. Presented to Zimmer Biomet's employees across the world, **this video highlights this unique partnership.** Enjoy!

WATCH NOW

Orthopedic Patient Triage



In November 2021, **Dr. Mark Ishimaru triaged orthopedic hip, knee, and spine patients** in El Petén, one of the most remote areas of Guatemala. Through the support of Faith In Practice staff and Guatemalan volunteers, this triage clinic, one of several across Guatemala, helps ensure that we efficiently find the ortho patients in greatest of need. Preparations for the 2022 season continue!

Obras Expansion



The Obras is expanding! Scheduled to open at the end of February, the surgical suite will nearly double.

READ MORE

Hilario Galindo is Growing



With the support of Faith In Practice, Hilario Galindo is constructing **additional convalescent rooms** to accommodate its growth.

Giving Tuesday

Thank You!



Thank you for your overwhelming generosity on Giving Tuesday! Each gift you made ensures that our Guatemalan patients receive the care they need.

We are so grateful for your continued support!

Four-Star Rating!



Faith In Practice has been awarded a four-star rating from Charity Navigator for **17 consecutive years**, placing us in the top 1% of all charities rated!

Did You Know?

Charitable gifts made as a rollover from your IRA are not taxed as income?

IRA rollover gifts are an easy way to make end of year gifts and count toward your required minimum distribution.

For your gift to qualify:

You must be 70½ or older at the time of your gift.

The transfer must go directly to Faith In Practice as an outright gift.

Your total IRA gift(s) cannot exceed \$100,000.

For more information, contact Cara Haddock, Director of Development

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