

# Faith In Practice

## Life Changing Medical Mission



## God's Joyful and Faithful People

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Anyone who is a preacher will tell you that he or she is not 'writing a sermon' but rather listening for the Spirit to guide. Anyone who is a preacher will say that writing a sermon is a miracle and a gift each and every time he or she sits down to listen and to write.

It is a miracle to sense the Spirit moving within, giving you words that you know are of you, and yet are not. To preach is an act of listening, an act of worship. An intimate offering of your heart to God, all the while knowing that it can only, and only will, come alive, will be imbued with meaning, when others meet you in that space of worship and offer their hearts, too. A sermon is never words on a page, but rather the Living Word made manifest when the community kneels together. A sermon is the intimate moments between you and your God that then become public moments of community and Holy Spirit.

For the past fifteen years, you have listened to, and for, my sermons, prayers, and reflections. And, you have met me in that space of heart to heart, which brought those sermons, prayers, and reflections to life. You have held my words offered in vulnerability and offered your own to me. And you have done so with a generosity of spirit that I shall carry with me for the rest of my life.

Your listening hearts, faith and openness to meet the Spirit in those moments have given meaning to anything I have written or offered. And, because I knew I was listening to God in order to meet you in the sermon, in the reflection, I found meaning there, too.

Of course, there were many moments of staring blankly at a blank page. Moments of fear that nothing would come. And, then the relief and wonder that would come as I felt the Spirit show up. Moments when I listened for God while thinking of you.

As of September 1, I will no longer be the CEO of Faith In Practice, so this is my last Monthly Devotional to all of you. I must admit that while there will be many things for which I am grateful and many things I will miss in this mission, what I will miss the most is holding the very privileged position of being at times your pastor. I hope I do not overstep by saying so, but there have been so many moments when I have felt that I have been just that. Your pastor, because you have opened your heart to me.

So, thank you. Thank you for trusting me and for letting me see your faith. Thank you for how you have inspired my faith and for being a witness to me of what it is to be God's joyful and faithful people. For that is what you are. God's joyful and faithful people.

I will never forget it. Or you. I will cherish those moments for the rest of my life.

With gratitude and love,

Rev. Linda L. McCarty  
President and CEO

PS Please stay in touch. My email is [lmccarty2@aol.com](mailto:lmccarty2@aol.com). And I hope to see many of you at the Grace and Gratitude Gala on October 21.



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