

Celebrating
20
Years

Faith In Practice

Life Changing Medical Mission

Padre José Contran: The Good Shepherd



Padre José Contran

The voices of the faithful echoed across the years as we entered San Francisco Church in Antigua Guatemala. Built in 1579, the church walls were lined with massive paintings of saints and soldiers. The faint smell of burning incense filled every nook. Each side chapel held flickering candles, providing quiet intimacy for those who knelt in humble prayer. Entering this church that had seen so much across the years, the earthquakes, the wars, the tears and the joy, we felt as if we were walking on holy ground. The church silently commanded a whisper.

The day before had been filled with much pomp and circumstance. Fancy clothes, ribbon cutting, news reporters and champagne. The President and First Lady of Guatemala graciously spoke, all to commemorate the miracle of the spacious operating rooms, the shiny new equipment, the human generosity which resulted in this gorgeous new operating suite at Las Obras Sociales del Santo Hermano Pedro. And, now we had come to share in a joint Catholic and Protestant worship service in this sacred place, the service, too, filled with splendor.

Then, in the midst of the regalia, a simple priest reminded us. It was not about the pomp and circumstance, not about the speeches, not about getting dressed up or any plaques placed high on walls.

The carefully orchestrated service was proceeding according to plan when a young woman wandered up the aisle. Obviously mentally ill, she stepped up onto the chancel. She stopped and touched the face of the reader and the others who were standing on their designated marks, awaiting their turn to participate on cue. She walked behind them, trailing her hand along the altar. Then she moved behind the altar to the chair reserved for the Bishop. She sat down.

One of the ministers began to read Matthew 25, one of the founding Faith In Practice scriptures. "...for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a

10 Years – 4 Stars



Charity Navigator has awarded Faith In Practice **4 Stars for TEN CONSECUTIVE YEARS!** We are so pleased at this transparency and efficiency rating not only because it shows we do everything possible to honor the donations we receive, but it also means we do everything we can to serve more as best we can.

Thank you so much for being a part of this mission in so many ways.

[See our profile on Charity Navigator.](#)

Make a Life Changing Gift



Tell Us Your Stories



Remember that:

- Special patient?
- Memorable mission trip?
- Loud snoring roommate?
- Chicken bus?
- Perfect photo?

Share your memories over the past 20 years with us! Send us your stories and photos to be part of this year's gala. Send your content today to Seth Romo at sromo@faithinpractice.org

2014 Annual Gala

stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, ... Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." As the gospel was being read, Father José Contran* silently rose and walked slowly to the Bishop's Chair. Gently, he placed his arm around the young woman, embraced her, and led her ever so lovingly to sit beside him. There she remained for the balance of the service.

We listened to the words of Matthew's gospel as we watched Padre José live those words out before our very eyes. Those of us present will never forget that moment for the rest of our lives.

To those of us who have witnessed his kindness, his gentle grace, Padre José is the good shepherd, although he would blush at the suggestion. Padre José has laid down his life for his friends, the least of these, each and every day for nearly fifty years. In his voice, in his actions, we recognize Jesus and we follow as he leads us ever closer to the Good Shepherd of us all. The simple priest who accounts himself as nothing. The simple priest who shall be exalted in heaven and in our hearts forever.

Rev. Linda L. McCarty
President & CEO

Please join us at our Gala: Steadfast Love as we honor Padre José Contran and celebrate twenty years of Faith In Practice.

**For more than 40 years, Padre José Contran has been living out the gospel in Central America. For the past twenty, he has served obediently and faithfully as Director of Las Obras, home to 300 of the abandoned and incapacitated of Guatemala and home to the extensive medical and surgical program that provides care to the poor from across all of Guatemala. Faith In Practice has journeyed beside Padre and Las Obras from the beginning and in 2006 built and equipped five state of the art operating rooms, pre and post op area and break room. Las Obras remains a strong committed partner as together we seek to serve the poor of Guatemala.*

Steadfast Love

Celebrate 20 years of hope and healing, 20 years of Faith In Practice at the 2014 Gala. Join **Dan and Lori Wolterman**, our event chairs, on October 17 as we honor **Padre José**



Contran. Come celebrate the start of another 20 years of God's work. [Purchase your tickets or table today.](#)

The Season Kicks Off



Please pray for our first teams of the season: the Maddox Surgical Team, the Providence Surgical Team, and the Kincaid Pharmacy Team. Once they are in-country, [follow their blogs.](#)

US and Guatemalan Leadership Conference



Our US and Guatemalan Volunteer Leaders are gearing up for another season of blessings holding conferences in Guatemala and the US. Please pray for them as they come together to bring hope and healing to the poor.



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