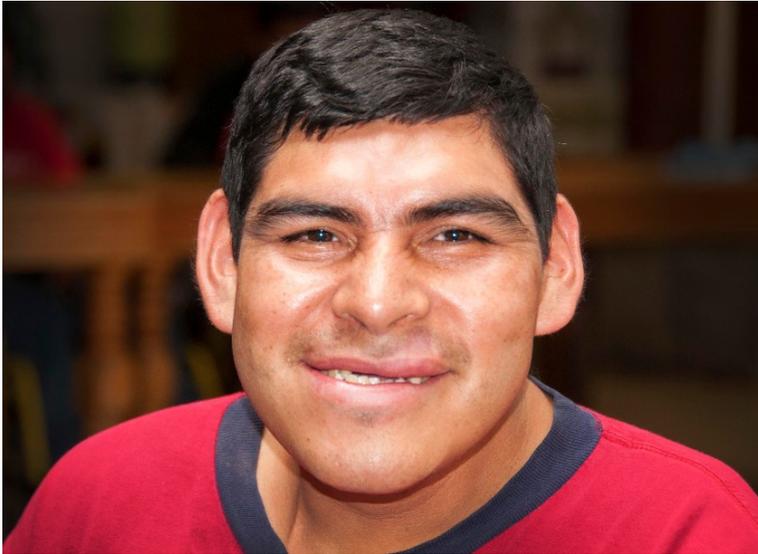


The Smallest Light



The bells were pealing and I quickened my step. It had been a busy week. Running from meeting to meeting without a moment to still my mind had been the order of the past several days. Catching my breath, I entered the little church at Las Obras in Antigua. My heart began to slow. The little chapel always seems to quiet time.

Navigating my way through the wheelchairs that held so many of the Obras residents*, all ages, varying abilities, I slid into the rough-hewn bench. Four rows ahead of me sat a young man. From where I was, I could tell he was tall. He wore a sweater that was a little too tight. By his movements, it was clear that he had significant mental deficiencies.

As I waited for the mass to begin, the young man stood and unsteadily began to shuffle backwards. Expertly holding onto the tops of each pew, he gently rocked his way backwards toward me. Arriving at the pew just before mine, he purposefully sat down. Slowly and intentionally, never turning around, he reached his arm

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Hilario Galindo:
Casa de Milagros

over the top of the pew and stretched his hand out to me. Surprised, I took his hand and felt him squeeze my fingers. Then he stood and made his way back carefully to the front of the church. Not once did he look at me. I have no idea how he knew I was there. I have no idea why he came to greet me of all the people who were gathering in the church.

In this Season of Advent, we turn to the grand and sweeping words of Isaiah. "Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low.... Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed." And, yet, is it not in the quiet, barely noticed moments where the glory of the Lord is truly revealed to us? Is it not the smallest light that pierces our Advent darkness? Is it not in the touch of a hand where we realize that even as we await the Christ Child, he is already here? Right here beside us? Immanuel, God with us? Yesterday, today, always.

In these days of Advent waiting, all of us at Faith In Practice pray for moments where you shall see the glory of the Lord revealed to you. In the Silence of Advent waiting. In the Joy of Christmas song. Or possibly in a moment when someone simply squeezes your hand.

And, in these Seasons of Advent and Christmas, may all of us give thanks for the many ways in which the glory of the Lord is revealed to us every day through the mission of Faith In Practice, this mission which is truly not our own, by rather God's blessing to us all.

All to God's honor, glory and praise.

Merry Christmas.

Rev. Linda McCarty

**Las Obras is home to nearly 300 of the abandoned and incapacitated of Guatemala. Managed by the Franciscan brothers, the Obras is also where the majority of Faith In Practice surgical teams serve. For more information about the Obras see <http://www.obrashermandopedro.org/>*



At the recent Guatemalan leadership conference, many of our leaders traveled with us to see the new exciting changes at Hilario Galindo.

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**Congratulations,
Dr. Stein**



Members of the American Academy of Pediatrics have just elected our own Dr. Fernando Stein as their president-elect.

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We Met the Goal



We met our matching goal! Thanks to you, we received **nearly \$19,000** in donations for #GivingTuesday. Thank you so much!