

INTERNATIONAL
PROJECT 1491



Cross Catholic
OUTREACH

Delivering Food, Shelter and Hope to the Poorest of the Poor

PROPOSAL

Casa de Fe

Surgery Recovery House

— Antigua, Guatemala —



Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

ROMANS 12:13



We are a Catholic ministry

that mobilizes the global Catholic Church to transform the poor and their communities materially and spiritually for the glory of Jesus Christ.

Rather than create new institutions to distribute aid, we support existing ministries and churches already serving the poor. In addition to being the most cost-effective way of helping the poor, empowering these ministries allows us to support the Church's spiritual mission and its important position of leadership in poor communities.

We consider every gift we receive as a precious resource from God. We direct every donation to its intended project, provide honest and accurate reports to our donors, and keep overhead costs to an industry low. We handle funds with utmost integrity and hold our ministry partners in the field to the same high standards by asking them to document costs and the impact of their outreach.

We invite you to join with us as we seek to transform the lives of the poor materially and spiritually — ways that please the Father and glorify him in Heaven and on earth.



Project Synopsis

Description

This project will provide impoverished hospital patients with safe lodging and meals while they prepare for and recover from surgery far away from home.

Purpose

To ensure that patients don't have to sleep on the streets — and that they can properly recover — while receiving free care.

Our Partner

Faith In Practice, an ecumenical Christian charity closely connected with the Franciscans, runs the Casa de Fe guesthouse.

Location

Antigua, Guatemala.

Cost

\$14,400 will go towards the cost of food, operational costs, a cook and care staff members for the patients staying at Casa de Fe.



Highlights

- Guatemala's public health care system is broken. The few hospitals that exist offer substandard care and are frequently closed from lack of funding.
- Thankfully, poor Guatemalans in need of surgery have a compassionate alternative: a free private hospital founded by the Franciscans.
- Faith In Practice fills critical gaps in the hospital's capacity — first, by referring and transporting patients from throughout the country; second, by ensuring free lodging and meals for the patients and their family members.
- Your support is needed to help cover costs of the Casa de Fe guesthouse, where most of the patients stay before and after surgery.
- While at Casa de Fe, the guests will receive clean beds and hot meals and have access to an onsite chapel, where staff and volunteers regularly pray for the patients.
- Please help ensure that the thousands of patients and family members coming to Antigua for surgery have a safe place to stay!

**“For I was hungry and you gave me food,
I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink,
I was a stranger and you welcomed me.”**

MATTHEW 25:35



The Need



Guatemala's hospitals are often closed or lacking vital supplies, leaving the poor with few options for medical care.

Imagine showing up for a surgery date to discover your hospital isn't open or the appropriate staff are unavailable. For the sick and injured in Guatemala, obtaining care at a public hospital can be that unpredictable — like rolling dice and hoping for doubles. There's no telling what conditions you might face or if your appointment will be honored at all.

In theory, Guatemala's public health care system gives universal access to medical procedures the poor couldn't otherwise afford, but in reality, services often fall abysmally short of that promise. A mere nine hospitals serve a population of 15 million people, and these institutions frequently close as they wait on funding for medicine, supplies and salaries.

Private care may be an option for those who have money, but that option is out of reach for the

rural subsistence farmers and city slum dwellers who struggle just to put food on the table. When their children have accidents there may literally be no place to go to treat those wounds or set bones.

Fortunately, for these needy families, Hospital Las Obras Sociales del Santo Hermano Pedro offers hope. The surgical hospital, founded by the Franciscans in the city of Antigua, can offer completely free care, and because of that, it draws patients from every corner of Guatemala. **But this hospital faces two challenges and needs our help to better meet the needs of the poor.**

First, many poor patients cannot afford to travel to the city of Antigua to receive care at Las Obras. Second, when the patients do arrive, they have no money for lodging during the pre- and post-operative phases of their treatment. Hotels in the town are simply too expensive, and the hospital is too small to provide rooms for that purpose.

As a result, when the hospital first opened, many patients resorted to sleeping in the streets. The lack of shelter, food and basic sanitation impeded their recovery — not to mention putting them at risk of theft and other harm. The hospital also realized that patients were returning home to unhealthy living conditions instead of remaining in Antigua to get the rehabilitative support they required.

In response to these serious needs, a charity with close ties to the Franciscans and a passion to preach the Gospel through works of mercy is standing in the gap — and *it is praying for the help of friends like you to achieve its critical mission.*



Ministry Description

In a peaceful, sunlit courtyard, a woman with a prosthetic leg embraces two friends, then prays with them. Tears flow.

The courtyard is a part of the Casa de Fe guesthouse, and the two friends are staff members of *Faith In Practice*, the charity that operates the home. The woman was the victim of a car accident and sought treatment at Las Obras. She now volunteers with Faith in Practice, escorting patients on their journeys to and from Antigua. The scene communicates — better than words ever could — the need for the guesthouse and the spiritual blessings it represents.

This wonderful facility — a hybrid of antique Guatemalan stonework and modern renovations — surrounds a traditional clothes-washing pool and a chapel where volunteers regularly gather to pray for the sick and injured. Physically as well as spiritually, prayer is at the center of this place.

Faith In Practice aims to manifest Christ's love by expanding and enhancing the life-giving work of the Franciscans' surgical hospital. This ecumenical Christian ministry seeks to achieve that goal by offering two critically-needed services — mobile medical outreaches and the Casa de Fe guesthouse.

Teams of volunteer doctors, each accompanied by a chaplain, go to the most destitute communities, where they provide exams and refer patients to Las Obras. The referred patients are then escorted on an expense-paid trip to Antigua.

Next, Faith In Practice makes sure each patient and an accompanying family member has a safe place to stay. For most patients, that place is the Casa de Fe guesthouse. Here, the patients are assured clean beds, healthy meals, spiritual support and the compassionate care of the guesthouse's loving staff. This is a secure, sanitary, welcoming home-away-from-home where stress is kept to a minimum so patients can be fully rehabilitated.

To keep its doors open and provide the best possible service, the guesthouse depends on the generosity of caring friends like you. **This year, your gift through Cross Catholic Outreach is needed to help cover the cost of food, operational costs, a cook and care staff members for the patients. Please join us today to give hope and healing!**



Claudia (center) became a Faith In Practice volunteer after she stayed at the guesthouse while recovering from a car accident.



Help Now!

The Casa de Fe guesthouse is the one thing standing between hospital patients being comforted in their hour of need or facing the dangerous prospect of sleeping on the streets, and that makes supporting its ministry a priority for Cross Catholic Outreach. *Its services are simply too valuable to lose!*

Because providing a safe stay for thousands of patients each year — plus the daily meals the patients need to keep up their strength through their recovery — is costly, the program can only continue with financial support from concerned Catholics like you.

Will you please empower Casa de Fe with a contribution to sponsor its services to the poor?

Your generosity will ensure that the patients and their families are well cared for during their stay in Antigua. The meals and clean beds the patients receive at the Casa de Fe guesthouse are absolutely critical to their safe and complete rehabilitation. But that's not all. The guesthouse is so much more than just a place to stay. It is a spiritual refuge and an expression of Christ's compassion for poor and vulnerable. It is a sanctuary, soaked in the prayers of the incredible staff and volunteers who have committed their lives to putting the Gospel message into action.

Christ has called his Church to bring healing and hope to the sick, the lame and the hurting. Please join with us today to live out that calling among Guatemala's poor. Your compassionate intervention will relieve suffering and save lives!

Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.

GALATIANS 6:2

Our Promise to You!

Donations from this campaign will be used to cover any expenditures for this project incurred through June 30, 2021, the close of our ministry's fiscal year. In the event that more funds are raised than needed to fully fund the project, the excess funds, if any, will be used to meet the most urgent needs of the ministry.

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