



December 24, 2021 Report from Oblate Youth Ministry in Tijuana.

A few months ago, we took our medical team to visit a senior care facility. We had been



there before and had been doctoring the leg of Antonio. Karla, our 5th year medical student, felt it was time to have it evaluated for surgery, since we were unable to get the skin to heal over an exposed metal plate in his leg. She arranged to have a clinic, where she volunteers, schedule an appointment, including the operating room, in case surgery was required.

Antonio is 74 years old and has been in the senior care facility for 10 years. He ended up there after a car accident, where he lost an arm and had with a metal plate implanted in his leg. After being treated in the hospital, and not having anyone to care for him, the hospital sent him to this senior care facility, which cares for indigent cases. Antonio said that he used to own and operate a mechanic shop, but after the accident, realizing he would never work again, gave it to his friend, an employee.

While Karla was able to obtain substantial discounts from the clinic and the surgeons, we got a donation from Maximum Impact to cover remaining expenses. This group has made possible several expenditures when we have needed more expensive things like an electric wheelchair, hospital bed, or operation. Karla assisted in the operation and the operation was successful, replacing the metal plate and not having to amputate.

We asked one of our 24-year-old seminarians, who lives near the hospital with the other seminarians if he would bring food to Antonio for 2 days. He jumped on the opportunity saying that his service this semester was to the elderly. Also, Alvero came the day of the surgery and gave Antonio a bath. He was great, scrubbing Antonio as if Antonio was going to be doing the surgery, all the while visiting with him and sharing laughs. The entire adventure was a nice Christmas gift for Antonio, Alvero, and for us. Perhaps with some therapy, Antonio will be able to walk again.



A postscript to the story is that we had to stop at Karla's grandmother's to process three ducks as partial payment to the surgeon and staff. Even though we were treated to pozole, it took 2 hours to defeather those wretched creatures. Maybe there is a pillow or some pens in it for someone.

As has become a tradition here, the youth gathered to create an event to help people on



Christmas Day. A team of 10 young adults ventured to a senior center where 40 clients reside. Having noticed in past visits that the walls were getting dingy, dirty, scratched, and stained, it was decided the main task would be to paint making things brighter and cleaner.

Some of clients could not get out of bed, so their beds were moved, but with respect and kindness. Since it was Christmas, the group bought some sweet breads for people to enjoy while the group was painting.



The group included some medical students, so they helped by cleaning wounds and administering medicines. Others were busy cutting nails and giving shaves. And the prize goes to those who cleaned the bathrooms.

When asked why we went on Christmas Day instead of spending the day with our families we explained

that they are our family. All wished there was not a pandemic, and more hugs could have been given, but certainly smiles and love were shared.

