

## **A Name Is Enough: A Reflection on the Guatemalan Prayer Partners Program**

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“Is this all?”

That was my question when I picked up the photo of Juan Gonzalez of Guatemala’s Mam ethnic group who is my assigned partner in NPC’s new Prayer Partners program.

Where was the bio? The bullet points giving Juan’s vital statistics? How, I wondered, can I pray for someone I know nothing about?

The same would be true for him, wouldn’t it? He knows that I go to church with Dottie and Stan Foster, who started the Prayer Partners program along with NPC’s Outreach Committee. Doesn’t he need more information to be able to pray for me?

I placed Juan’s photo on the bookshelf in my office. I said a prayer for him. God bless him and keep him. God answer his prayers. Oh, and thank you, God, for this stranger thousands of miles away who wants to pray for me.

As often happens, prayer turned on a light. It occurred to me that my questions were typical of a privileged white guy in America in 2016. We expect a package of information to come with everything. If not a handsomely produced DVD in a jewel case complete with photos, then at least a LinkedIn profile, a resume, a Facebook page.

Millions of people around the world—people like Juan Gonzalez—get by every day without the information that inundates us—our senses, our spirits—every waking minute. We can live without it. We can pray without it. It’s even possible to connect to another human being without it.

I know in time I will learn more about Juan. I will ask Dottie and Stan about him, and they will share stories. I might even meet him on next year’s mission trip. But no hurry. I’ve grown to like the idea that all I have is his name and photo, and that that is all he has of me. We are two of God’s children sharing God’s love, and that is enough.

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