

For Mom’s angel.

Lazara Ortega was unlike anyone I have ever known. She came into our lives shortly after my grandfather passed away in 1992 when, through a friend of a friend, she was put in touch with us about renting my grandfather’s apartment, which connected to our house. Instantly, we took a liking to her. It was impossible not to. She had a kind and noble disposition.

Lazara came from Cuba many years ago and the closest she had to family was the people she worked for. She was no stranger to hard work. In fact, that’s all she did her entire life, work hard. Always for others. Cleaning, cooking (boy could she cook!), babysitting, etc. With barely a second grade level education, she relied mostly on strength, experience and wisdom to tackle everything in life. As admirable as that was, what impressed me most about Lazara was her no-matter-what unwavering faith. It was worthy of envy. God in her lips all the time, no matter the circumstances. In her early 90’s she’d still walk to church daily for morning Mass, rain or shine – – that worthy of envy.

She adored Lauren and Danny and often, even after a long day’s work, would cook a meal for them and either send it with Mom or show up at our doorstep, pots in hand. Just the other day on the phone she said to me, “*Les voy hacer una comidita*.” I’m going to make them a little meal. Never mind she no longer had the strength or health to do that, she had the will.

Through the years, she and Mom became very close. They looked in on each other, had their afternoon *cafecito* together, shared stories, treated each other’s ailments, and celebrated milestones together. Mom would tell everyone Lazara was her angel. “Ella es mi angelito negro,” she would say.

Today, I’m posting about Lazara in remembrance of her life and the legacy of humility, strength and faith she leaves behind. She left this world a few days ago as the saying goes, “Con los zapatos bien puestos.” With her shoes firmly on. A warrior. She was 96 when the Lord summoned her. I am sure in a “Beam me up, Scotty” sort of way. Heaven did not have

to wait long for that soul to reach it. Not a woman like her.

For Mom's angel, and ours, I am thankful. Rest in Peace, Lazarita. You will always hold a special place in our hearts.

Do you have an angel here on Earth? And what are you thankful for today?

Until next Thursday's post…si Dios quiere.

"…and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace."
-Ephesians 6:15

"Truly I tell you, wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her."
–Matthew 26:13



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