

ONE FOR THE TOOTH ANGEL

Each morning in the last six days, young Steven Hernandez Velis would ask “are they coming today?” narrates his mum, Arcelia Hernandez. Steven was having sleepless nights over the painful tooth. Eventually the day came and the medical team of the Episcopal Church of El Salvador arrived in his community, Izalco. Steven was seen first in line on the day, and within a few minutes, the troublesome tooth was out and at last Steven could smile again. Dentist Roberto Flores, packed the removed tooth nicely in a zip bag for Steven to “save it for the tooth angel, so his tooth could grow back again”. Dr. Daniella Flamenco, the program manager explains that “In El Salvador dental care is very expensive, and most community members don’t even have access. At the beginning of the program, we were seeing mostly adults, but now we can see children with mild problems, like caries. Our dental services include cleanings, fillings, restorations, extractions, topical fluoride.”

Izalco is one of about 60 communities being served by the Episcopal Church of El Salvador’s integrated Health project with support from Episcopal Relief & Development. Clinics are run from seven central points which are visited once every ten days.

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