

A profile of Rafael

Rafael and his wife Vivian scheduled a vacation to Orlando for the beginning of March 2015. All was set, plane, hotel, rental car and a projected warm weather for the week in Florida.

On the second week of January their great family Doctor Dr. Lord, calls Rafael for his annual checkup and medications review. They say yes and thought what a great opportunity and good timing to update the medications before the trip.

After all the medical test results came back with great results and all the medications were in order, they were ready to GO!!! While conducting the final records review Dr. Lord found that Rafael did not have the nuclear stress test that he ordered last year when he complained of a strange tingling sensation in his left shoulder while walking their dog with his wife for any distance from one to four miles. The sensation dissipates after a minute or so at the beginning of the walk and did not bother more until the next walk. Dr. Lord recommended Rafael take the nuclear stress test, since he was feeling great, it will be done soon and in time to enjoy the trip. That decision saved Rafael life.

Rafael went for the test the following Tuesday and did not pass the test, a day later he went to the cardiologist for a catheterization were they inserted a stent to open one of his blocked arteries but he found that he needed more than that and referred him to a surgeon. On the following Tuesday, February 17, he was admitted in St. Joseph Health Center in St. Charles, where surgeons performed a quintuple bypass. Oh what a day, GOD gave him another chance.

While he recovered at St. Joseph, Rafael received a visit from members of the local Mended Hearts Chapter. Mended Hearts members who survived heart procedures visit other recovering heart patients in hospitals, giving them encouragement and answering questions about the recovery process. Rafael's wife's comments were that this visit was great for the patients but is more comforting for the spouses that have a million questions, fears and need the hope of knowing that there is life after the surgery and to resume a normal life together again. The only opinions that we the spouses want to hear are from people that went through that experience before and are living the new life successfully.