



“Miracles Here in Your Hometown”

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In Luke 4, Jesus returns to his hometown of Nazareth and proclaims his mission using the oft-quoted words of the prophet Isaiah: “The Spirit of the LORD is upon me, ...to bring Good News to the poor...to proclaim that captives will be released, ...the blind will see, ...the oppressed will be set free, and ...the time of the LORD’s favor has come” (NLT).

But what follows is a challenge from those present (my paraphrase): “Isn’t he the kid from down the street? What does he know about healing people?” And Jesus responds with another iconic quote: “You will undoubtedly quote me this proverb: ‘Physician, heal yourself’—meaning, ‘Do miracles here in your hometown like those you did in Capernaum...’ (Luke 4:23 NLT).

For me, Alicia Rodriguez Dávila de Jesús, and my mom, Luz Zenaida, our mission in building the *Garden of Eden Health Resort* in our central mountain hometown of Jayuya, Puerto Rico, is in many ways similar to Jesus’. After a successful career in healthcare in Central Florida, I am returning home to see if “miracles” can be performed there, too. Fortunately, I have received more support than Jesus did, with partners such as Hope Clinical Research. The dream for this homecoming begins with the story of my mother.

The daughter of Don Alejandro “Leo” Dávila—farmer, businessman, and well respected leader in the community, who came to Christ at a later age in life—Luz Zenaida also became well known in the community as a seamstress and school cafeteria manager. But more than this, like Jesus, she too was a healer. At night, Luz Zenaida often received many guests who sought basic medical assistance and first aid. Her home became well known as “Casa Mama Luz.”

When Don Alejandro passed on, he left the inheritance of these 33 acres to seven of his children with the stipulation that the land remain within the family and be used to further develop and serve the community. Together, the seven children have formed the Dávila-De Jesús Foundation and have put the property under my management, his granddaughter. After working for many years at the Florida Hospital in Kissimmee, I am returning to my roots—and with the support of my uncles, aunts, and mom—rebuilding the legacy of “Casa Mama Luz” by creating a healthcare facility for the rural community and small town of Jayuya.

This project is set to be developed in stages—first, a local clinic for the poor, local, rural families and a ministry of healthcare education using the Florida Hospital’s “Creation Health” curriculum, and later expanding the facilities to provide rehabilitative services for the elderly and others who need to be nursed back to health. This project will also provide many jobs and opportunities for the local economy as well.



With the support of the Disciples NBA Incubate Initiative and others, Lord willing, the *Garden of Eden Health Resort* will be a more successful homecoming for the Dávila family than it was for Jesus, yet staying true to His vision for restorative ministry. For more information, go to www.GardenofEdenHealthResort.com.

*The NBA incubates new ministries, supporting social entrepreneurs of faith who are serving their communities in a variety of innovative ways and empowering these Disciples-led health and social service projects to focus on growth, impact, and sustainability. Learn more at **nbacares.org/incubate** or by contacting Rev. Ayanna Johnson Watkins, Director of the NBA Incubate Initiative, at **awatkins@nbacares.org**.*