



“CHARITY IS GIVING UP
YOUR TORTILLA, HONEY, WHEN
IT’S THE ONLY ONE.”

“IT IS A PRIVILEGE TO WORK WITH THE POOR because they have no facade. They only have their faith.”

Lydia Hernandez runs Manos de Cristo. It is a place where the poor in the Mexican community can come for help for clothes, for food, for medicine, for love. Lydia knows about love. And she knows about the plight of the poor.

“I think that the real purpose of Manos de Cristo is to live with and among the poor so we can experience Christ among us. While it is for us to reach out to those who don’t have, it is as much for those who don’t have to reach out to us.

“We were so poor when I was a kid, and my dad would always be bringing people home to share our dinner. I remember there would sometimes be only enough dough that my mother could only make one tortilla apiece for us, and we would hide our tortillas under our plates. My dad would pray, ‘Heavenly Father, we are so grateful to You for everything You give us, everything that is hot and tasty and good. And, God, I just give You thanks because I know that there is somebody at this table who, out of the generosity of their heart, is going to be sharing with this man that I have brought home. Thank You, Jesus. Amen.’ We’d be pinching each other like, who is going to give up their tortilla? My dad’s praying and we’re fighting about it. So charity is giving up your tortilla, honey, when it’s the only one.

“It’s a big step just to acknowledge that there is something greater than all of us looking out for all of us. That is the common ground of all religions.”

LYDIA HERNANDEZ *Presbyterian. Angel. Texan.*