

# **Jacky Centrella: ‘I wanted to do something to serve God with my career’**

July 8, 2020

Jacky Centrella, a member of Calvary Baptist Church in McAllen, is a registered nurse in the labor and delivery unit of McAllen Medical Center. From deep in the heart of one Texan, Centrella shares her background and thoughts on being a follower of Christ in healthcare. To suggest a Texas Baptist leader in the marketplace to be featured in this column, or to apply to be featured yourself, [click here](#).

## **Background**

### **Where else have you served in healthcare, and what were your positions there?**

I was a registered nurse at Edinburg Children’s Hospital for the pediatric medical and surgical unit.

I have served on mission trips with the Baptist Student Ministry at the University of Texas, Rio Grande Valley as the nurse and leader for the mission team, along with my husband.

### **Where did you grow up?**

Edinburg, Texas.

### **How did you come to faith in Christ?**

At a summer retreat in 2013. I attended church my entire life, but I did not

have a true relationship with the Lord until that summer.

## **Where were you educated, and what degrees did you receive?**

South Texas College, associate's degree in applied science.

I need one more course to complete my bachelor of science degree in nursing from the University of Texas, El Paso.

## **About life in healthcare**

### **Why do you feel called into healthcare?**

Because I always have wanted to help people, and my long-term goal is to go on missions overseas, along with my husband and child, and use my medical experience to share the gospel.

Since I was a little girl, I loved helping people. I wanted to do something to serve God with my career. He confirmed my call then and still is confirming it now during this pandemic.

God has really stretched me and allowed me to have the opportunity to share the gospel with many as I care for women giving birth at this time.

### **How does being a Christian influence your decisions in healthcare?**

It makes me realize I am a living testimony and witness to the ones around me.

Everything we do or say reflects who we are. I try my best to be Christ-centered in stressful situations. I remind myself I should be God's hands and feet.

## **What is your favorite aspect of healthcare? Why?**

I get to be involved with a stranger who has placed his or her life in my hands. It is an honor and a privilege.

## **What one aspect of healthcare gives you the greatest joy?**

I get to see a mother's cry of joy for the first time when she holds her newborn child.

## **What one aspect of healthcare would you like to change?**

I wish people wouldn't have to meet such high deductibles to get checked at a clinic.

## **What is the impact of healthcare on your family?**

During COVID-19, it has been a bit of a rough patch. I was quarantined away from my husband and child a few weeks ago for almost two weeks, because I was exposed to COVID-19 and had to be tested. Testing took five days for results. My husband and I feel this is where God has placed us at this time, and this is God's ministry.

## **About Jacky**

### **Why are you Baptist?**

I was raised in a Baptist church with my mother and felt as if every member was my family. I still do. I believe Baptist teachings accurately reflect Scripture.

## **What is your favorite Bible verse or passage? Why?**

“I will never leave you nor forsake you” (Hebrews 13:5). It reminds me I am God’s child, and that he keeps his promises, including this one.

Every time I feel burdened or tired, or simply wondering what God’s plan is, I come back to this verse.

## **Who is your favorite person in the Bible, other than Jesus? Why?**

Peter, because he rejected knowing Jesus and repented. His character changed, and he became courageous, even to the point of being martyred for his King.

## **Given the current status of the pandemic, how would you counsel Christians to be faithful followers of Christ during these days?**

Continue having devotional time.

Prayer is key in surviving our 14-hour shifts.

This is the time to be God’s hands and feet. May his will be done with my life. I am his. If he wants me to continue being his hands and feet, he will allow me to do so.

To those nurses serving: Don’t give up. Finish the race. God is greater than the evil one or anything else in this world. Our most effective personal protective equipment is the armor of Christ described in Ephesians 6. I have seen miracles and his grace through this time.