



TASH TIMES

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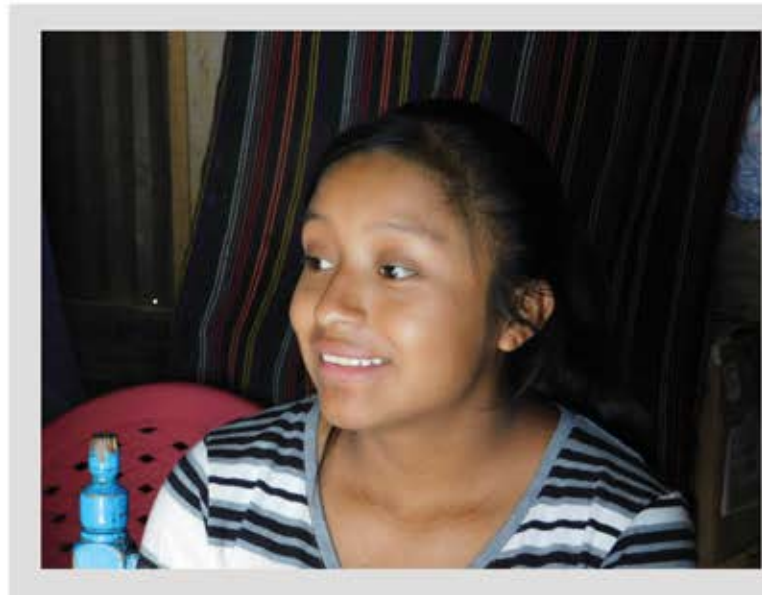
■ GREETINGS

Dear Friends,

Fr. Scott wanted me to let you know that he is in Florida in February, but we can expect a TASH Times contribution from him in the next newsletter. In the meantime, I'd like to share with you a reflection and update on the work at TASH. Many of you may be familiar with the starfish anecdote. It goes more or less, like this:

A young girl was walking along a beach upon which thousands of starfish had washed up during a terrible storm. As she came to each starfish, she would gently pick it up and throw it back into the ocean. People watched her with amusement. She had been doing this for some time when a man approached her and said, "Little girl, why are you doing this? Look at this beach! You can't save all these starfish. You can't begin to make a difference!"

The girl seemed momentarily crushed, suddenly deflated. But after a few moments, she bent down, picked up another starfish, and tossed it into the ocean. Then she looked up at the man and replied, "Well, I made a difference to that one!" The man looked at the girl inquisitively and thought for a long moment. Inspired, he joined the little girl in throwing starfish back into the sea.



I went on my first mission trip to Haiti back in 1989. Since then I have spent twenty of the last thirty years in Latin America working in the development field. Often, I have seen the most success coming from the "little people" who are throwing back starfishes into the ocean, and inspiring others to do the same. At TASH, I am humbled to have the opportunity to support those working on-the-ground at La Clinica and the partner organizations; and this would not be possible without your generosity. I would encourage all of us to continue to be inspired to make the world a better place.

Sincerely,

Pete Noll
Executive Director, TASH Inc.

SERVANT LEADERSHIP by Pete Noll

What comes to mind when you hear the word empathy? Empathy is a key practice for the servant leader. It entails that we truly feel the emotions of the other person and do so without judgment and criticism. Empathy begins with intentional listening – truly being present in the moment with someone and listening with your whole self. Listening not only with your ears but also with your heart. Slowing down to feel what they are saying and intuit the meaning between the words. For some, it comes easier than others. But we can all get better at it.



One of many families we met at La Clínica del Pueblo on a recent visit

In today's accelerated and competitive world, practicing empathy can feel conflicted with not being efficient, as it is likely that you need to invest more time. But we need to be careful there, as in the long-term, empathy should translate into authentic and deeper connections with the people you are seeking to lead.

I find that practicing empathy is particularly true when I encounter people from very different walks of life both in the United States and overseas. It has allowed me to recognize and accept people for their uniqueness and understand their point of view. Once we are on even footing, we can best complement each other.

STRATEGIC INVESTMENT and TRANSPARENCY

During Fr. Scott's 2016 visit to Oaxaca, he went to La Clinica. Much to his surprise he saw a friar in a Capuchin brown robe in the waiting room. It was a Capuchin Friar, Justino Sanchez. He had come to meet with Fr. Scott. They spoke briefly. As is his gift, Fr. Scott invited Justino to contact him about his project. A month later, TASH sent down money to support a medical team in the Mixteca. Over the past three years, we have been very impressed with their progress and transparency.



The renovated parish medical clinic will serve many rural families in the Mixteca region of Oaxaca

In January of 2020, Justino submitted a grant that would allow them to add two much needed specialties: cardiology and ophthalmology to their parish clinic. They work six hours from Oaxaca city, so having the services nearby will allow them to give timely attention to those in need. The TASH Board approved the grant and sent the funds in February.

In addition, we recently sent down resources to support subsidized medical care to more than 250 families in Oaxaca, like the story you can read on the next page.

WITNESS to OAXACA

On Friday, February 21, together with La Clínica's social worker, I visited a young woman who had recently given birth to her son. I was intrigued by the story, as she seemed to have overcome multiple challenges. I suspected that she and her mom might be sad or distraught. Dulce (translated to sweet or sweetness) described her childhood as happy, saying "my parents were always on the lookout for me." This even though her father had been in an auto accident and was paralyzed from the waist down. He passed away several years ago owing to organ failures. Her mother made and sold tortillas for a living. When we asked about her schooling, she proudly shared that she did quite well, rarely getting anything less than 9 & 10s. But then the economic pressures got too big and she had to drop out to find a job.

She said she had a good boss, although ironically, she was working from 8 to 6 pm Monday through Sunday, with every other Sunday off. In order to make an extra \$10 per week, she skipped her lunch break. There at work, she met and dated a boyfriend. One year later, at age 17, she became pregnant. Her boyfriend abandoned her and many of her family refused to speak with her.

Then late in her pregnancy, she felt that something wasn't right. She went to a local health clinic, only to be told that she needed to endure. Still determined, she made it to La Clínica del Pueblo. The gynecologist who was on call detected that she had barely any liquid in the womb and they had to perform an emergency cesarean. The surgery was successful.

In Oaxaca, they often don't name their children until a certain amount of time passes. But I was curious and asked Dulce. With a glowing smile, she said, "Yes, his name is José Valentín." She added, "He was born on Valentine's Day". Her mom chimed in excitedly, "And was the only baby born that day in La Clínica." They also shared that her relatives were no longer angry and had come by to visit them the day after the baby was born.

While one might have imagined a scenario that she could have continued in school or had her first child with a committed partner, I was amazed by the answer she gave to one of our final questions. The social worker asked, "and what additional needs do you now have?" She answered, "adaptarnos" or adapt our lives to best love and take care of my son. As we left, they shared a heartfelt, "*Dios les bendiga*" (God Bless You) to you and people who support TASH and La Clínica." I will never forget this incredibly humbling experience and vivid example of the young child's starfish comment: "Well, I made a difference to that one!"



HUMOR



Q: What does the Easter Bunny order at a Chinese Restaurant?

A: Hop Suey!

Q: Who delivers Easter treats to all the fish in the sea?

A: The Oyster Bunny!

Q: Did you hear the one about the fifty-pound jellybean?

A: It's pretty hard to swallow!

UPCOMING EVENTS

2020 Ole 5k Benefit Race: With a month to go, we have over 200 racers registered and 16 sponsors. Don't miss out! Register before April 4 for \$25. On race day, the race fee increases to \$30. Please visit: www.ole5k.com or www.tashinc.org/ole5k.

This year we are planning a pre-race packet pick-up on April 3.

The location: Pro Bike and Run at North Park, 9999 Kummer Rd, Allison Park, PA 15101

Friday 4-8pm

We also are going to expand the visibility of our sponsor businesses, families, and individuals. If you are interested, please fill out the form online or contact me: pete.noll@tashinc.org

WE'RE ONLINE! @tashincorg

Do you follow social media? Connect with us on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter - @TASHIncOrg - for updates on our work in Oaxaca, Mexico.

**If you would like to make a donation to support the mission in Oaxaca,
we would truly appreciate it.**

**Please make a check out to TASH, Inc. and use the donation envelope included
or you can make a secure donation online at www.tashinc.org.**