



TASH TIMES

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■ GREETINGS

Dear Friends,

Do you know the story of “**The Other Wise Man**”? It is a short novel by Henry van Dyke. It was initially published in 1895 and has been reprinted many times since. It has been made into movies and television programs. It tells the story of the “fourth” wise man, a priest of the Magi named Artaban, who sees signs in the heavens that a new king has been born to the Jews. On his way to join the other Magi, he stops to help a man who is dying and arrives too late to join them. The rest of the story describes how Artaban spends his life trying to find this king. During his many years of searching, he helps people who are in great trouble. In helping them, he gives all his precious stones away that were meant for the king. Finally, he arrives in Jerusalem while Jesus is being crucified. He doesn’t get to see Jesus because he helps a woman being sold into slavery. Then he is struck on the head by a falling roof tile. As he lays dying, he hears a voice tell him that what he did to the poor and needy he did to Jesus. He dies peacefully knowing that he DID get to see the King.



I share this story with you because what really counts with Jesus is the way we treat people who have fallen on difficult times. Jesus makes this point very powerfully in His description of the Last Judgment. My first two visits to Oaxaca, Mexico were during the Thanksgiving weekends of 1998 and 1999. I was deeply moved by the poverty there. On my way home I spent time thanking God for the blessings of my life. I also asked God to help me find benefactors who were willing to give money to build a clinic for the poor and sick in Oaxaca. God answered my prayer and many people came forward to make my dream come true.

Every time I decided to extend the outreach of TASH, I made my decision knowing that all things are possible with God. Many times I had to convince the leaders at the hospital, and the other organizations I wanted to help, that God was with us. I was never wrong. I reminded people that Jesus fed 5,000 people with five loaves and two fishes. I knew that if God wanted TASH to be successful, He would supply the resources we needed. When there was a temporary setback, I reminded everyone of the words of St. Paul: “We walk by faith and not by sight.”

This Christmas Season I am reminded of the “Other Wise Man” story. Despite the challenges of the Coronavirus, The Anna Seethaler Hospital is still helping the people who come for assistance. Keeping the hospital open twenty-four hours a day is slowly depleting the hospital’s savings. I believe that God is calling our Board of Directors to become other Artabans. We have accepted God’s call. **Please join our Magi club by sending a Christmas gift for the poor and sick of Oaxaca.**

God bless you!
Father Scott

SERVANT LEADERSHIP by Pete Noll

We have heard many times that 2020 is a reference to one thing or another. For me, it has reinforced the essence of servant leadership. In the past several months, thanks to TASH, I have been a part of a start-up project to serve hot meals to those suffering from hunger. I also witnessed the Capuchins in Mexico (see “Witness to Oaxaca” below) in full force in the Mixteca. I felt the support of all the volunteers and sponsors who rallied behind the 12th annual Ole 5k. And of course, I have seen firsthand the Clínica staff keep the Anna Seethaler Hospital open 24 hours, 7 days a week.

We must acknowledge that, during these unprecedented times, what makes this servant leadership more extraordinary is that there was an extra level of sacrifice and responsibility to assure that we were looking out for our fellow brothers and sisters. What if I got sick and brought the virus back to my family? What if I was asymptomatic and passed it on to a person who then fell severely ill? When we work with people in vulnerable conditions, we know that they are disproportionately affected in difficult times. Thus, servant leaders have a unique call or duty to reach out to those less fortunate, even under increased risk and exposure.

Personally, I am grateful for all the front-line workers, who have always done the work, putting others and humanity first. And then in a global pandemic, they went even further. I do hope that those who practice servant leadership also find time for rest and care of their immediate loved ones and themselves, something often overlooked. We all need security and peace, even if only for moments. While 2020 was unlike any year we’ve known before, we know that we will always have suffering and injustice in the earthly world we live in. Together, and by practicing servant leadership, we can do our small part to make 2021 a better world.



WITNESS TO OAXACA by Pete Noll



Since the start of the pandemic, confirmed COVID-19 cases have reached 20,000 with 1,600 attributed deaths in the state of Oaxaca. Despite the challenges, the projects that we support have adapted and forged on. In this edition of Witness to Oaxaca, I wanted to share with you a special testimony from a remarkable TASH partner, Sercade. I had the privilege to visit the project on October 1 and 2. Sercade-Mexico, a Franciscan Capuchin service organization reached out to TASH with what they imagined would require a miracle. Could we support them to build their own medical dispensary on-site in Chalcatongo? Thanks to the overwhelming generosity of all of you, the Board of Directors approved 100% of their request that would cover 40% of the total project cost. Sercade then set out to secure the difference with local and international donations.

As TASH's Director, on-the-ground in Oaxaca, I had played witness to this type of additional help before, with TASH willing to go the extra mile to meet emergent and extraordinary needs. And I can tell you that after traveling seven hours on rain-affected curvy and bumpy roads, going the extra mile is saying something! However, it *valió la pena y mucho* (was worth every bit of effort). Sercade serves 40 rural villages in the Mixteca region of Oaxaca. The Mixtecos are often considered one of the most economically-deprived, yet most resourceful people. Sercade operates health, education, and cultural programs where few people would go. The organization is led by an amazing young man, Friar Justino (pictured in the red vest on the prior page), who has been in Chalcatongo for the past four years. He shared with me, "I should wear my brown robe, even to bed. But I must run around and climb stairs, and my habit limits me from that standpoint." Having known him for over three years, I can testify that he is a human Energizer Bunny.

On to the inauguration event, where they normally would have celebrated with more than 1,000 villagers who will benefit from this project but was limited due to health and safety protocols. Still, it was a wonderful celebration and, more importantly, it signaled that Sercade will be able to add eyecare and cardiology specialty projects to their general medical and dental practice.

During the festivities, I was blown away by the musical interpretation of a young girl who sang a popular Mixteca song. Sercade has recognized the cultural identity of the people and how that can reinforce their ministry and service projects.

In conclusion, I want to recognize Fr. Scott's vision for seeing need beyond borders. It started and continues with La Clínica del Pueblo on the outskirts of Oaxaca City, but has extended into the villages in the Mixteca, Mixe and Sierra Juarez regions of Mexico. It truly is Health and Humanity without Borders. With your support, we will continue to go the extra mile to carry out our mission, in service of our brothers and sisters.



"Hoy es un día de mucha alegría, mucha fe, caridad y más que nada, gratitud con Dios por permitirnos servir con esta gente tan bella."
— Fr. Justino

"Today is a day of much joy, faith, charity and more than anything, gratitude with God for allowing us to serve these beautiful people."
— Fr. Justino

UPCOMING EVENTS & UPDATES



2020 Ole 5k Benefit Race: Despite having to navigate through the uncertainty of planning a large group event during a pandemic and weather dipping below 40 degrees, we are pleased to announce we pulled off another successful Ole 5K race. This was the 12th edition, and it would not have been possible without the incredible support of the sponsors, vendors, volunteers, and 475 participants, so **thank you!** Together, we were able to raise over \$30,000 to support the work in Oaxaca, Mexico. We have reserved the same venue for next year, Saturday, October 2, so please mark your calendars!



Photos courtesy of Brian Apel / BA Photography

Planned Giving: A gift to TASH improves lives. Behind every patient treated are loyal supporters, like you, who make their care possible. Every time an individual enters La Clinica, receives affordable and quality attention, or needs emergency care, your generosity is felt and remembered. In addition to supporting the mission of TASH, a planned gift can provide substantial tax advantages, especially on gifts of stocks and real estate.

To learn more, please visit our website: www.tashinc.org/donate/planned-giving/ or contact us at 412-219-9099.

Please remember that **your year-end donations up to December 31, 2020, are tax-deductible.** We will send your tax receipt in the first quarter of 2021. If you need it beforehand, please don't hesitate to contact us.




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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.