



# TASH TIMES

Vol 18 – November/December 2021. Oaxaca, Mexico.

www.tashinc.org

## GREETINGS

Dear Friends:

Every generation has its own taste in music. My favorite songs are the love songs from the 50s and 60s. Here are some of the words: “What the world needs now is love sweet love.” “Some people want to fill the world with silly love songs.” “Love me tender, love me true” “Love is a Many Splendored Thing.”

Thanksgiving and Christmas invite us to love. St. Paul wrote: “In the end there are three things that last, faith, hope and love, and the greatest of these is love.” One of my favorite religious songs that I pick when I am the celebrant at Mass has these words: “The love I have for You my God is only a shadow of Your love for me.” At the risk of being called simplistic I believe that love is the answer to all human problems. It is love that took me to Oaxaca in 1998.

My first visit was a real eye opener. Dust from the dry roads, dirt streets two miles from the Capitol, street vendors, people wanting to wash the front window of your car while waiting at a red light, 10-year-old boys walking around with their shoeshine kits looking for customers.



*Devoted medical team at La Clínica.*

I wanted to help these people and when I prayed to make the right decision, God directed me to the poor and sick. The Anna Seethaler Clinic/Hospital will turn 22 the first day of January. As the years passed, I was dumbfounded by the way it kept growing because of your generosity. It will always be my first love. It is the flagship of my ministry in Oaxaca.

I read once that “love is like five loaves and two fish. You never think you have enough until you start giving it away.” As your generous gifts have allowed me to help the poor and sick, they have also helped me care for people who suffer from other forms of poverty. In the next article, Dr. Charley Gates, the President of our Board, writes about how TASH has expanded our work to other poor people in Oaxaca. As busy as Dr. Gates is, he finds time to work closely

with Pete Noll, our Executive Director, to further the work of the ministries that TASH is supporting. I am grateful to Charley and Pete for their hard work. It is a great consolation to me as I grow older.

Daily I pray for you. May the blessings of Thanksgiving and Christmas be with you and your families!

Fr. Scott

## TASH's Impact on Children, by Dr. Charley Gates, President of the TASH Board

Children are precious. Their innocence is practically divine, and their potential is tremendous, yet they are at the mercy of the situation into which they are born. In Oaxaca, many children are born into extreme situations. The TASH Board feels strongly that targeted, impactful intervention in a young person's life can favorably and forever change the trajectory of that child's life. One example of this type of intervention is the scholarship partnership that TASH launched last year. Through two partner organizations, TASH supports 25 students from low-income families who otherwise could not afford to continue their education. The scholarship program is comprehensive and covers ancillary expenses, like transportation and food, as well as appropriate follow-up with the student to ensure scholastic success.

I would like to introduce you to one of TASH's scholarship winners: Roxana Lopez. Roxana is 18 years old and lives with her parents and two younger brothers in a one-room home in the outskirts of Oaxaca. Their living conditions are stark, but Roxana has a burning desire for self-improvement and a better future for herself and for her family.

At the age of three months, Roxana was diagnosed with bilateral retinoblastoma (a rare and aggressive cancer of the eye). After four years of intermittent chemotherapy and multiple surgeries, doctors were able to cure the cancer, but Roxana lost vision in both eyes. As a blind child from a family with limited resources, Roxana faced many challenges. It was difficult to make friends. Roxana was not admitted to grade school as the teachers did not know how to teach a blind student. Roxana considered herself a burden to her family.

Fortunately, Roxana found a mentor who believed in her and saw her great potential. This mentor taught Roxana many things including Braille. Roxana used this tactile reading and writing system to begin her education. When she demonstrated her ability in Braille to administrators, Roxana gained entrance into the public school system. Roxana studied hard and performed well. However, her education hit a brick wall upon graduation from high school because she lacked the resources necessary to continue.

TASH intervened to support her with a scholarship to continue her studies. Roxana currently is attending university and is majoring in psychology. She plans to harness her own extraordinary experiences to help others overcome adversity, enhance their well-being, and maximize their potential. With Roxana's perseverance, her chances for post-graduation employment are excellent. We are proud of Roxana, and we will continue to support her to achieve her dream.



*Roxana full smiles with her father.*



*La Clínica's outreach to families and children.*

In addition to education, quality health care is also a critical part of a child's life. At **La Clínica del Pueblo**, the heart and soul of TASH's efforts in Oaxaca, children and their families receive expert care in obstetrics, pediatrics, nutrition, and psychology services at a reduced cost. Though not officially designated a children's hospital, many children come through La Clínica's doors each month and receive quality and compassionate care.

TASH has actively sought out other organizations that focus on children and youth. Here is a summary of three of these organizations:

**Canica:** Canica provides nutritional support, tutoring, and educational activities to the children of street vendors.

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Without Canica's support, these children would be exposed to the dangers and temptations of life on the street.

**The School of Music:** TASH has funded the construction of buildings that house the School of Music at Santa Cecelia parish which is located adjacent to the municipal garbage dump. There, at the School of Music, these children receive formal training in classical music and have formed a symphony. It is breathtaking to hear these children play their music.

**Simply Smiles Orphanage:** TASH supports Simply Smiles, an orphanage that provides children permanent relief from extreme circumstances. These children are able to grow and develop in a safe and supportive environment. The alternative for these children is unthinkable.

TASH's website, <https://tashinc.org/about/our-partners/>, offers more details about all of our partner organizations.

Your continued generosity makes TASH's support of Roxana and these organizations possible. Together, we are giving these children a fighting chance. Father Scott says that every person that you help makes ripples in society. Our hope is that these children make waves.

## ■ Witness to Oaxaca (Interviewed by Pete Noll)

I had the opportunity to meet Hilda and her timid, yet energetic daughter in early October. The following is a powerful testimony to the need for La Clinica del Pueblo and gratitude to Fr. Scott and all the TASH community. Her story is much longer than the space provided, but she had a tough upbringing. She was born on October 7, 1992, in San Juan Meltaptec in the Mixes region and her parents split immediately. Her mother decided that Hilda's grandparents would be best suited to raise her. She dropped out of school at age 10 and helped her parents in small-scale agriculture. At 14, she moved to Oaxaca City in hopes of finding a job and better living conditions. She took a job as a housekeeper. At 17, she met her boyfriend and at first, their relationship was stable. They had four children Alejandra, Alondra, Axel and Jose Alfredo. Three years ago, the father walked out, and they have had no communication or financial support for the children since then.

To make ends meet, Hilda has worked various odd jobs, but it has been hard to hold down a full-time job, as she was also raising four children. If one of them fell sick and she got to work late, she frequently would be let go. Since she was already working from 8 - 7 p.m, she sent her children to be with their grandparents for four months, while she sent them money. But it was during these four months, that her daughter Alondra suffered a fall while playing and badly fractured her elbow. Without any extra money, Hilda took Alondra to the state public hospital. The administrators said she would have to wait 24 hrs. to be examined. Hilda felt this would be impossible, because if she didn't show up for work, she would be out of a job, again. Fortunately, a former employer recommended that she go to La Clinica del Pueblo. Here in La Clinica, the doctors evaluated her daughter and sent her to surgery to set the elbow within two hours. At TASH, we assured that she paid nothing, so that she would not be burdened with bills that would be nearly impossible to pay back. Hilda shared with me how grateful she was since she would get a fresh start, in an economic sense.

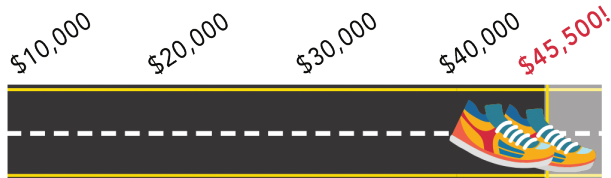


*Hilda and her family at La Clínica.*

And while there are countless more stories like this one, it further demonstrates the reach of La Clinica to those most in need of a helping hand. While Hilda faces many challenges, we trust that her commitment to providing for her family is a sign of a brighter future. The social worker at La Clinica will continue to provide follow-up outreach and assure that Hilda and her four children have their basic needs covered.

## ■ FUTURE EVENTS & UPDATES

**2021 Ole 5k Benefit Race:** We are excited to share with you that the race was a huge success, in financial terms, but as importantly in bringing together the community to bridge our commitments and joy for the work of TASH in Oaxaca, Mexico. Thanks to 45 sponsors, donors, volunteers, and vendors, we will be able to send down 100% of our net proceeds of \$45,500!



**WE HAVE EXCEEDED OUR GOAL!**



And they are off!



**Save the date,** next year's race is confirmed for October 8, 2022 in North Park.



*No patient ever left unattended.*

**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, you can visit the Website: <https://tashinc.org/donate/planned-giving/> or contact us at 412-219-9099.

**Donation receipts:** We will be sending out the 2021 tax acknowledgment receipts in mid-January. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us. Thank you!

**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](http://www.tashinc.org).



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