



TASH TIMES

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www.tashinc.org

■ GREETINGS

Dear Friends:



Father Scott spreading joy and inspiration at the 2022 Olé 5k race on October 8.

Some people dread this time of year because there is less light and more cold. Depending on where they live, they may have to contend with snow and ice. Many are already tired of Christmas displays that started in October, the Christmas music which starts the day after Thanksgiving or even earlier that has few religious songs, the big sales starting on Black Friday, or even on Thanksgiving evening. Christmas parties start right after Thanksgiving. The secularization of Christmas can be very depressing. It is important to celebrate a religious Christmas because Jesus is the Reason for the Season. I have a placard on my car that says: "Keep Christ in Christmas." I keep it on my car all year long.

To prepare for a religious Christmas I want to suggest that you make a 30 day novena. It will start on Thanksgiving and end on Christmas Eve. Each day say three Our Fathers for the intention that I give for that day. You can make the novena alone or with others. Here are the intentions. I have numbered them 1-30.

1. Gratitude for your blessings. 2. Good health for you and your family. 3. Safety from disease and violence. 4. Leaders of our Country. 5. Peace in our world. 6. The people of the Ukraine. 7. Food for people in drought areas. 8. The Homeless. 9. Migrants. 10. Veterans who live on our city streets. 11. Women with breast cancer. 12. Abused children. 13. People with addictions. 14. An end to abortion and Euthanasia. 15. An Advent filled with hope. 16. Grieving parents. 17. Vocations to the priesthood and religious life. 18. The poor of Oaxaca, Mexico. 19. For the success of the ministry of TASH. 20. Struggling marriages. 21. Lonely seniors. 22. For the media to be unbiased. 23. End of the Pandemic. 24. That people will return to Church. 25. Wisdom and courage for Church leaders. 26. Peaceful family gatherings. 27. A deeper prayer life. 28. A generous heart. 29. Belief in miracles. 30. A Blessed Christmas.

Your desire to make this novena will depend on whether you believe God answers prayers. Our faith tells us that God does, though we must accept that God works in mysterious ways. God wants us to trust Him and believe that He always has our best interests at heart. Trust in God will be tested more than once in a person's life. We can see that in the lives of the Apostles and Saints like St. Francis of Assisi, St. Ignatius of Loyola, Mother Teresa and Padre Pio. Each one of them had to develop a strong prayer life that enabled them to do God's Will and to trust God when they faced difficulties, opposition, criticism, and dryness in prayer. Jesus told his disciples to: "Pray always and never lose heart." Prayer is not optional; it is critical if you want to grow old trusting God and counting your blessings.

Have you ever heard of the Mexican tradition of Las Posadas? (Spanish word for inn) It is celebrated between December 16 and 24. Each evening during the festival a small child dressed as an angel leads a procession through the streets of the town. The procession is primarily made up of children dressed in silver and gold robes carrying lit candles and images of Mary and Joseph riding a donkey. Adults, including musicians, follow the procession, which visits selected homes and asks for lodging for Joseph and Mary. Traditionally, the procession is always refused lodging, though the hosts often

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Fr. Scott, continued

provide refreshments. At each stop, passages of scripture are read, and Christmas carols are sung.

Mass is held each day after the procession, and, at the conclusion of the Mass, children break open piñatas filled with candy, toys and occasionally money. The piñatas are usually crafted in the form of a star, which guided the three Wise Men to the newborn Jesus. It is a wonderful tradition.

Besides making the novena, I want to encourage you to do something special for your spiritual life from December 16-24. Light a candle every night at dinner time and go around the table with each one saying what they are thankful for. Then someone reads the Christmas story from the Bible. Preparing spiritually for Christmas will bring many blessings.

Count on my prayers for you in a special way from Thanksgiving to Christmas.

God bless you!

Fr. Scott

■ Servant Leadership – The Power of a Team

In May of 1860, Abraham Lincoln was an underdog for the Republican nomination for President. The frontier lawyer and one-time Congressman trailed three better known and more accomplished rivals – William Henry Seward, Edward Bates, and Salmon P. Chase. Lincoln stunned the country when he won the nomination. Before Lincoln took office in March of 1861, seven southern states seceded from the Union, created the Confederate Constitution, and named Jefferson Davis as President. Facing an unprecedented threat to the country's existence, Lincoln appointed all three of his formal rivals to his Cabinet – Seward as Secretary of State, Bates as Attorney General, and Chase as Secretary of the Treasury. Influenced by Lincoln's masterful leadership, each man played a crucial role in the effort to preserve the Union. Lincoln's decision to surround himself with a talented team helped him to guide the country through its darkest days.

Early on and continuing to this day, Father Scott and the Board also recognized the power of a team. As I noted in the last newsletter, in 2019 TASH hired a gifted executive director, Pete Noll, to lead the organization in Oaxaca. At the most recent biannual meeting, TASH welcomed a new Board member: Mr. Charlie Baker. Charlie is a professional pilot who lives in Pittsburgh, PA. He graduated from Holy Trinity Catholic School and Kent State University. He has known Father Scott for more than 20 years. Charlie brings energy, enthusiasm, and a high level of commitment to TASH's mission. Charlie and I will visit Oaxaca together for a week in December. I invite you to learn more about Charlie on TASH's website: <https://tashinc.org/about/mission-board-staff/>

In Oaxaca, TASH has been instrumental in assembling a talented local Board to guide La Clínica. Four of the seven local Board members are leaders of other organizations with which TASH has collaborated in other contexts. These men and women have proven their trustworthiness, capability, and dedication to serve the poor. Each joined the local Board in large part due to their pre-existing relationship with TASH. Due to the contributions of these new members, the local Board is a stronger, more dynamic, and more inspirational group than ever. In fact, one of the new members, Brother Carlos Pech, a Capuchin Friar, recently was elected the new local Board President. Like Father Scott, he brings with him a vow to service. Brother Carlos has personally met with La Clinica staff and spoken with patients



Celebrating 2nd year anniversary of community kitchen and > 12,000 meals served!

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Servant Leadership, continued

to better understand how La Clínica is performing and where there are opportunities for improvement. This level of engagement by the board President is crucial to delivering outstanding patient care.

A team can achieve things that would be impossible for an individual. Lincoln knew this, and he staffed his Cabinet with the most capable men that he could find to ensure that “government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth.”

On a smaller scale, TASH and the local Board are working together to make La Clínica a healthcare destination for quality and affordable healthcare for those who need it the most. A cornerstone of this vision is the assembly of talented and dedicated leadership teams both within TASH and on the local board.

Thank you for your continued prayers and support of our team and our mission in Oaxaca, Mexico.

God love you.

Charley B. Gates, MD

President, TASH Board of Directors

■ Witness to Oaxaca – by Pete Noll

As our Board plans for bold and ambitious distributions in 2023, we hope that you will make a year-end gift to support the ministry in Oaxaca. Fr. Scott has often shared with us that *God cannot be outdone in generosity*. It is based on that reflection that I share with you another turnaround thanks to TASH’s commitment to the people of Oaxaca.

Eliseo Torres López was born on October 12, 1967, in Santa Catarina Juquila. Like so many down here, his father was a peasant farmer and along with his wife, raised their nine children and took care of the household. Eliseo went to school only through sixth grade and got married to Lorenza at the young age of 18. One year later, they started a family and in search of work, they ended up in Vicente Guerrero, a poor neighborhood about 30 minutes from Oaxaca City.

The following is part of the story of Eliseo and Lorenza, who are like many of the tens of thousands of hardworking families in Oaxaca. Even when employed, due to low wages, they are barely making ends meet.

Recently, as he did each morning, Eliseo was walking down to get public transportation at 6 a.m. which would take him to a construction work site, where he was earning \$7 USD per 12-hour shift. It was still quite dark that morning, and out of nowhere, he was hit by a young driver (most likely intoxicated from observers at the scene). Several people helped him into a taxi to rush him to a nearby private clinic. However, with his leg terribly broken and without insurance, the doctor quoted him a cost of \$3,000 USD. From his daily wages, that would translate into 428 days of nonstop work. After much literal pain and deliberation, he and Lorenza realized they would have to sell their tiny house to make the payment. They decided they couldn’t do this, as they have three grandchildren, they take care of. It was at this moment of disruption that his wife shared that God intervened: “Out of nowhere, I was reminded of La Clínica del Pueblo. My cousin had gone there about eight years ago, and she had talked about the free and quality attention she received.”



Eliseo and Lorenza during our home visit.

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Witness to Oaxaca, continued

They arrived at La Clínica and after a primary care physician and specialist reviewed him, they scheduled him for the next day. He had a successful surgery and, as importantly, a hospital bill for \$0. This was critical as he would have to take some time off work to recover (Imagine carrying a 40 lb. sack of cement on a recently operated broken leg!) and receive basic physical therapy. When we went to see them, Lorenza said that they had to sell off a few items in their home and she was now selling seeds and nuts to pay for their food bill. Eliseo shared proudly that they were happy though, as he would be going back to work soon and that they didn't have to sell their house. Their three grandchildren popped in laughing, one of them wearing a school uniform. **Another day at La Clínica, and thanks to all of you who support TASH, another success story!**



FUTURE EVENTS & UPDATES



Post-race Mexican buffet, friends and family fun for a cause!

2022 Olé 5k Results! The 14th edition of the **Olé 5k** Benefit Race was an astounding success, with the sun coming out right at the start of the race. Thanks to 66 sponsors, race registrations, and many other donors, we were able to raise \$95,356 to support the work in Oaxaca, Mexico. In addition, we hosted the first ever “Building Bridges Pittsburgh-Oaxaca Happy Hour,” so that sponsors could mingle and share their motivations for promoting Fr. Scott and TASH’s mission.

We were able to book North Park again for Saturday, October 7, 2023, so please mark your calendars. You can visit www.ole5k.com for info and updates.

Young Jaxon Schoeder also set the new course record with a time of 16:18! Congratulations to him and the 400+ participants who signed up for the race.

Planned Giving – One way to support local heroes is assuring that TASH has the resources to send down to Oaxaca, Mexico. 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 Clínica, 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.

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.



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