



TASH TIMES

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www.tashinc.org

■ GREETINGS

Dear Friends:

I have often said in my preaching that “Christianity is not taught, it is caught.” Inspiring people by the way we live will bring more people to the faith than any book, class or television program. Our homes need to be “domestic churches.” I saw a sign recently that read: **“If we don’t teach our children to follow Christ, the world will teach them not to.”**

My parents’ generation sent their children to a Catholic Grade School and Catholic High School, thinking that their children would get a good religious education. The problem, however, was that their children approached religion classes like it was a subject to study and to take exams. Unless the teachers had a personal relationship with Jesus, they were not able to invite the students to have one. Many parents did not have the ability to talk about faith at home or were uneasy doing so. They expected that the school would take care of “religion talk.” The parents just made sure that their children received their Sacraments.

It is not uncommon for me to have parents tell me that their children went to a Catholic Grade School and High School and now do not go to Mass or have their children baptized. In their disappointment they complain that the Catholic Church and Catholic school have failed them. I believe that the solution is to get parents involved in teaching religion. At the baptism of a child, there is a blessing of the parents. The blessing includes these words: “Bless the father of this child. He and his wife will be the first teachers of their child. May they be the best of teachers.”



Young Mateo’s expression says gratitude times a hundred for the new dormitories built at the Ciudad de los Niños orphanage, thanks to Fr. Scott and the Board’s vision and the generosity of the TASH community. Read more below in Witness to Oaxaca.

This is especially true when it comes to the virtues. Honesty, forgiveness, self-control, gratitude, chastity, and generosity have to be taught at home. Children are very attentive to how their parents treat each other. During the first five years of a child’s life, the parents especially have the child’s attention. When they read to the child before going to bed; talk about the heroes in the book; have the child take a part in the Christmas Pageant; visit grandma at the nursing home; treat their puppy gently—these are teachable moments.

Most children today go to public schools. Teachers can support parents when they teach virtue, but they cannot replace them. Some teachers spend a lot of time trying to keep the children quiet and

focused. Often their hands are tied by school policies. Many teachers suffer from “burn out” and quit. I remember when the Supreme Court ruled that there could be no prayer in public schools. Now this includes coaches praying with their athletes; School Valedictorians are told not to include references to God in their speeches. Parents today must take the lead in teaching their children virtue.

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Fr. Scott, continued

We need to protect our children in today's secular society. I urge parents to be very involved both in their children's religious education and in their school education. Though the task at times may seem daunting, we can call upon the Holy Spirit for help and guidance. St. Padre Pio often gave this advice: **"Pray, hope and don't worry."** In St. John's Gospel Jesus said: "Take heart, I have overcome the world."

You can always count on my prayers.

God bless you!

Fr. Scott

■ Servant Leadership – *"Celebrate!" - by Charley B. Gates, MD*

"The more that you praise and celebrate your life, the more there is in life to celebrate." – Oprah Winfrey

Celebrations are an important part of life. These are happy times when people gather to recognize the achievement of a worthy milestone, such as an anniversary or a baptism or an important victory.

Celebration puts a person in a grateful state of mind. **Gratefulness helps a person to focus on what they have instead of what they lack.** When we focus on what we have, we pause and look backwards, acknowledging the challenges that have been overcome and the dark moments that have given way to a great light.

Celebrations and gratefulness reinforce in our minds that there are good things in the world. It is a positive feedback cycle. The more that we celebrate, the more that we will want to find reasons to celebrate. Celebrations also reenergize us to continue forward on our journeys with renewed commitment and enthusiasm.

With this in mind, I would like to celebrate the university graduation of the first TASH-sponsored scholarship student! His name is Conrado Morales. He recently graduated with a Bachelor of Science in agricultural engineering.

Conrado is 22 years old and hails from San Jorge Nuchita, a village about 7 hours from Oaxaca City. The village has a population of about 2,000. He is the oldest of seven children. Agriculture is the principal economic activity in San Jorge Nuchita, and Conrado has been involved in agriculture for as long as he can remember. During school, he worked part-time picking tomatoes. Agriculture runs in his family. His father emigrated to California years ago to work on farms. **Conrado is not only the first person in his family to graduate from university, but also the first person from his village to do so.**

When asked what part about his university experience he enjoyed most, he unhesitatingly answered (through a translator), "One of the best experiences for me was the opportunity to deepen my knowledge of agricultural best practices." Conrado excelled in his studies, earning a cumulative GPA of 8.9 out of 10, which is an excellent performance. He places a high value on his education.

When the pandemic interrupted his in-person studies, he faced challenges due to the lack of a computer and reliable internet. The scholarship program, supported by TASH, stepped in to provide him with a laptop and hotspot internet connection. Conrado overcame many other challenges on his road to graduation.

Conrado added, "My family, friends, and I are eternally happy and grateful that I have been able to complete my degree." He said that his graduation would not have been possible without TASH's support.



Conrado is pictured on the far left.

Servant Leadership, continued

Agricultural engineers work in farming, including aquaculture (the farming of seafood), forestry, and food processing. They solve problems concerning power supplies, machine efficiency, the use of structures and facilities, pollution and environmental issues, and the storage and processing of agricultural products. Agricultural engineering is a growing field, projected to grow at a rate of 6% in the coming decade, faster than the average for other occupations.

Conrado has professional goals and sees a clear path forward towards achieving them. He is excited about his future.

TASH firmly believes that timely intervention in a young person's life can permanently improve the trajectory of that person's life. Often, the entire family benefits. Siblings are inspired by a powerful example of success in the family. Parents feel pride to see their son or daughter excel scholastically. The family unit is more secure economically, which brings hope that life in the future will be better than it is today.

TASH first began to sponsor scholarship students during the academic year 2020-2021. Currently, TASH supports 59 students across three organizations. TASH may never change the world, but TASH is certainly changing the lives of these students. And that is worthy of celebration!

TASH's support of scholarship students like Conrado would not be possible without your donations, thoughts, and prayers.

Thank you for your continued support of TASH.

God love you.

Charley Gates, MD

■ Witness to Oaxaca – by Pete Noll



Three cheers for clean and safe drinking water. A picture is worth a thousand words.

In the last edition, we highlighted the clean and safe drinking water project. We are following that up with another amazing accomplishment. In the May/June 2023 newsletter, Fr. Scott made a special birthday request to make a gift to TASH to provide funding for an orphanage, *La Ciudad de los Niños*. On February 24, I was able to bear witness to the inauguration of a well-constructed and beautiful 100-bed dormitory on their grounds.

As you will recall, their original dormitory was heavily damaged by an earthquake reaching 7.7

on the Richter scale, on September 7, 2017. It was a complicated process to determine if the best option would be to repair the former building or start fresh. After the local government authorities made their final determination, the only viable alternative was to demolish the old building and begin the lengthy process of architectural designs, special building permits, a COVID-19 pandemic interruption, and a major fundraising campaign. For six years, the children were living in provisional bunkbeds in the common eating area.

It was in 2020 that the TASH Board asked me to visit local orphanages. By 2021, we were engaged with *La Ciudad de los Niños* and began to coordinate with the local leadership to establish the terms for our involvement, starting with the demolition, which happened in 2022. Shortly thereafter, we agreed to an initial project to build the new orphanage in two stages, a first floor for 50 children and a second floor for the other 50. Of course, **God works in mysterious ways and the orphanage wasn't going to build itself.**

Witness to Oaxaca, continued

Therefore in 2023, Fr. Scott wrote to you all. **Thanks to your generosity**, we realized that we could cover the full build, which would reduce the costs of renewing permits, possible inflationary costs of construction materials, and most importantly, allow for *La Ciudad de los Niños* to grow from 50 to 100 children and youth. This orphanage (or Casa de Hogar as it is known in Oaxaca), founded in 1958 by another charismatic Roman Catholic priest, Padre Jose Miguel, is now the largest of its kind in Oaxaca.

Again, thanks to Fr. Scott's vision, at the ripe young age of 80, and **with TASH approaching its 25th anniversary**, we can with your support continue to install essential building blocks in the areas of medical attention and healthcare, shelter, education, clean water, & community development, that will provide opportunities for decades to come.

We hope you will continue on our journey towards the 25th anniversary of TASH in 2025.



Almost finished!! Bunk beds and windows ordered. The planned date for the kids to move in is March 15.



FUTURE EVENTS & UPDATES



Six months and counting! We hope that you will join us as a sponsor, racer, volunteer, or race day attendee as **we celebrate the 16th edition of the Olé 5k Benefit**. Again, this year, we will be organizing the 2nd ever sponsor "Building Bridges Brunch and private Mass" at St. Augustine's Friary on Sunday, September 29, starting at 11 a.m.

100% of the race proceeds will be sent to our projects in Oaxaca, Mexico, where many families must get by on \$5 - \$7 per day. With great need comes greater generosity. Family fun for a worthy cause! You can find more information and updates: www.ole5k.com

Planned Giving – *Would you like to assure that TASH can continue to increase its impact, especially as we approach the 25th anniversary?* A gift to TASH improves lives today and into the future. Behind every person served are loyal benefactors, like you, who make their care possible. Every time an individual enters the 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.

Make a gift today that lasts for a lifetime!



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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