



# TASH TIMES

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## ■ GREETINGS

Dear Friends:

### HAPPY NEW YEAR!

This year TASH will be celebrating the **Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Clínica del Pueblo, Anna Seethaler**. For twenty-five years, the clinic/hospital has helped thousands of poor people receive good medical attention at little or no cost. The fact that it has already been twenty-five years amazes me. Where has the time gone? In August I made my twenty-fifth trip to Oaxaca. Visiting all the programs we support allowed me to see the growth that has taken place over the years.

When I first arrived in 1998, it was very apparent that the poor had no healthcare. If they had a serious health problem and could not access any medical attention, **they had no choice but to go home and wait to die**. As in many societies, the poor of Oaxaca have no voice, no political power, and, most importantly, no money. Our hospital has given many people a new lease on life. We not only supply necessary medical attention, but we do it in a way that protects their dignity. **People go there because they have nowhere else to go**. We receive elderly people who are from the mountains. We comfort children who are scared of needles. We help those with addictions and those with weight and blood pressure problems. And we oversee teenage pregnancies.



*Father Scott and Brother Carlos engage in strategic conversations at La Clínica Del Pueblo, Anna Seethaler, Hospital in August 2024.*

In the beginning we struggled to find the right leadership. It was always a shock for me to find that some leaders only worked in our hospital to get people to come to their private office. I remember times when we didn't have enough workers. **Yet God always came through with the right people at the right time**. I also remember the time that God protected the hospital when an earthquake hit the city of Oaxaca. There was minimal damage done to the hospital. Over the years, we have rarely needed to advertise our services because most of the people come because of word of mouth. This is especially true of the people from the mountains.

**We have always been able to pay for our programs in Oaxaca because of your great generosity.** You are the reason why the hospital exists. Looking to the future, we can face it with hope because the hospital is under the protection of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

### HOLY YEAR

**In 2025, the Catholic Church is celebrating a Holy Year**, which takes place every twenty-five years. The theme of this Holy Year is **hope**. We at TASH are eager to celebrate the Holy Year in the same year that we celebrate the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Anna Seethaler Hospital because it opened during a Holy Year.

Holy Years bring many blessings. Once we had identified the property for the hospital in Oaxaca, we were able to pay for it. A retired architect offered his services to renovate the building at no cost. **Patients first walked through the doors on January 1, 2000**. The first patient to move our hearts that year was an elderly man who had come down from the mountains blind in

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*Father Scott, continued*

both eyes because of cataracts. **Once they had been removed, he began to cry as he saw his wife's face for the first time in seven years.** The staff also cried.

The theme of this Holy Year, **hope**, is a very important one for TASH. Hope has guided us in making future decisions. **Year after year we based our decisions on the fact that God is with us and our hope would never be in vain.**

During this Holy Year, we will share with you the small miracles that happen so you can thank God with us for His great blessings.

God bless you!  
Fr. Scott

## ■ Servant Leadership – “*Serving is a Supreme Art*” - by Charley B. Gates, MD



*Brother Carlos has a conversation with a patient at La Clínica Del Pueblo, Anna Seethaler, Hospital.*

In the 1997 Italian comedy-drama film *Life Is Beautiful*, there is a powerful scene between the protagonist of the movie, Guido, and his uncle, Eliseo. Eliseo is teaching Guido how to be a waiter in an elegant restaurant.

When learning to bow, Guido humorously bows too deeply, practically bringing his nose to his knees. Eliseo counsels Guido, “Think of a sunflower. They bow to the sun. But if you see some that are bowed too far down, it means they are dead. You are here serving; you are not a servant. **Serving is a supreme art.** God is the first servant. God serves men, but he is not a servant to men.”

What makes serving a supreme art? Serving assumes its highest form when it is performed with love in the heart. **The presence of love is absolutely critical.** Love transforms the act, imbuing it with profound emotion and meaning. The most powerful acts of service are often simple ones; it is the love that is conveyed that makes

them so impactful. **Love is the ultimate and highest goal to which man can aspire.** In 1 Corinthians 13:2-3, it is written, “If I have faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.”

In his seminal book *Man's Search for Meaning*, psychiatrist and Nazi concentration camp survivor Viktor Frankl poignantly recalls the moment when a German Schutzstaffel (SS) guard gave him a piece of bread from his own ration. Though he was thankful for the food, Frankl was stunned by the guard's kind words that accompanied his bread offering. The love that those kind words conveyed moved Frankl to tears.

In Oaxaca, I have had the privilege to meet a leader who serves others with a heart full of love: **Brother Carlos Pech, a Franciscan Capuchin.** Brother Carlos grew up in the resort town of Cancun in the heart of the Yucatan peninsula. After graduating from university, he became a certified public accountant. He worked for several years and led a comfortable life as a successful professional. However, he found himself wanting to serve his fellow man in a more direct way. He made the decision to take the solemn vows of poverty, obedience, and chastity and to become a Franciscan Capuchin.

**Brother Carlos currently serves as the president of the local board of directors of La Clínica Del Pueblo, Anna Seethaler, the flagship of TASH's efforts in Oaxaca.** Brother Carlos is also on the board of directors of Sercade, an organization that provides healthcare services to the poor in La Mixteca, an especially impoverished region of Oaxaca. After a full day of work with marginalized persons, he spends his evenings studying for an advanced psychology degree. Clearly, he is a talented man who has devoted himself to a life of service.

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*Servant Leadership, continued*

During a visit to La Clínica Del Pueblo, I witnessed Brother Carlos in action. As board president, he had no obligation to make rounds in the first place, yet he thrives on this kind of direct patient interaction. I witnessed this firsthand on one occasion when he met with some family members of a patient undergoing a general surgical procedure. They were distraught with concern for their loved one. **Brother Carlos was intensely present during his meeting with the family.** He comforted them with such warmth and compassion that a palpable sensation of peace and love filled the room. The family members were immediately calmed. It was a remarkable exchange. I felt inspired.

**TASH is blessed to be able to partner with great leaders like Brother Carlos.** Your thoughts, prayers, and financial support make this collaboration possible. Thank you.

God love you.

Charley B. Gates, MD  
President, TASH Board of Directors

## ■ Witness to Oaxaca – *TASH Supports Education* - by Charley B. Gates, MD

TASH firmly believes in the power of education to change lives. TASH also believes that the impact is magnified when it occurs early in a person's life. For these reasons, **TASH actively seeks out opportunities to provide children with the educational resources that they need to give them the best opportunity to succeed.** TASH currently accomplishes this in at least two ways: (1) its collaboration with Canica, and (2) its scholarship program.

Canica is an after-school program for children whose parents work as street vendors. **Canica was founded more than 30 years ago and has a well-developed, effective approach towards improving the life opportunities for the children enrolled in its program.** The children receive a nutritious meal, physical exercise, and tutoring services. Canica seeks to supplement, not to replace, the education that these children receive in the public school system.

**TASH has a long-standing collaboration with Canica.** TASH currently supports teacher salaries. Previously, Canica had a difficult time retaining teachers because the compensation was so low. This led to high turnover and some anxiety among students as favorite teachers came and quickly left. **TASH stepped in to support Canica to raise salaries, which has led to a high teacher retention rate and a better experience for the students.** TASH has also donated educational materials to Canica, including books and chessboards. In addition, TASH recently made a contribution to cover a capital improvement that allowed the construction of a large, multi-purpose room, which allowed Canica to expand its enrollment.

**In addition to Canica, TASH supports more than 49 scholarship students in collaboration with three local partners.** One of these partners is Oaxaca Youth Empowerment (OYE). OYE operates two centers in Oaxaca: Casa Jodi in Oaxaca City, and Casa Emilie in nearby Santa Cruz Xoxocotlán. These two locations provide student support that includes school uniforms, school inscription fees, tutoring, a meals program, computer labs, counseling services, and much more.

I would like to highlight one of the scholarship students that TASH supports through OYE. Yesenia Zaragoza López is a 23-year-old female who is completing a bachelor's degree in architecture. She is the third daughter in a family of five, and

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*Two students at Canica spend time reading a book.*



*Two students at Canica play chess after school while a tutor looks on. TASH donated chess boards to Canica.*

*Witness to Oaxaca, continued*

*TASH scholarship student Yesenia Zaragoza López says that the scholarship that she received is changing her life and the life of her family.*

she is the first family member to have the opportunity for advanced study. **Yesenia has taken full advantage of this opportunity.**

She began in the OYE program at age seven when she entered 1st grade. She is now in her last year at university. **Yesenia has said that her scholarship has changed her life and the life of her family.** Her siblings, inspired by her example, are also pursuing their own educational goals.

**Yesenia** has begun a job search with various architecture firms, with promising results. When she starts earning an income, she plans to buy a bus pass for her mother to save her from having to walk to work. Next, when her savings allow, she plans to move her family to a safer neighborhood. **In Oaxaca, where the average education level is 6th grade, Yesenia's accomplishment is an amazing and life-changing one.**

Without the support of TASH, Yesenia would not have had the opportunity to fulfill her educational dreams. **TASH is able to support students like Yesenia because of the generosity of its donors.**



## FUTURE EVENTS & UPDATES

The 2024 Olé Benefit Race. To see more images, please visit: <https://tashinc.org/ole-5k/>



Mark your calendar! The 2025 Olé 5K Benefit Race will take place on Saturday, October 4, 2025. As always, 100% of the race proceeds will be sent to the projects that TASH supports in Oaxaca.

Mr. Pete Noll is no longer with TASH. We wish him the best in his future endeavors.

**If you are able 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. Alternatively, you can make a secure donation online at [www.tashinc.org](http://www.tashinc.org).



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