



*Transforming the lives of the  
poor through education.*

# THE JOURNEY

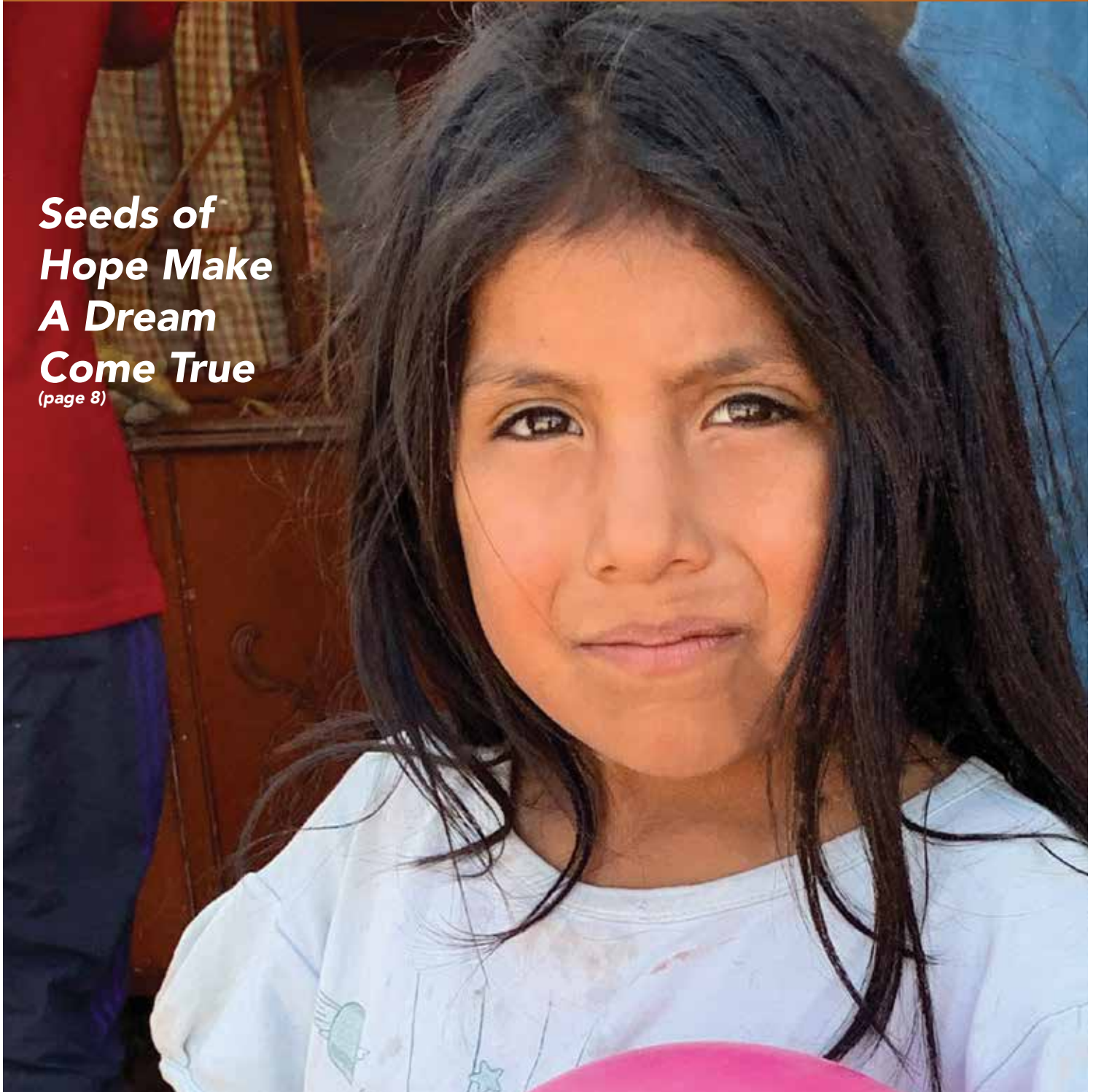
A publication for the community of Friends of Chimbote supporters.

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Fall/Winter 2019

## **Seeds of Hope Make A Dream Come True**

*(page 8)*



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*The Friends of Chimbote Board is deeply committed to the mission of transforming lives of the poor including an annual meeting in Chimbote engaging in our mission work. The broad and diverse nature of challenges facing our mission is met head on by the amazing skills, knowledge, advocacy, and passions of our Board Members.*

## Friends of Chimbote Staff

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# Executive Director's Corner



FALL/WINTER 2019

# "The Lord Hears the Cry of the Poor"

By Father Phil Ackerman

Every day, the determined and faith-filled people of Chimbote battle against the poverty that envelopes them. They share their desire to create a better life for their children. Meals are skipped so their children can have the funds to attend school. Single parents walk for hours each way to work to try to earn enough to feed their family. Grandparents keep working to raise their grandchildren who have been abandoned or whose parents have died. The examples could go on for paragraphs. The living conditions are tough and not helped by the instability of the government – like most in South America.

What's so inspiring is the resolve, strength and faith of the people. For every step they are knocked back, they take two forward. We (donors and advocates) are there with them through our mission to keep taking those forward steps. They do the hard work and we provide support, opportunity and hope. It is so humbling to be thanked for what we provide when they are the most inspiring people I have ever met. This past October the Friends of Chimbote staff and board of directors along with some special guests traveled to Chimbote. I am excited to share with you in the following pages what we participated in and witnessed in the sands of the barrios of San Pedro, Chimbote, and Jesus



of Nazareth on the outskirts of Chimbote. As always, we came back with our hearts full and eager to dive into all the possibilities on how to be the best advocates possible for the people of Peru.

**"What's so inspiring is the resolve, strength and faith of the people."**

Yours in Service,

Todd Mickelson



Greetings from Langdon, ND! I just returned from another trip to Chimbote. It never gets easier. One doesn't get used to the desperate needs and suffering of our brothers and sisters we serve. I am so grateful to "Friends of Chimbote." Our goal is to "Transform lives!" Our task is to invite those who have been blessed with gifts to share them with those in need. But our lives are transformed, too!



Many of us brought two extra suitcases of things we can share. I gave a coat to a man who has a wife and four children. They live in a home with woven grass walls and dirt floors. They have so little. He didn't have a coat—his old one was no longer able to be used. His face lit up with such love and deep appreciation when he put on his new coat. He wore it every time I saw him. I was overwhelmed by his gratitude and love!

Loren Nowacki of Holy Family Church, Grand Forks, ND decided to travel with the "Friends of Chimbote" Board for our annual trip. I invited him to share his thoughts:

*"The idea of traveling to Chimbote to help with the mission, seemed to be too far out of my box, until I had an unexpected visit with Father Phil. As soon as I heard that he was making a visit to Chimbote, something in me said I wanted to do this mission trip."*

*"Even after I knew I wanted this, I had many questions and some reservations. For example, how was it going to be working with a team in a dusty environment, tearing down a*

**"Their hugs said a million words."**

*house? How would it be to share a dormitory room with nine other guys? What would the food be like? What if I got sick from the food or water?"*

*"I also could see the way ACAF is empowering*



*Chimbote's people's lives by their training programs and employment. This is giving people self-esteem that didn't seem possible to them. We heard three people give their testimonies how their lives have been transformed. The biggest thing my ears heard is that they know that God has been with them throughout their journey. That has helped my faith. Surrendering to God is one of my greatest challenges and I made several steps forward by listening to the testimonies."*

*"The trip was very meaningful to me, even more than I realized. God put me there. Now He will show me what to do with my experience."*

I am so overwhelmed by all who send substantial gifts as well as those who donate a small sum. As we come to the close of another year, this is wonderful opportunity to make a difference by your gift to "Friends of Chimbote." We need your help. Your gift will help to sustain the important work that we do: provide needs directly to families; fund a variety of programs to provide jobs for people such as micro-lending, the culinary, pastry, sewing, carpentry programs. It's so encouraging to see people have a chance to improve their lives by learning skills that will enable them to establish a new career!

The "Cry of the Poor" stirs our hearts. Let us be Christ for them! Let us transform lives by sharing what we have with those in need! On behalf of the "Friends of Chimbote" Board, I want to thank you for making all this possible! May God bless you!

Father Phil Ackerman



For the past 25 years, Friends of Chimbote Mission Visitors would meet Maruja and Jaime shortly after arrival at the mission. This meeting was essential to the experiences of the following week in mission. Opening our hearts and minds to the special gifts of those we would encounter and embrace in our mission work, began with our interactions with Maruja and Jaime.

Friends of Chimbote board members, staff and guests just returned from Chimbote. This was the first group to stay at the parish since Maruja's passing on September 22nd. Her absence was deeply felt.

The wonderful services of the kitchen and cleaning staff were still exceptional. However, a part of the essence and spirit of our mission was missing.

Maruja was so much more than the blind and disabled woman who would bring the cart with clean dishes into the gringo room early in the morning followed by serving breakfast, lunch and dinner. Maruja opened our hearts and minds and souls to the gifts of every person. She helped mission visitors grow, learn and expand comfort zones – essentially the purpose for our being in Chimbote.

While Maruja was cared for and employed by the parish and ACAF, she gave significantly more than she received. Maruja taught us the meaning of maximizing the gifts we receive from God. Her disabilities and lack of sight were overcome with her gift with languages – English, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian and French. She helped those less

fortunate by raising money for the poor and elderly. She was a faith witness – spending hours in prayer in the church, worshiping in song and leading scripture through Braille readings.

Rather than allow her disabilities to restrict her life, she embraced learning including international travel. She visited her loving friends throughout the United States including traveling alone. Her

laughter, storytelling, harmonica playing and singing lifted those around her. Maruja was an amazing woman who improved the lives of all those who met her.

Maruja will be deeply missed. Her contributions to the lives of every mission visitor provided a very important lesson and must not be lost with her absence. Now it is our responsibility to future mission visitors to continue Maruja's legacy of opening hearts, minds and souls.

Thank you Maruja. Rest in Peace.



*"Sometimes we feel that what we do is just a drop in the sea, but the sea would be less if it lacked a drop."*

*Sister Teresa of Calcutta*



friendsofchimbote.org



**Welcome**

*New Pastor at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish*

Bishop Angel Simon of the Diocese of Chimbote has appointed Padre Jertzi Enrique Riofrio Ojeda the new pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help (OLPH) parish in Chimbote. Padre Jertzi began his role on January 20, 2019. He grew up in Tambo Grande - Piura which is north of Chimbote. He became a priest in Arequipa which is south of Lima.

Father Jertzi's smile is so welcoming to the people of Chimbote. He has been extremely involved with ACAF and has already put on team building seminars for the staff. He has sincerely welcomed Friends of Chimbote Mission Visitors coming down to Chimbote.

While he does not speak English, he shares the love for the poor of his community that Friends of Chimbote and ACAF Support.

**SERVE • EMPOWER • TRANSFORM**

Chimbote's story remains one of hope and courage. More than ever after assessing the needs of the surrounding areas around Chimbote, we need your help! Thousands of men, women and children living in the barrios of Chimbote, Peru are trapped in extreme poverty. They yearn for a life without suffering and adversity. So many live in unbearable living conditions and despite daily efforts to seek work to buy food, many go to bed hungry, weary and disheartened. We are making a difference, but we need more people like you to join us.



**Schedule a mission visit**

The mission visit team in Chimbote welcomes groups and long-term volunteers any time of the year. We provide translators, visit and project coordination, safe lodging and meals and most importantly we bring you face to face with the people you will serve. You'll witness the ingenuity, perseverance, faith and hope within the inspiring people who are determined to change their own lives through the programs and services that we can provide.

**Become A Mission Partner**

Support and advocacy are welcome from all faiths. In addition to donations, help is always welcome in our ongoing effort to ignite the passion of new generations to connect and fall in love with the mission and the works that are being done in Chimbote. This might include informational presentations, a spaghetti fundraising event or any other kind of fundraiser, donations of container goods or simply be an advocate and tell your story. Contact us for support materials.

**Donate**

Without financial gifts, our mission work could not exist. Contact us to explore endowment options, stock or security gifts, bequests, and other options



However you choose to share your gifts, know that your friendship and support is graciously accepted and judiciously utilized. Together we are truly transforming lives.

Visit [www.friendsofchimbote.org](http://www.friendsofchimbote.org) for secure online giving or mail your check to Friends of Chimbote PO Box 717 West Fargo, ND 58078



friendsofchimbote.org

# Blessings of 2019 Board Outreach

On Oct 27th twenty-six Friends of Chimbote Board Members, staff, and special guests headed from Lima to Chimbote. ACAF staff members greeted the group with eager anticipation to share the progress, challenges, and successes that have been occurring in Chimbote. Although meetings were an essential component to the

trip, the group spent the majority of their time out in the barrios witnessing the impact of the mission and participating in projects in the communities outside of Chimbote. The needs of these outlying communities and the lack of resources were witnessed and the work that needs to be continued was never more evident.

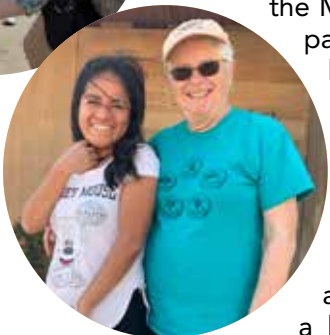
## PIZZA SURPRISE

A pizza party was organized to bring the families together that will be recipients of a new home in 2020 and also the family that just received a new home. What an amazing opportunity it was to get to know these families over a slice of pizza and a cup of soda. Hearing their stories and experiences, and often the horror that intense poverty has brought to their families was tough to shallow. But by faith... no matter what traumas these families have endured they continue to stay resilient and are grateful for the blessings they have and remain confident that God will continue to protect them.



## VAN DEDICATION

An essential part of our mission is for the need for reliable transportation. The old van was failing. Dan and Lisa Kunkleman and many of their faith family from Charlotte, North Carolina raised funds for the purchase of a 15-passenger van. After a year planning and searching a dream became a reality. Board members, ACAF Staff, and leaders in the community had the privilege of dedicating and blessing the van.



## SOUP KITCHEN

In Chimbote...4 soup kitchens continue to run daily in the community. In the past 6 months over 8,230 meals have been served. Board members and guests divided into groups and spent part of the morning cooking the meal and then serving and visiting with the guests. Thank you to Leona Fox who purchased aprons for mission visitors to wear as they serve.



## SCHOOL

In Peru, pre-primary education is mandatory. However, there are not enough resources to build and supply the schools for the children in the invasion. Our group headed up to Villa los Jardines (San Pedro) an extremely poor community to visit one of the schools to understand the needs. What was so encouraging is to hear that parents having been working to scrape up enough funds to slowly build the school, adding their sweat equity. It is sorely lacking for supplies, but they have space and 3 teachers so 65 kids can attend. Tragically there are over 50 more children who cannot attend due to inadequate space and resources. If these children enter primary school three years behind, they will never catch up. This community, parents, teachers and leaders have asked for our help. We are looking at ways to do so.

## SUPPLIES DISTRIBUTION

During our stay we visited the warehouse where donations primarily from the container are stored. Because of amazing efforts by numerous volunteers in the Minnesota and North Dakota area, the first part of October another 40-foot container left Shakopee and has recently arrived in Chimbote. In preparation for the next container to arrive our group loaded up bags of essentials and traveled to an extreme poor area of Nuevo Amanecer. Walking the dirt streets and knocking on doors handing out bags turned out to be an amazing personal experience. Extending a helpful hand, a prayer of comfort and a listening ear connected our groups. What a perfect example of "Loving our neighbors as ourselves."

## THE GIFT OF SHELTER

Randy Thorson and his partner Warren Ackley made the generous decision to donate funds to have 5 families receive a home this coming year. During our visit Randy was able to meet these families and present them with a home in a bag and share with them the unbelievable news that they would be receiving a new home.



  
FALL/WINTER 2019

Chimbote, Peru was blessed this year with numerous mission service teams. Friends of Chimbote and their partner ACAF, tirelessly work to create life-changing experiences to empower mission teams to meet the physical and spiritual needs of under-served communities in Chimbote. While the organizing was taking place, mission teams were working in the states fundraising to be able to provide the most resources possible for the poorest of poor in Chimbote.

Countless stories of mission experiences and the impact of the mission on the hearts of the volunteers have been beyond inspiring. Miracles of hope and transformation filled the barrios of Chimbote during this last year. Mission teams built homes, remodeled school rooms, interacted with children in school classrooms, participated on social visits, visited orphanages and developed new life-long friendships.

"My heart has forever been touched by the beautiful people of Chimbote. Knowing that my contribution of time and hard work has impacted a family for generations to come is overwhelming. I can't wait to go back!"  
2019 Mission Visitor



A sincere thank you goes out to these special groups who took that additional step out of the comfort of their homes and routines to be the hands and feet of our Lord and Savior.

Thank you for being that strength and encouragement for the families of Chimbote getting them one more step closer on the path out of poverty.

**2019 Groups Blessed** Sacramento • Providence Presbyterian • WayPoint Church (1) • WayPoint Church (2) • WayPoint Church (3) • Roosevelt High School • UND Medical • St Benedict/St John • St Michael (1) • St Michael (2)

"We witnessed abject poverty and the conditions for total despair, but saw the people living in it full of hope, joy and faith. We experienced physical exhaustion, uncertainty, moments of deep meaning, profound friendship, stories of loss, gratitude, and 14 other emotions I can't even think of right now. It was a crucible, and one can't emerge unchanged."  
2019 Mission Visitor

# Blessings of 2019 Mission Visitors

## 2020 MISSION VISITS

January 19-26  
Providence Presbyterian

January 26-February 1  
Waypoint Church F3

February 10 - March 9  
UND Medical Students

March 6-13  
Fair Anita Organization

March 14 - 21  
Focus Missions

May 13 - 20  
Roane State Community College

June 5 - 13  
Waypoint Church F3

June 13 - 28  
St Michael (2 weeks)

June 28 - July 4  
St John Neumann Church

July 12-19  
Waypoint Community Church

July 18 - 29  
Shanley High School

**Call 701-364-0162  
to plan your  
mission visit.**

# Hands and Hearts Reaching Out Across the Miles (Cover Story)



20 years ago a dream began with seeds planted thousands of miles away...

Little did Eric and Brenda Krueger know what had been put in motion 20 years ago when they first visited Chimbote.

Each fall during our annual mission visit to Chimbote, Friends of Chimbote board members, staff and guests complete a capstone learning and service project. This year a new wooden home, furniture and household items were provided for a family in deep poverty. The three generation family of six earn three dollars per day. They live with serious physical and mental health challenges in the neighborhood of Jesus of Nazareth in Chimbote.

The journey to build this new home and transform lives of beneficiaries and mission visitors began long ago. In 1999, Eric and Brenda Krueger completed a mission trip to Chimbote with a group from Nativity Church in Fargo. They continued to stay engaged in the mission through fundraisers and relationships with people they met on their trip including many Chimbotanos.

The journey accelerated in 2016 when Eric began to serve as a Friends of Chimbote Board Member. One of the projects he embraced was mission advocacy – planting mission seeds in people’s hearts. Eric and Brenda completed a list of friends, family,



Faith formation class of St. Joseph’s Church in Brooks, MN raises more than \$4000 to benefit a family thousands of miles away in Chimbote, Peru.

classmates and business associates they wanted to inform about the work of the mission. Packages with videos and written stories, sharing the impact of the mission in the lives of beneficiaries, were sent out in March of 2017 to over 150 people on their list. Eric’s letter asked for prayerful consideration to support and advocate for the work of the mission.

One of the recipients was Brenda’s cousin Pam Gieseke in Brooks, MN. Pam reached out to Friends of Chimbote last December to look for ways to help the mission through fundraisers and Lenten projects for her faith formation classes at St. Joseph’s Church in Brooks, population 141. Pam, her students and community organized numerous projects with the goal of providing a wooden home for



a family in need in Chimbote. Through their many projects, they raised more than \$4,000. Once all funds were collected, Friends of Chimbote received their generous and hard-earned donation last month.

Those funds were immediately wired to ACAF and it was determined that the board members, guests, staff and ACAF staff would build a new



... growing as hearts, one by one ignited with passion...



home for a family as the capstone project. Furniture and household items were funded and provided by additional board members. It truly was amazing that the entire Krueger Family – Eric, Brenda, Ella and Mia – were on the trip and would be able to participate in the teardown and construction of the new home for the family of Juana Castilla. What a journey. The seeds planted with



... coming together to fulfill a dream.

Eric and Brenda 20 years ago resulted in a bountiful harvest for the poor of Chimbote with more seeds being planted on this trip with new visitors. Imagine the possibilities of our many mission advocates planting seeds of Christ’s work. The work that is happening in Chimbote every day. How beautiful would it be if more families were blessed through journeys to Jesus of Nazareth in Chimbote, Peru.





My recent trip to Chimbote was a rare gift to see the many positive changes that had occurred since my last visit, 22 years ago. What had been a singular parish initially helping the poorest through direct giving has become a locally based organization setting their own course for their future. Our visits to the successful programs available through ACAF also underscored the reality that although measuring success is crucial, it measures only that. Beyond still lies the unavoidable reality of so many people destined to a life style most of us cannot imagine for ourselves, only because they were born there.

This was an opportunity I did not request; I was invited. My gut said decline. I did not need to see what I was contributing to. My wife and I have blindly supported this organization for a long time, because I trusted, I had faith, and I had seen it once already. That has been comforting through the years. I viewed another trip to Chimbote as a waste of resources that would be better spent on the people that need it, who we are attempting to help. A small amount of coaxing by my wife, an explanation of valuable purpose by Todd, a sense of duty, a changed mind. My selfish vacation became an opportunity to offer dignity to those we work with, by simply receiving their gratitude. I still have mixed feelings about this, but I agree there exists a different perspective with its own merits.

I have never become fully involved or even educated about the organization we have chosen to contribute to regularly for the last 25 years. That was a conscious choice, probably selfish. I'm not alone in my frail desire to avoid human suffering, and shelter myself beneath a cloak of financial contributions, comfortable in my knowledge that I am doing what is right, if not wholly so. Sharing likely came from a synoptic gospel at some point in my youth, but is engrained in me more as a moral

code; grace requires sharing our good fortune. And after a trip to Peru, there is no question that anyone reading this is overwhelmingly blessed with abundance. We were born to a life of incredible material privilege.

Handing out material possessions or food to people who, given an opportunity, would provide these items for themselves, is something I may never be comfortable doing. I won't try to explain it; most people can empathize. There are enough guiding quotes from wise people about humility and anonymity, and that philosophy has worked well for me since I was a child. But it turns out my charity wheel had a spoke missing: the visceral discomfort that accompanies one's physical presence when witnessing the gross inequity of living standards. I can't tell you why exposure is necessary, because I don't understand it. But I sensed long ago that from one perspective, humbleness was enabling selfishness. Money is only a tool. Useful value is created by people, transforming money thru their infusion of time and talent, into basic necessities for a full and just life.

I'm not sure what role I'm best suited for. Work with your strengths, while challenging your weaknesses, because a whole person can do more. And since I'm in it to help, it's not about me. It never was. Consequently, I am thankful for the opportunity to be reminded by a thousand smiling faces, who eagerly and graciously accept what we can offer, that the opportunity for them to personalize their gratitude is every bit as important. Giving and receiving are one.

Since childhood, the good feeling I experienced after freely giving was a moral conundrum that wrinkled my altruism. That question has been described and explained psychologically, physiologically and socially, and I now believe there should be no guilt or shame associated with it. We have no control of the things that happen in our lives, we can only control how we react. We strive to find a positive purpose in who we are and what we do. The overwhelming positive reactions of the Chimbotoans I witnessed, and the fact that this community has grown and progressed from its original existence to its current form, suggests we are doing some things right. How can one not feel good?

And I finally accepted charity isn't a static one-way street. Like most things we recognize as important in life, it's a dynamic sphere, a complex phenomenon that requires continuous effort to understand and improve upon. Any given day we may realize our last best attempts, though well-intentioned, were ineffective or harmful. New ideas and opportunities are presented, and through the actions of participants and contributors, local and international, we become the change we seek. And there is no end to the amount that needs changing.

# BRING HOPE this HOLIDAY SEASON

"It's the most wonderful time of the year!" The Holidays remind us to be thankful, reflect on our blessings and do acts of kindness that bless us in return. Christmas shop below at these heartfelt gifting selections. Whether you need that perfect gift for a loved one or are looking for an opportunity to make a difference. Give one of these special gifts that will benefit our brothers and sisters in Chimbote. Placing them one step closer on the path out of poverty.

## PROVIDE SHELTER FOR A FAMILY

<p><b>\$4450</b> Item # H1</p> <p>3 bedroom wood home with concrete floor</p>	<p><b>\$4000</b> Item # H2</p> <p>2 bedroom wood home with concrete floor</p>	<p><b>\$2550</b> Item # H3</p> <p>3 bedroom wood home with compacted dirt floor</p>	<p><b>\$1950</b> Item # H4</p> <p>2 bedroom wood home with compacted dirt floor</p>	<p><b>\$700</b> Item # H5</p> <p>Build a new eternit roof on an estera home</p>
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## PROVIDE COMFORT FOR A FAMILY

<p><b>\$265</b> Item # F1</p> <p><b>Bunk Beds</b> Includes 2 mattresses, 2 blankets, 2 sheets and 2 pillows</p>	<p><b>\$140</b> Item # F2</p> <p><b>Double Bed</b> Includes a mattress, blanket, sheet and 2 pillows</p>	<p><b>\$109</b> Item # F3</p> <p><b>Single Bed</b> Includes a mattress, blanket, sheet and pillow</p>	<p><b>\$125</b> Item # F4</p> <p>Table with 6 chairs</p>	<p><b>\$80</b> Item # F5</p> <p>Gas Stove and Tank</p>
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## PROVIDE EDUCATION and OPPORTUNITY

<p><b>\$45</b> Item # S1</p> <p>Classroom Supplies and School Bag</p>	<p><b>\$400</b> Item # S2</p> <p>Microloan to an aspiring entrepreneur to start their own business</p>	<p><b>\$1000</b> Item # S3</p> <p>Two-year vocational training to a student</p>	<p><b>\$185</b> Item # S4</p> <p>One year of meals for an individual at the soup kitchen</p>	<p><b>\$50</b> Item # S5</p> <p>A pair of egg-laying Chickens</p>
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Friends of Chimbote  
 PO. Box 717  
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 701-364-0162.

**We'd love to hear from you!**

### HOPE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON ORDER FORM

Item #	Description of Item	Qty	Price Each	Total Gift	Dedicated to...

Please place in the enclosed newsletter envelope. Attach additional pages if needed! **TOTAL**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

**PAYMENT METHOD**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Enclosed is my check payable to "Friends of Chimbote" for the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Bill this purchase to my credit card. \_\_\_\_\_ Mastercard \_\_\_\_\_ AMEX \_\_\_\_\_ Discover  
 Card# \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**DEDICATED GIFT**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ YES! Please let my special person know I am sponsoring this gift in their honor with a card!  
 Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*Gifts made through the "Bring Hope List" represents a gift to the entire Friends of Chimbote Mission. Friends of Chimbote does not use its limited resources to track individual gifts. We use gifts where they do the most good. Your contribution to fight poverty, illness, abuse and homelessness are fully tax-deductable.