

Whirlwind Missions

Outreach Update March 2016



Hello, my friends!

“Mr. Tim! I don’t have a pencil!” Grimsly told me, matter of factly. I hear that same statement at least thirty times a week. I got up, went to the closet, and picked up a handful— It’s never just one kid needs one!

“Here you go, Grimsly,” I handed the yellow, #2 pencil to him. He stood up, walked towards the kitchen and was back in about five minutes.

“The sharpener doesn’t work, Mr. Tim,” he stated.

“What? Give me your pencil and I’ll try.” I walked to the kitchen, stuck the pencil in the hole, but it wouldn’t go all the way in. I got my phone and turned on the flashlight. I could see something that looked like paper jammed in the hole. “Why would some kid jam paper in the sharpener?” I asked myself, my ire raising. Being intentionally destructive really gets my goat. I walked back to the living room where the kids with the disfunctional electric sharpener in my hand.

“Somebody in here looks like they decided it would be fun to jam junk in this sharpener. Anyone want to confess?” Silly question, no one ever confesses.

I shook my head in frustration and sat down to continue to help the kids with their homework. That night, I took the sharpener apart to see what was going on. A pencil about 1” long came out. I recognized it immediately. Juan had been using this tiny scrap of a pencil the day before and I had tried to give him a new one. Apparently, he’d tried to sharpen it. I felt better. At least it was just an honest mistake and not an intentional thing.

The next day I talked with the kids.

“I figured out how the sharpener got broken. I pulled this out of it.” I held up this tiny stump of a pencil. Three of the girls immediately pointed and said, “JUAN!”

“Juan, I found your pencil.”

“It wasn’t me, Mr. Tim!”

“Juan, I’ve never seen anyone use a pencil this small. I know it was you.”

He had the most hang dog look I’ve ever seen. “Dude, it’s ok. I know you weren’t trying to break anything. The next time, just use a regular pencil, ok? Waves of relief washed over his face.

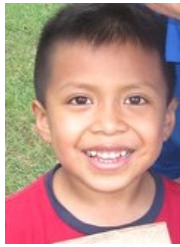
Every day at the mission, I always take a picture with kids. I do it for the blog and for my happiness. “Who wants a picture with Mr. Tim?” I called out enthusiastically, like this was the best possible opportunity ever!

A crowd gathered around me as I lined up the selfie. I felt warm breath on my neck. Juan hugged me for the close up.

We really find out what we’re made of when things go wrong. It’s amazing to me how upset I can get over something like a broken pencil sharpener. If there’s one thing I’ve learned working at the mission, it’s how to forgive. It’s a blessing to both of us.

Do you hold hard feelings towards someone? Maybe it’s time to forgive them, too!

LOVE, TIM AND KATHY



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