

## DESERT BLOOMS

August 2017



We are used to the comings and goings of volunteers at Santo Niño but usually we do not have two at once! In August, however, we said good-bye for now to Sister of Charity Affiliate (now Novice and “Sister”) Whitney Schieltz and Nahyun Kang, an After Volunteer Experience (AVE) participant. Whitney has been part of our Santo Niño family since October of 2015 when she arrived to begin her formal discernment process with the Sisters. She was famous for swinging the kids in circles until they –or she- were too dizzy to continue. Whitney often served as the “extra eyes” needed in the escuelita to keep tabs on the very active students. She was an all-round good sport when it came to Zumba and other dance routines that were included in our celebrations.

Nahyun, known at Santo Niño as “Nany”, spent two months with us processing her volunteer time with the Benedictine Sisters and her transition to Scranton University last year. She discovered that very little or no Spanish is needed to be a soccer star at Santo Niño. No matter how hot the day, “Nany” was up for a game of “futbol”. The kids were quite impressed at the agility and stamina of this-Korean college student!

We received a donation of a children’s kitchen set last month. We knew it was going to be a huge hit as soon as we saw it. In addition to a play sink, stove, refrigerator and microwave, the set included dishes, cooking utensils and all kinds of food items. The kitchen has been set up in the little classroom where it is a favorite free-time activity center.

Last Saturday a very distressed Yamilet came to find Sister Carol. She and Reyna, both age 8 with Down’s Syndrome, were playing in the “kitchen” with older siblings Andrea, Pati and Janet. Yami pulled at Carol’s hand and pointed to the classroom. Carol followed her to find that some of the boys had descended on the kitchen and were ruining everything that the girls had set up. In her sternest voice, Sister Carol shouted, “OUT!” and the marauders departed immediately! Calm was restored to the kitchen and the girls continued in peace. (The boys will have their playtime in the kitchen later!)

The escuelita is back in session and the students are happy for the return to routine with their teachers, Cristina and Nancy. We are hoping to begin a religious education program for special needs children in the next month or so. Fr. Bill Morton is now the pastor of the local parish, Corpus Christi of Rancho



Anapra, and he is enthusiastic about this collaboration with Santo Niño. Sofia is already a certified catechist and we are excited to explore this new area of service to our children and the local Church.

We hope you have a relaxing Labor Day weekend and we thank God for your support and prayers.