

## DESERT BLOOMS

September 2016

We are always surprised at how families in need hear about our services. Sometimes they come from far away parts of the city. And sometimes, as this month, they come from just down the street. Susy teaches Zumba and sells MaryKay products out of her home just a few blocks from Santo Niño. Yessenia wondered why Susy stopped teaching Zumba (“She was a hard and demanding teacher but really good!”) and decided to ask her. Susy said that her doctor said she was exhausted and needed to cut back. “What’s going on?” asked the ever-sensitive Yessenia. That’s when Susy reluctantly divulged that she had a son with cerebral palsy and he required more than she could provide. She knew he should be receiving therapy but she couldn’t afford it. She couldn’t even get him a wheelchair. So Yessenia told her about Santo Niño and offered to look for a used chair in El Paso where she works as a medical assistant. She got Susy to text a photo of Ruben so she could estimate the kind of chair he would need. Yessenia found a good used chair and arranged to bring Susy and Ruben to our next Saturday session.



Ruben, age 20, was carried into the center by his 16 year old brother. He has severe contractures and is nonverbal. Sister Janet chatted with Susy to get a medical history and to explain the services we can offer. When Sister Carol was available Ruben was laid on the table and Susy stood by anxiously. Carol began her work with Ruben who became very attentive. One of his contracted legs relaxed and extended to its full length. “He hasn’t been able to do that for years!” Susy gasped. The neuromovement lesson contin-

ued and Ruben accepted the experience with increasing calm. Afterwards Yessenia brought the wheelchair and we realized that it wasn’t quite the thing he needed. But Salvador pulled another out of the corner and Sarai came to show Susy how to work the various brakes and levers. Sister Peggy brought a therapy belt and cushions to make a cozy and secure seat for Ruben. Arrangements were made for Susy to bring him after her morning Zumba classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays. By Saturday evening we were seeing Susy’s posts on Facebook about the angels God put in her path to help with her son.

We hadn’t seen Jesus in about seven years. He was “Baby Jesus” in one of our favorite Santo Niño

Christmas cards. While he has retained his baby face and is unmistakably our “Chuy”, at age 8 he has a condition that has caused him to gain weight uncontrollably. The family moved away during the violence and recently

returned to Anapra. Gloria discovered that Chuy and his mother, sister and two brothers are living in the shell of a house that they built. It burned down because of faulty electrical wiring. They have no indoor plumbing, no running water, and of course no electricity. With his mental and physical limitations, Jesus has not been able to go to public school. Now he comes to our *escuelita* for a few hours a week, participating as fully as he is able and receiving individual attention at his own pace.

Another member of the famous Christmas card celebrated her *quinceañera* (“Sweet 15”) last weekend. Maria Concepcion Carrillo,



Conchita(Mary) and Chuy (Baby Jesus)



a.k.a. “Conchita”, had a fiesta worthy of the name. We have watched Conchita grow for 11 years and many of the Santo Niño family joined her for mass and the outdoor dinner/dance afterwards. We thank God for the gift of her life and ask for continued blessings on her journey into adulthood.