

Desert Blooms
June 2006

Dear Sisters,

We have wonderful news about Miriam! In late May Fr. Bill's workers began construction of a small room at the front of Teodora's house. (Teo is the mother of Skarle Mendez whom many of you have met in recent years as an Associate in Volunteer Ministry.) We were so anxious to get the room finished so that Miriam could move in because her mother is near death and the living situation for Miriam was terrible. The Seton High School Mission Trip 2006 painted the inside and outside on their first workday in Anapra. It was over 100 degrees and they worked like troopers. The next day the finishing touches were added and Fr. Bill and Gloria brought Miriam to her new home.

Since then Miriam has had three meals a day along with the loving attention of Skarle's family. We've been checking in regularly to see how the foster care is working out. What a difference today when S. Peggy went to pick up Miriam to bring her to the clinic for a Jacuzzi bath and to give Teo a break for a few hours! Miriam was clean and fed. Teo had a clean towel and some fresh clothes for her to put on after the bath. She went along with Peggy quite eagerly, knowing the routine of "bath-snacks-massage" that waited. Your donation is still going to be used for Miriam- to supplement the family's grocery expense each month. Please join us as we pray daily for Miriam and her new foster family, as well as for the comfort and peace of her mother, Natividad.

The ten Seton girls, accompanied by S. Sandy Howe and Mrs. Peggy Paff, lived and worked in Anapra June 9-17. Each morning they worked on a project under Kirstin's supervision. They painted and applied stucco to cinder block houses, thus insulating them from the stifling heat of summer and chill of the desert winter. Two local women were their teachers, along with Kirstin, explaining how to mix the whitewash and apply it in even strokes. Some of the girls helped with the handicapped children at the clinic on Tues. and Wed. and were quite touched by the experience. During the afternoons the girls had a siesta followed by presentations by various religious and lay people ministering at the border. They came away with a much deeper understanding of the experience of immigrants, issues of water conservation and the reality of living in poverty.

We received three new children at the clinic June 10. One woman arrived huffing and puffing at noon, just as we were starting to get lunch. She had taken more than 3 hours on the bus trying to get to the clinic with her handicapped baby. Then she got lost walking around the colonia looking for us. We had some cool Gatorade for her and the child whom we also cooled down in the Jacuzzi. Another poor mother offered to help her get to the bus downtown, saving her some time on the return trip. The poor are often our best examples of generosity.