

Desert Blooms

March 2007

Dear Sisters,

Last week was one of our busiest ever at Santo Niño. We had the regularly scheduled clinics on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday as well as training for six parents in Reiki on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. That meant that while the parents were in “class” we were the baby-sitters, for all the children! And we had our regular visits for prenatal care and for children whose parents were not in the class.

At the beginning of the Thursday clinic one of the mothers scheduled to participate in the class arrived in a panic. Her son, Alan, was very ill. She had taken him to the general hospital and was told “There’s nothing we can do. Just take him home.” Peggy took one look at the child and knew he was close to death. She and Gloria bundled him and his mother off to a different hospital downtown, praying all the way. Alan was admitted with a diagnosis of pneumonia and it was several hours before Peggy and Gloria could return.

Meanwhile, the remaining volunteers ran around like the proverbial headless chickens, feeding, rocking and changing the infants while keeping tabs on two active teens with autism and supervising a variety of other youngsters. The Jacuzzi was busy from start to finish. Thankfully we had two students volunteering with us over their Spring break. Katlin is a physical therapy major at MSJ and Theresa is a graduate student in occupational therapy at Washington University in St. Louis. They had quite the experience on Thursday and everyone looked rather bedraggled by the time they got home around 6 p.m. Late in the evening we received a call from Cristina who helps with our social service needs at the clinic. She took another of our children, Vanessa, to the hospital with pneumonia. Two hospitalized children in one day is a record we don’t want to repeat.

Saturday afternoon was a touching scene when the Reiki students finished class and came out with their practitioner certificates. They expressed their gratitude for having had the opportunity to learn the healing technique and quite obviously had shared much of their personal experiences of raising children with special needs during the class. We have hoped since the beginning of Santo Niño to offer support to the families and this was a dream realized.

We need your special prayers for a situation with Miriam, the young woman with autism whose mother died last August. She has been in a kind of “foster home” for the past nine months and has made good improvement but at this point it appears that the foster family is not going to be able to continue for much longer. We are facing difficult decisions and need divine guidance (and perhaps some new and generous caregivers) for this young woman we have come to love. We’ll keep you updated.