

Desert Blooms
May 2007

Dear Sisters and Friends,

This is Mother's Day week and we have been surrounded with examples of maternal love and care at the Santo Niño project. Last Saturday, after bringing over 100+ sandwiches she made for lunch, our dedicated mom-volunteer, Siba, came to the house in time to help us change a flat tire. We still made it to Anapra in time to begin welcoming the children at 10 a.m. The other car wasn't so lucky! Sisters Carol and Peggy and volunteer Eileen Baca (grandniece of Sister Adele) went to downtown Juarez to pick up Zoila and her family. They didn't figure on becoming part of the Cinco de Mayo parades. Caught amid busses, fire engines, and ambulances, they had many detours before they made it to the pick-up spot for Zoila. She wasn't there. She came by bus with her three children and arrived before they did!

Two women arrived for their initial prenatal exams along with several other registered pregnant patients. Skarle and Sister Janet were kept busy all morning caring for the "next generation". One of our new mothers arrived with her one month old son to check his weight and have questions answered about a variety of "problemitas". Her son was perfectly healthy, a pudgy breast-fed infant.

Most of our mothers know the routine and wait for a turn to put their child in the Jacuzzi. We have to keep an eye on Miriam who is always ready to make a mad dash for the tub, jumping to the head of the line out of turn, clothes and all. Conchita, age 5, even brought a swimsuit! Cerebral palsy doesn't keep her from splashing and swimming like a regular fish in the six foot long tub. Someone got carried away with the soap and soon the volunteers were carrying buckets of bubbles through the waiting room to dump outside.

The last time we saw Karla she was 8 years old and had just been to the Shriners' hospital in Salt Lake City for surgery on her legs. The family moved to another part of the city and we lost contact until last Saturday when a lovely young woman, now 12, was carried into the clinic by her mother and aunt. Sister Carol worked with her for awhile before asking if she'd like to try the tub. Karla was delighted! At the end of the visit her mother offered to give some classes to the other mothers: jewelry-making, hair cutting, and other arts and crafts that they could sell. She is coming next time to make a presentation during lunch.

By 2 p.m. the van was loaded up again with moms, children, and various supplies: diapers, leftover food, a vaporizer, walkers, etc. Just before pulling away from the clinic our mom-chauffeur Sofia noticed the tires. Two were nearly flat. "Everybody off the bus!" and she drove down the street to get the repair. The children all cheered because they could come back into the clinic. The tired mothers never complained.