

## DESERT BLOOMS

May 2015



Mother's Day in Mexico is on May 10 every year and so of course we celebrated on Saturday May 9 during our scheduled session at Santo Niño. Weeks in advance the mothers themselves talked about how they wanted to celebrate. There would be music, even with a disco with an amplifier and selection of songs. Sarahi would make small rose corsages out of craft foam. They would make fruit kabobs, slicing pieces of jicama into hearts and flower shapes that they could paint with food coloring and alternate with strawberries, bananas, marshmallows and clementine sections. These would be used to create an edible bouquet, arranged next to the CHOCOLATE FONDUE FOUNTAIN which would be the special dessert for the day!

The lunch menu was full of favorites. A pork and red chile dish was commissioned from Erik's mother. Charro beans would be made at the center. These are pinto beans cooked with hot dogs, bacon and chicharrones (pork rinds). We also provided a pasta salad: spaghetti, canned corn and chopped lunch meat dressed with Mexican sour cream. And of course fresh warm corn tortillas!

It seemed that everyone arrived early, full of excitement for the day. It was also Monce's birthday but she didn't mind sharing the spotlight with all the mothers. Two of our regular team had to miss the day. Cristina is still waiting to deliver her baby. Lucy's eldest son is in prison and Saturday



was visiting day. She has developed a prison ministry of her own, visiting not just her son but the many other young men who have no one coming to see them. "They are so happy just to have someone stop and shake their hands, say hello and ask how they are doing," she said.

Several of the older girls worked on creating the fruit bouquet under the direction of Isidra.

Fortunately we brought plenty of strawberries and bananas because the artists did some serious snacking while they worked. The music started around 11 and soon there was dancing. The chocolate fountain

started spouting and our mouths were watering in anticipation. Isidra finished decorating the dessert table with some homemade chocolates and individual gelatin molds that each contained a small edible flower. It was an elegant affair!

Finally the carne asado arrived and the last of the children was done in the Jacuzzi. We sang two rounds of the traditional Mexican "mañanitas". Celia's daughter, Janet, read a poem she practiced all morning, "What Is a Mother?" before we said the blessing before the meal. Everything was so festive and beautiful. The food was delicious and there was plenty for everyone- even the chocolate-covered fruit kabobs. The final treat of the day was the easy clean-up. We indulged in disposable plates so that dishwashing was kept to a minimum.

Mother's Day is over for another year and we celebrated well. It is so important to keep these holidays, to give recognition and express our gratitude when we can. Life is uncertain and many days for these mothers are very difficult. That's why FIESTA is such an essential part of our culture at Santo Niño.

