

## DESERT BLOOMS

October 2015

*Greetings Beloved Disciples,*

*It is with some sorrow and great joy that we inform you of Brother Jim's passing into the Lord's everlasting presence on September 27, 2015. Jim had been hospitalized twice previously and was always up and running at the mission in a few weeks. This time it was evident that his work and his calling on this earth were coming to a close. He was surrounded by people who loved him deeply during the two weeks of his hospitalization.*

*Jim made it very clear that he wanted the work to continue among the poorest of the poor in Anapra. He asked that all remaining funds be donated to the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati who have a ministry here at the border. They serve severely handicapped children with great mercy and compassion at the Santo Niño Project in Anapra. Brother Jim hoped that you would prayerfully consider supporting their ministry. In his words, "I love the Sisters!" and it is very evident to us that the Sisters loved Jim, too. This newsletter explains how the connection has grown between Beloved Disciples and the Santo Niño Project.*

*Thank you for your faithful support of the Ministry and the many kindnesses extended throughout the years. May we all join together humbled by the Lord's grace exemplified in His servant's life of prayer, obedience, poverty, and stability. May each of us continue to fight the good fight and finish the race well. Brother Jim's last message was, "Pray and be vigilant!" Peace. We love you.*

*Ray Rivera, Kevin Joyce and Filiberto Bonilla  
Board of Directors, Beloved Disciples*

With this month's *Desert Blooms* newsletter we welcome the benefactors of *Beloved Disciples*, a ministry of love and compassion in Anapra, Mexico for almost twenty-five years. Founded by James Toman, known to all as "Brother Jim", in the days when the colonia on the outskirts of Ciudad Juarez was barely inhabited, this ministry of prayer, presence and charity continued uninterrupted throughout all the years of violence and turmoil.

Brother Jim became aware of the Santo Niño Project through one of his earliest volunteers, Gloria Lozano, who readers of *Desert Blooms* came to know in last month's newsletter. Brother Jim was always concerned for the most vulnerable residents of the colonia. Children with special needs like Gloria's tiny son with Downs Syndrome always

caught his attention as he provided food, clothing, and housing assistance. One day Brother Jim appeared at our doorstep to see what the Santo Niño Project was about. At the end of the visit he asked, "What do you need?" We weren't sure what his capacity to assist us might be so we offered our usual list: diapers, baby wipes, general cleaning supplies. "What else?" he asked.

Some weeks later we had a message to stop by Brother Jim's mission. He told us that he had always wanted to use his complex for handicapped children but that every time he started to make plans, God let him know that it wasn't for him to do. "Lord, why do you put this in my head and heart and then let my plans fall apart?" he asked. With a twinkle in his eye Brother Jim humbly recounted, "Now I know why! You Sisters are doing it better than I ever could!" Then he gave us a check and told us to contact one of his benefactors in El Paso who had already been instructed to find a van to transport our children. Some months later Brother Jim met with Fr. Bill Morton on whose property the Santo Niño Project is located. Jim thought we needed more space and suggested that we could double the size of the building by tearing down Fr. Bill's house! And so our two mission projects in Anapra began a beautiful collaboration.

Brother Jim was more than sixty-five years old in 1990 when he heard the call to leave the Benedictine Abbey in Belmont, North Carolina and devote the rest of his life to a ministry of healing presence in Anapra. For the past ten years he has prayed about what to do with the mission when God called him home to heaven. In conversations with his close friends, his board of directors and the Sisters of Charity at the Santo Niño Project, Brother Jim expressed his desire that the mission would be used to support the needs of handicapped children. We have agreed to carry out his wishes as best we are able. Funds that have been donated to *Beloved Disciples* will be used for the utilities and upkeep of the mission complex as well as the ongoing work of the Santo Niño Project.

You, *Beloved Disciples*, will now receive this monthly newsletter. If you would like to donate to our ministry those donations are tax deductible when made to the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati, specifying Santo Niño Project in the memo line. Donations can be mailed the Sisters of Charity at the address below. You can also learn more about us by visiting our website at [www.proyectosantonino.org](http://www.proyectosantonino.org) Rest in the peace of Christ, dear friend and our brother, Jim! We love you!