

# Sisters of Social Service

*Rooted in the social teachings of the Church, we are sent to be pioneers*



Celebrating 91 years of working with and supporting people on the margins of our world through social services and advocacy

## World Youth Day 2019

by Jamey Fitzpatrick, Sr. Beatriz Tevera Guijosa, SSS,  
Sister Isabel García Rodríguez, SSS, and Sr. Raquel Cruz, SSS



Ten Sisters of Social Service from the SSS Federation were delighted to attend this year's World Youth Day in Panamá.

SSS Sisters receiving visitors at the vocation booth include: (front row): *Sr. Beatriz (Mexico) and Sr. Zsuzsa (Slovakia)*; (standing): *Sr. Maria Elena (Mexico), Sr. Leticia (Mexico), Sr. Raquel (California), Sr. Yurelis (Cuba), Sr. Maria de los Angeles (Cuba) and Sister Isabel (Mexico)*.

In late January ten Sisters of Social Service were delighted to participate in the *15<sup>th</sup> International World Youth Day in Panama City, Panamá*. The week-long event was held in Cinta Costera where 64 acres of lush coastline land connects many diverse ecosystems and forms a peninsula that reaches out into the Panama Bay. The people of *Penonome* were warm and welcoming to nearly 600,000 visitors convening from all over the world, and made everyone feel like they were an integral part of local celebrations and religious rituals. Youth and other attendees represented more than 155 countries from around the globe, and activities brought together the worldwide Catholic community.



SSS Sisters received hundreds of young people at the vocation fair and answered questions about their ministries and lives as a Woman Religious, as well as supported the spiritual lives of those present. Below are some pictures and reflections from the incredible experiences our sisters had.



World Youth Day  
**PANAMA**

*The following photos given courtesy of Sr. Beatriz Tevera Guijosa.*

***Listening to the messages of Pope Francis and seeing him smile, these are moments that I keep in my heart and that I thank God for allowing me to experience. ~ Sister Isabel García Rodríguez***

Some of the festivities for pilgrims included the Opening Ceremonies, the Papal Vigil, the “Via Crucis” (Way of the Cross) pilgrimage, and musical celebrations, as well as a presentation on the Laudato Si Encyclical. Many social justice activities were organized and the week coincided with the World Meeting of Indigenous Youth. Images and tributes to the recently canonized and beloved Saint Oscar Romero were plentiful, and paid tribute to the late priest and his tenacious and tireless advocacy for those living in poverty.



***The coexistence with so many young people filled me with energy, nourished my faith and joy for the proclamation of the Gospel, and reminded me of the beauty of being Christians.***

***~ Sister Isabel García Rodríguez***

***It renewed my commitment and love for others... God advises us to be everyday sources of living water to be able to live the present with fullness.***

***~ Sister Beatriz Tevera Guijosa***

***As far as meeting everyone or having the Pope a few feet away - those moments were "Amazing". I was also really impressed to see kids from all over the world together in one spirit praising each other - not in fights or arguing - it was just unreal.***

***~ Sister Raquel Cruz***





Also the people in Panama welcomed us everywhere we went to and they were just so kind and hospitable. This is what I can say about the trip - it was an unforgettable experience.

~ Sister Raquel Cruz



### World Youth Day 2019!

(front row): Sr. Maria de los Angeles (Cuba), Sr. Dailenys (Cuba) and Sr. Isabel (Mexico); (standing): Sr. Beatriz (Mexico), Sr. Maria Elena (Mexico), Sr. Raquel (California), Sr. Marcela (Slovakia), Sr. Zsuzsa (Slovakia), Sr. Yurelis (Cuba) and Sr. Leticia (Mexico).



## ***How did World Youth Day begin?***

“In 1984 at the close of the Holy Year of Redemption, over 300,000 young people from around the world responded to the invitation of His Holiness John Paul II for an International Jubilee of youth on Palm Sunday in St. Peter’s square.

Looking out to the crowds who answered his invitation he said, **“What a fantastic spectacle is presented on this stage by your gathering here today! Who claimed that today’s youth have lost their sense of values? Is it really true that they cannot be counted on?”**

It was at this gathering that the Holy Father entrusted to the youth what is now known as the World Youth Day Cross, to be carried throughout the world as a symbol of the love of Christ for humanity.”

**Excerpt from [worldyouthday.com](http://worldyouthday.com)**



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