



ROSTRO DE CRISTO

Lenten Pilgrimage March 20-24, 2020 Guayaquil, Ecuador

Make your Lenten journey truly special by joining Rostro de Cristo on a most unique and powerful pilgrimage to Guayaquil, Ecuador. You will be hosted by a group of remarkable young adults who, inspired by their faith, have committed to living the Gospel with families and communities in some of Latin America's most impoverished neighborhoods. Each day they encounter Christ on the peripheries of Ecuador's largest city, and you are invited to join them.

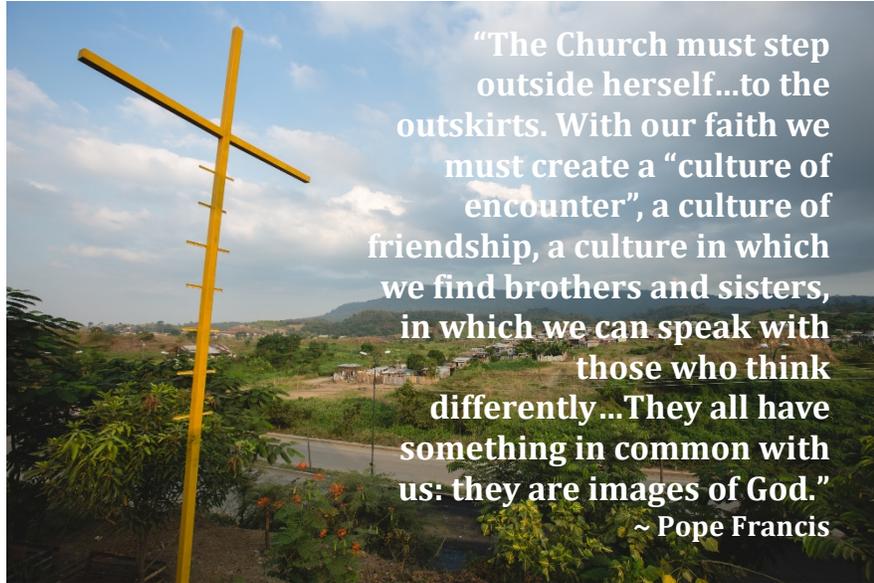
Who is Rostro de Cristo? *Rostro de Cristo* (Spanish for "Face of Christ") is a volunteer and mission immersion program that inspires young people to a life-long commitment to faith, service and justice by providing an intercultural, transformative experience of living the Gospel of Christ with those on the margins. Our participants respond to the invitation to "go to the outskirts" and create a culture of encounter in which we see in each other the face of Christ. Founded in 1989 by Fr. Jim Ronan, a priest of the Archdiocese of Boston who served in Ecuador with the St. James the Apostle Missionary Society, Rostro de Cristo has thirty years of experience of inviting young adults from United States to encounter Christ in Ecuador by living in solidarity with those who are excluded and forgotten and doing so with respect and humility.

Volunteer Program: Each year 10-15 young adults commit to living a year as Rostro de Cristo volunteers. They immerse themselves in their neighborhoods and support local ministries: tutoring programs, a shelter for families escaping domestic violence, pastoral ministry and leadership formation for youth, local Catholic schools, health care ministries, etc. Volunteers cultivate friendships in the community by visiting neighbors in their homes and participating in the life of the local parish. They live in an intentional Christian community where each day they pray and share meals together. The volunteers live simply, in solidarity with their neighbors. There have been almost 300 full time volunteers that have served with Rostro de Cristo since 1991.

Retreat Group Program: In addition, our volunteers host retreat groups. For a week, retreatants from high schools, colleges and parishes enter the communities where the volunteers live and serve and are guided by them. During the "retreat" we invite the students to reflect on the ways they experience Christ in Ecuador and in their daily lives at home, and to discern God's call in their lives. They see witnesses to the Gospel in our volunteers and neighbors, and are inspired. We host over 300 students each year.

Where does Rostro de Cristo serve? Currently we are located in two large barrios on the fringes of Guayaquil. These communities are rapidly growing and comprised mainly of migrants from the rural areas of Ecuador who are in search of greater access to education, health care and jobs. The communities are hampered by chronic, widespread poverty and lack basic needs, such as potable water, proper sanitation, health care, and schools.

Our mission: *To inspire a lifelong commitment to a faith that works for justice through transformative, intercultural experiences living the Gospel of Christ in solidarity with marginalized communities.*



"The Church must step outside herself...to the outskirts. With our faith we must create a "culture of encounter", a culture of friendship, a culture in which we find brothers and sisters, in which we can speak with those who think differently...They all have something in common with us: they are images of God."
~ Pope Francis



What will I do while on Pilgrimage with Rostro de Cristo? While in Ecuador you will be accompanied by our founder, Fr. Jim Ronan, Executive Director, Evan Cuthbert, our volunteers, and our staff. You are invited to open yourself to an encounter with Christ as you walk the streets where our volunteers live, meet their neighbors, and visit our local ministry partners. You will pray, reflect, and celebrate Mass with others who are sharing in your pilgrimage. You will come to know intimately Rostro de Cristo and our mission.



Itinerary:

Day 1: Travel to Guayaquil, Ecuador. After arriving in the evening will be greeted at the airport by Rostro de Cristo staff and transferred to a local retreat house in Guayaquil. After settling into your room we will meet for a brief orientation and evening prayer.

Days 2-4 Visiting Days: Each day will be full of rich moments - with encounters, sharing and learning. We begin with Morning Prayer followed by breakfast. We will then board our vans for a guided experience of our neighborhoods and ministries – a local Catholic school, a tutoring program, a shelter for women and children, and more. You will share lunch and conversation with some of our friends and partners who have been serving in Ecuador for decades. Our volunteers will introduce you to neighbors where you can hear their stories and share yours. In the evening we will gather in our volunteers' home for intimate celebration of Mass, dinner and conversation. In the evening we will return to the retreat house for shared reflection and conversation.

Day 4 (late night): Return to US on an overnight flight. You will be home by midday on Day 5.

Logistical Information:

Costs: Each person will need to cover airfare to and from Guayaquil, Ecuador. In addition, to cover costs of the lodging and food while in Ecuador we ask that you make a gift to Rostro de Cristo as you are able.

Passport: You will need a valid passport that *will not expire 6 months before your return date*.

Travel: Please contact Executive Director, Evan Cuthbert, regarding flight information. We will help arrange flights to ensure that all participants will arrive and depart on the same flights. Round-trip fares from major airports in the US are currently between \$550-\$800.

Lodging and food: The retreat center offers simple, secure, and comfortable housing, and a prayerful environment. Each individual or couple will have their own room with two twin beds, a private bathroom with hot water shower, and air conditioning. The food offered will be carefully prepared local fare.

Immunizations and Vaccinations: Please consult your health care provider for specific information for travel to the coastal city of Guayaquil, Ecuador. Generally, no additional immunizations or vaccines other than the standard are necessary.



For more information contact Evan Cuthbert, Executive Director, at 617-746-5890 or evan@rostrodecristo.org.