



Documentary Filmmaker Honors Sister María Rosa's Ministry

By Abigail Springsteen, Communications Intern

The Fall issue of *De Paul* magazine features an article about “With This Light,” a forthcoming documentary film about the life and work of Sister María Rosa Leggol.

Sister María Rosa, often called the “Mother Teresa of Honduras,” ministered with our congregation for 71 years until her death last year at age 93. She was the founder of *Sociedad Amigos de los Niños*, (Friends of the Children Society), an organization that is credited with saving more than 80,000 children from poverty through housing, education, and medical programs.

Film director and De Paul University alumna Jessica Sarowitz said she is creating the film out of a deep and personal connection with Sister María Rosa. When she was just a toddler, Jessica emigrated to the United States from Honduras with her parents, who continued to financially support Sister’s organization when they settled in Chicago. Jessica got to meet Sister María Rosa on a visit to Honduras when she was nine.

“I saw Sor (Sister) as this mythical nun figure who was always vibrant, full of energy, running around and giving the greatest hugs,” Jessica told *De Paul* magazine.

Always having a passion to support social justice organizations, Jessica felt a “gravitational pull” to tell Sister María Rosa’s story. She said that attending De Paul and becoming a first-generation college graduate nurture her love of philanthropy. “I live in the business world but have a responsibility to dedicate my talents and time to service,” she said.

“With this Light” shows Sister María Rosa’s everyday work with Friends of the Children and the program’s beneficiaries, and also tells her life story with archival images and recreated scenes. Jessica said the goal was to include Sister’s whole legacy “because she was so full of life.”

The COVID-19 pandemic restrictions halted the production completely, but work resumed this year and Jessica said Sister María Rosa’s optimism and charisma inspired her team to complete the project. “You have to have faith,” she said. “With this team, there’s no way we weren’t going to make a beautiful film that’s going to move people.”

You can [read the full interview](#) in *De Paul* magazine online. We will share more details about the completion and release of “With This Light” when that information becomes available.