Why Central America?

Central America has become an area of major concern for the religious community in the United States. The terrible toll of violent death, the witness of the poor seeking to build new societies of justice and dignity even in the face of that violence, the reality of hundreds of thousands of refugees living among us, unemployed and in daily fear of detention and deportation, and the role of the U.S. government in supporting repressive governments and blocking roads to peace - all of this has profoundly shaken our consciences and called us to the work of prophetic witness with and for the poor of the region.

The witness of martyred prophet, Archbishop Oscar Romero, has called us to be, as he was, a voice for the voiceless. The sacrifice of the four U.S. churchwomen - Maura, Ita, Dorothy, and Jean - killed in El Salvador because of their work among the poor, has become for people of faith in the U.S. an event calling us to a deep commitment of solidarity with the people of Central America, with the thousands of martyrs who have given their lives for their faith, with the majority poor who are struggling for their liberation and asking us to accompany them on that journey.

Who We Are

The Religious task Force on Central America is a national office supported by a broad base of concerned people of faith in the U.S. Founded by an ad hoc group of Catholic religious leaders in Washington D.C. in early 1980, with close ties to missionary communities and relief workers involved in the Central America region, the RTFCA is in touch with faith-based activists throughout the U.S. and collaborates closely with ecumenical and interfaith national organizations.

What We Do

Through our work we seek to promote the witness of religious people in the U.S. who are working for justice and peace in Central America, and towards changing the policy priorities of our government towards the region. We also seek to be a voice for the persecuted peoples of Central America who are yearning for peace based on justice and liberation from generations of oppression.

Specifically, we are working for:

- an end to U.S. military and political support for repressive regimes in Central America, particularly El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras;
- the beginning of a new era of relations with the people of Nicaragua based on mutual respect and an end to U.S. attempts to wage military and economic war against their government;
- U.S. support for principles of national sovereignty, self-determination, the rights of the repressed and oppressed majorities to strive for political change free of the threat of intervention;
- the promotion of the right of refugees to remain in the U.S., with basic social and economic rights, until their countries are free of the war and political violence that threatens them;
- a broader awareness among people of faith of the saving work that the poor peoples of Central America have for our faith here in the U.S.

The RTFCA promotes the concerns and the witness of the religious community in the following ways:

- by informing people of faith about events in Central America, the role of the U.S., the witness of the Central American and U.S. churches, and the aspirations of the region's people;
- by producing resources for the religious base as tools for education and organizing efforts;
- by participating in national campaigns and strategies that address legislation and other project priorities of the wider Central America movement;
- through ongoing articulation and development of the work of accompaniment, the effort by which we walk with the poor as they journey towards their own liberation.

What You Can Do

Inform yourself. The RTFCA publishes *Central America Report*, a 8-12 page tabloid, six times per year. It covers news and provides analysis of events in the region from the perspective of our faith. Subscriptions are $6.00 per year. Bulk subscriptions for churches, communities, special events, are also available upon request.

Become involved. Join our network of over 225 local contacts who receive special action alerts and legislative updates. These mailings are for active groups only, not for individuals. A yearly donation of $10 is requested. Contact us for more information.

Help support our work by sending a donation to the RTFCA.

Write for information on other RTFCA resources.

❒ Please send me a free introductory newsletter.
❒ I want to subscribe. Enclosed is $6 for one year.
(Outside U.S., please write for foreign postal rates.)

Name/organization _____

address _____

_____

Please return to: Religious Task Force
1747 Connecicut Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20009
(202) 387-7652