Dear Members of the Detroit Mercy Community and supporters of CLASA,  

March 12, 2020

Hello! I hope that you are well. You may know that, due to the concern over the coronavirus, our university has asked students to return home, and we are moving to online classes for the second half of the semester. We have canceled all of our public programming. That means that all three of our remaining events are canceled, that is, the Thursday, March 19, 2020 “Mextasy” event with Latinx scholar, Dr. William Nericcio; the Tuesday, March 24, 2020, 7 p.m. talk by Fr. John Dear on the topic of his new book, Praise Be Peace; and our April 2 annual fundraiser dinner for the UCA Jesuit Martyrs’ Scholarship, with our keynote speaker, Padre Melo. We are very sorry to have to cancel all of these events.

As you may know, the students at University of Central America (UCA) greatly depend on the scholarship money. Through your generosity we have been able to raise thousands of dollars each year, enough to support several students. I am hoping that you will still consider donating to the fund, even though there is not a dinner this year.

If you are able to donate this year, and you send your check for the scholarship (for $10 or more) to us at CLASA, we will forward your monies as we always do to the Jesuits of Central and Southern Province (and they send the funds to El Salvador). And we will send you a coffee-color print of Dean Brackley (see left), created by El Salvadoran artist Chomingo Rivas of Sr. Preggy O’Neill’s Center for the Arts and Peace (in Suchitoto, El Salvador). Chomingo created the print especially for our event.

Write checks to: Jesuits Central and Southern Province (you can put UCA Scholarship Fund in the memo), and send it to: Erin McDonald, University Ministry, University of Detroit Mercy - CLAE, 4001 W. McNichols Rd., Detroit MI 48221.

Please also keep Padre Melo in your prayers as he continues his important work in Honduras. Hear a great radio interview of him at https://www.kalw.org/post/sacred-steps-jesuit-priest-risks-his-life-challenge-honduras-repressive-government#stream/0.

Chomingo Rivas: Prints of Peace and Justice heroes  Left: artista Juan Domingo Rivas Menjivar, “Chomingo”: “I was born on the Guazapa mountain and my first 9 years were spent in the refugee camp of COAR because of the civil war in El Salvador. My motivation for drawing started during school hours on the margins of my school work. Later I received work with different organizations in Suchitoto. I was a benefactor of a scholarship to study art in CENAR (National Center for the Arts) and took part in workshops at Centro Arte para la Paz. I currently work out of my house as my studio, on my family’s land as a farmer, and in Centro Arte para la Paz as a teacher.”

Please consult our website, https://udmercy.edu/clasa for extensive coverage of past events including links to videos (available to the Detroit Mercy community), and announcements of future events. Sincerely, Gail Presbey

Dean Brackley, S.J., founder of the UCA Jesuit Martyrs Scholarship Fund. Dean Brackley was devoted to El Salvador, and taught theology at the UCA.