



Ignacio Ellacuría, S.J.

Native of Spain, Fr. Ellacuría was the rector of the José Simeón Cañas Central America University for over 10 years, a theologian & philosopher, and a gifted intellectual with a fierce commitment to human rights. He was outspokenly critical of El Salvador's extreme right and of the military which was using repression to crush its political enemies. He also became a strong advocate of a negotiated solution to the war, which won him the enmity of the military and rightist political sectors that supported a strategy of total war. For the last 20 years of his life, he was also involved in pastoral work with the poor.

"Today in our situation the authenticity of the people of God goes by way of poverty and justice: they are the touchstone of the truth of the faith that is professed and of the genuineness of life as it is lived out."

~Ignacio Ellacuría, S.J.



Amando López Quintana, S.J.

Professor of theology and former rector of the seminary in the San Salvador archdiocese, Fr. López Quintana was a close associate of Archbishop Oscar Romero. He was the former rector of the UCA in Managua, Nicaragua, just following the fall of the Somoza dictatorship and the triumph of the Sandinista revolution in 1979. He was known to be a gifted counselor and did pastoral work in a semi-rural parish at Tierra Virgen.

"The root cause of the fighting here is wealth distribution. If the real wealth of our country were distributed equally rather than the few having so much more than the many, then there would be enough for all. But the government kills its own people when they cry for bread. They are called 'communists' when they organize because they have no food."

~Amando López Quintana, S.J.



Joaquin López y López, S.J.

Native of El Salvador and 71-years-old at the time of his death, Fr. López y López was the director of Fe y Alegria, a religious education program that organizes schools for primary-age children in poor communities. He helped found the UCA in 1964, though he only taught there a few years. He joined the Jesuit university community in 1988.

"Throughout his life he was exemplary in his self-denial and fondness for secondhand things -- never a trace of luxury... Lolo was a man already condemned -- not by any death squad but by prostate cancer. He did not know how long he had. Meanwhile he kept working tirelessly, until, without his suspecting it would be this way, the enemies of his poor people did the Reaper's business."

~Joaquin López y López, S.J.



Ignacio Martin-Baró, S.J.

Born in Spain, vice academic rector at the UCA and director of the psychology department, Fr. Ignacio was described as intense, a workaholic. A highly acclaimed researcher, he carried out pioneering studies on the effects of war and repression on the human psyche. He did pastoral work among campesinos in the community of Jayaque, surrounded by coffee plantations. He was known for his goodness and generosity, as well as his passion for justice.

"Above all, this is a society that is more than poor -- it is impoverished; a society that is not just divided -- it is violently torn apart. It is a society in which the most basic human rights of the majority are structurally and systematically denied -- such fundamental rights as having a place to live, a job in which to fulfill oneself as a human being, or a school in which to educate one's children."

~Ignacio Martin-Baró, S.J.



Segundo Montes Mozo, S.J.

Spanish-born, Fr. Segundo was the director of the UCA's Institute of Human Rights and professor of sociology and political science. He conducted surveys in the countryside, studying social classes and land holding patterns. He also wrote prodigiously about refugees and human rights. On Sundays he did pastoral work among the poor in Santa Tecla. He was well-known internationally because of his many presentations abroad based on his institute's human rights documentation.

"With a history of killing our population at random, now they can terrorize persons and threaten them, and the threats are taken seriously, because the population knows that the army can really do it."

~Segundo Montes Mozo, S.J.



Juan Ramón Moreno Pardo, S.J.

A native of Spain, librarian at the UCA's Center of Theological Reflection, and assistant director of the Oscar Romero Center at the UCA, Fr. Juan was especially grounded in Ignatian spirituality – the spirituality of the founder of the Society of Jesus. He gave many retreats for religious and was known as a gifted preacher.

"Our world is an overdeveloped world with an impressive supply of consumer goods and services, but one in which there are more poor than ever... Our world is marked by the lack of solidarity and the mistrust of people toward each other... And alongside all this there is a new awareness of the dignity and rights of the poor... God does not want things to go on as they are..."

~Juan Ramón Moreno, S.J.



Elba Ramos

Born in 1947, Elba's mother was a fruit-seller and her father a plantation boss. She worked as a housekeeper and coffee-picker and met her common law husband while working on a coffee plantation. From 1976, she was employed by the Jesuits to cook and clean at their theologate. She moved with her husband and two children to the guardhouse at the UCA in 1989. Her husband was hired that year to be the guard at the UCA's main gate.

She is remembered as a woman sensitive to others' needs, intuitive, "an exceptional person," according to Jesuit Fr. Jon Sobrino. He wrote that on the day she was killed, she washed her best dress so that she could give it the next day to a woman "who had taken refuge in the theologate from the bombing."



Celina Ramos

Elba's only daughter, Celina was 16 years old and in her first year of high school at the time of her death. She had worked as a catechist and participated in activities such as band and basketball. Celina's boyfriend of two years was a classmate and player on the school basketball team. They had planned to approach Elba in December to ask for permission to marry.

"Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way, they persecuted the prophets who were before you."