



Association for the Rights of Catholics in the Church

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Dear Fr. Edward Dougherty,

We were deeply disappointed to learn that your missionary society has withdrawn financial support of School of the America's Watch. Your annual commitment of \$17,000 was a mark of Maryknoll's century-long mission—"compassion at work"—and we are grateful that you joined SOA Watch in the struggle for peace and justice for so long.

For nearly 100 years, Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers have modeled Gospel values. You live in solidarity with the poor and powerless. You work to end poverty, provide health care, build communities, and spread the love of God among marginalized peoples everywhere. Indeed, this is "compassion at work."

However, the recent decision to terminate your support of SOA Watch appears to contradict that very mission. Instead of combating poverty, this decision weakens SOA Watch's ability to support people in poverty. Instead of empowering marginalized communities, this decision allows the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation and the abusive dictators it graduates to advance, while SOA Watch scrambles to close its budget gap. This decision abandons Catholic social teaching, firmly rooted in two thousand year-old Gospel values. We believe certain doctrines are more important than others when life and death of the world's poor is at stake. Yes, we are disheartened, for Fr. Roy and SOA Watch will suffer. But the true victims of your decision are the communities of Latin America for whom SOA Watch advocates.

In addition, by cutting SOA Watch funding, you have sent a clear message that women should be regarded as second class citizens in the Catholic Church. For you to make such a statement this year, of all years, causes us great pain. We need not remind you that this December marks the 30th anniversary of the kidnapping, rape, and assassination of Dorothy Kazel, Jean Donovan, Ita Ford, and Maura Clarke. As we honor their martyrdom, the Maryknoll Society, to which three of these heroic churchwomen belonged, is deserting the organization that seeks justice from their perpetrators.

In their memory, and in honor of all victims of injustice in Latin America, we beseech you to reconsider your decision. Will you reinstate the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers' \$17,000 annual contribution to the SOA Watch in 2011? We look forward to a reply by the end of September so that SOA Watch has the time to prepare an announcement and share the good news of the funding reinstatement with all who gather at the vigil in November.

Sincerely,

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