

“A Joyful Privileged Burden”: The Life of Father Stanley Rother



*By Ariana Quezada**

*“Which way will he go?”
This Guatemalan
older than he looks,
ponders the future
as he leans against his broken-windowed school.
Which path will he choose?
The way of the gun, left or right?
The way of the world’s doormat?
The way of sacrifice or justice?
How can we help him?¹*

During the 1980s the world witnessed the sudden disintegration of communist governments and the emergence of new social movements. The Velvet Revolution in Czechoslovakia, the Workers Solidarity movement in Poland, and the fall of the Berlin Wall in

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Germany all signaled the end of the Cold War and marked a transformation in the way people demanded change. Tired of living under the threat of nuclear war, activists now shied away from violent confrontation and sought to affect policy through cooperation, humanitarianism, and solidarity. It was also in the 1980s that the language of human rights burgeoned, providing an alternative avenue, legally and internationally framed, to demand social justice.

In the United States the term solidarity has been retroactively applied to the Central American peace effort. The movement encompassed an extensive network of activists protesting US foreign policy in Central America in the 1980s and early 1990s. The best-documented group was the Sanctuary Movement, a faith-based network of churches aiding refugees along the US-Mexico border. In summer 1980 twenty-six Salvadorians crossed the Sonoran Desert. The *coyotes* or smugglers abandoned the refugees resulting in the death of half of the group. Immigration authorities arrested the thirteen survivors and prepared them for deportation. This event outraged individuals like Jim Corbett, a Quaker in Tucson. Soon thereafter, a coalition of Catholics, Presbyterians, Quakers, and Jews created the Tucson Ecumenical Council Task Force on Central America (TECTF) to respond to the sudden influx of Central American refugees into the United States.²

These groups' frustrations with refugee policies led to the establishment of an underground network for sheltering and transporting immigrants from Mexico into the border states. By 1987 there were more than four hundred sanctuary sites, including churches, synagogues, and universities, in twenty-five cities. As a whole, the Central American Solidarity Movement was comprised of activists groups from the United States, Mexico, Canada, and Central America. In the First World, this empathy also reflected a "revolution of moral concern," a humanitarian response to suffering emblematic of the post-war period that reached its height in the 1980s.³ Oklahoma too played a part in this movement. Many Oklahoma residents developed a strong sense of solidarity with Central Americans in the 1980s and 1990s. Unquestionably the most famous of these solidarity activists was Stanley Rother, the Okarche-born priest who died in 1981 at the hands of assassins in Santiago de Atitlán (Guatemala), where the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City sponsored a mission. But many others participated in a less dramatic fashion.

Moreover, and despite the extreme cultural differences involved, this sense of solidarity among Oklahomans had profound effects. As the crossroads of the US interstate system, Oklahoma became an important halfway point in the transportation of refugees to Chicago, which had

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a large Hispanic population and an established Sanctuary Movement. Oklahoma's geographical location made the state an important way station for the Sanctuary Movement. And for the Catholic Church, the violence in Santiago de Atitlán became a potent criticism used against Ronald Reagan's official account on human rights violations under President Efraín Ríos Montt (1982-1983). Subsequently, the death of Father Rother and the violence in Central America drew the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City closer to Hispanics in the state, making Spanish ministries a priority. Finally, the faith-based transnational networks established under the Solidarity Movement merit a place in the history of the state and of human rights development in general.

Guatemala: A Troubled Mosaic

The Oklahoma Solidarity Movement had its origins in Guatemala. This Mayan land constitutes one of the most diverse cultural and linguistic mosaics in the entire hemisphere. With approximately twenty-two different ethnic groups, Guatemala has one of the largest indigenous populations in Latin America. First colonized by conquistador Pedro de Alvarado in 1530, Guatemala gained its independence from Spain in 1821, as did the rest of Spain's New World colonies. The early cash crop of cochineal, a red dye made from an insect that grows on cacti, inserted indigenous peoples into global markets. Despite the integration into the capitalist system, for most of the century Guatemala's economy remained subsistence based. The liberal reforms of the late nineteenth century broke up indigenous landholdings and curtailed the power of the Church, in the process weakening established communities and their traditional institutions. These changes paved the way for plantation-based coffee cultivation, which in turn profoundly transformed the environmental and cultural landscape of the country. The resulting system depended on Maya peasant labor extracted by force through a variety of legal (and illegal) mechanisms. For all intents and purposes, the nation was now divided between a handful of wealthy, white property-owners and a mass of extremely poor and politically disenfranchised Maya workers.⁴

The period immediately following World War II offered a brief democratic opening. It was in this political climate that Juan José Arévalo (1945-1951) became the first democratically elected president in Guatemalan history. Far more important, however, was his successor, army colonel Jacobo Arbenz. During his brief presidency (1952-54), Arbenz enacted a series of reforms designed to alleviate the abuses of the coffee boom. The most controversial change consisted of a land

reform law threatening the expropriation of uncultivated land. Moreover, as this was taking place, the post-World War II political opening came to an abrupt halt. The disintegration of Allied power led to a backlash against the left, popular fronts, and at times even democratically elected leaders. The geopolitics of the time profoundly affected Guatemala. In 1954 a CIA-orchestrated coup overthrew Arbenz. The intervention halted land reform and planted the seeds for what became a long and violent civil war. Ideologically, US involvement radicalized leftist groups and convinced many that peaceful reform was no longer an option.⁵

These many changes affected the Catholic Church as well. Anticlericalism, a legacy of the nineteenth-century liberal movement, ebbed during the revolutionary years of 1944-54, as issues of land and politics monopolized national attention. It was then that the arrival of foreign and national missionaries to the countryside revitalized the Catholic Church and transformed the relationship between indigenous people and the state. Catholicism prospered with the creation of *Acción Católica Rural* (Catholic Rural Action) and the arrival of the Maryknolls, a Catholic order, in the 1940s. These groups renewed the church in remote areas, particularly through the work of lay catechists. A second stage of missionary work of the developmentalist tradition followed in the 1950s and 1960s that blended “social and economic goals along with religious ones.” Developmentalist projects encouraged the training of leaders who could advance local needs, such as those of health and education. Like the developmentalism associated with the Alliance for Progress, a Kennedy program whose resources “were also channeled through Catholic institutions,” an important component of these efforts included the modernization of agriculture. At this critical juncture, Catholic nexus, as well as nascent Protestant groups, coalesced into the country’s social and political makeup. Whatever the denomination, the initial goal was to aid communities while simultaneously directing peasants away from more radical options.⁶

Despite their original intent, religious groups in Guatemala soon found themselves moving leftward. In part the change came as a result of frustration over the region’s persistent poverty and deeply entrenched racism. But by far the most radical turn within the church took place after the Cuban Revolution. The teachings of Vatican II (1962-65), followed by the Medellín Conference of Latin American Bishops (CELAM) in 1968, established new precedent for missionary work. The teachings of Liberation theology, which grew from the conference and the work of Peruvian Gustavo Gutiérrez, emphasized a shift in consciousness. This included the “adaptation of a universal

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church to national and local cultures.” What some have termed the “Latinoamericanization” of the church meant acclimatizing the teachings and pastoral work to the needs of communities, in many cases requiring the learning of indigenous languages. This transformation also necessitated that foreigners constitute the bulk of workers carrying out these changes. To practice this new theology, priests, catechists, and lay people journeyed across national and cultural borders.⁷

Micatokla

This renewal within the Catholic Church first brought Oklahomans to Lake Atitlán in Guatemala. In the highlands west of the capital, the lake remains a historic site visited by travelers from all over the globe. British explorer and photographer Alfred P. Maudslay captured the region’s beauty in the last decades of the nineteenth century. To the north lies the town of Panajachel, today a popular tourist destination. With an area of approximately ninety square miles, five thousand feet in elevation, the robust terrain of this region, insulated on the south by three volcanoes (Tolimán, Atitlán, and San Pedro), remains a true jewel to the eye. “With steep cliffs, deep canyons, gorges and ravines,” the few level areas around the lake are the home to Tzutujil, Cakchiquel, and Quiché towns.⁸

The Archdiocese of Oklahoma City began its sponsorship of the Guatemala mission in Santiago de Atitlán in 1963. The first priests established their ministries upon the foundations of a Franciscan church dating back to the sixteenth century. Clergymen themselves had been absent from the region since the years of the liberal coffee revolution. It was not until Vatican II and the ideological reorientation of the church that Atitlán received foreign laity with the arrival of “a Catholic bishop of the local diocese,” a missionary from Washington state, and Father Ramon Carlin. This initial group dubbed themselves *Micatokla*: The Catholic Mission of Oklahoma. Their presence spiritually bound the Oklahoma Catholic community to the Tzutujil people. Five years later Father Rother or “A’plas” (Francis in Tzutujil) joined this growing international community.⁹

A patient man with a good sense of humor, Father Rother actually drove to Santiago de Atitlán from Oklahoma. Rother hailed from the rural town of Okarche and found that in many ways Guatemala did not differ all that much from his native wheat farming community. He joined the seminary in 1953, only to fail his first year of theology. Father Marvin Leven, a longtime friend from Assumption Seminary, explained that, “Stan was a wonderful person. He was very adept at

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Lake Atitlán near Santiago de Atitlán where the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City sponsored a mission from 1964 until the late 1990s (photographs courtesy of the author).



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mechanical things, repairing wiring, running machinery and all sorts of other things. And he was given these things to do. He didn't have enough time to study, and he needed to study. As a result he failed in his academics." Rother "was crushed when he was told to go home at the end of the first semester of the repetition year," wrote Father David Monahan.¹⁰

Despite this setback, the determined young Okarchean was ordained on May 25, 1963. Two years later he applied to work at the mission in Guatemala, but was rejected due to his lack of experience. Apparently the mission members believed he was "a nice enough guy but not so bright" and questioned his ability to learn Spanish. His luck changed in 1968 when Father Ramon Carlin traveled to Oklahoma in search of a priest. "I hardly knew ten words in Spanish," said Father Rother. Regardless of his total lack of foreign language skills, he accepted the mission. Rother studied Spanish for four months and later Tzutujil at a Guatemala City language institute established by Father Carlin.¹¹

Initially overlooked for his lack of experience and shy manners, Father Rother lived to be accepted by the community in Santiago de Atitlán. His missionary group, aided by a constant cadre of volunteers, carried out a number of projects in the mission. The programs took the name of S.P.R.E.A.D., the acronym for Santiago Physical, Religious, Educational, and Agricultural Development. Nurse Marcella Faudree first ran the clinic, and in the 1970s and 1980s Frankie B. Williams from Wichita, Kansas, spent considerable time with Project Concern, a program sponsored by the clinic that dealt with nutrition and health. Marcella recounts that other volunteers included college students who made trips to the mission in the summer. In addition to the radio station that transmitted "daily lessons in language and mathematics," the mission included a weavers' co-op and a Montessori school. And in these endeavors, Father Rother's truck served "as an ambulance, hearse, delivery wagon, earthmover, [and] picnic transportation."¹²

Above all, Father Rother built. He ordered the church's stained glass windows from Mexico and installed them himself. He constructed part of an elementary school about two miles from the Atitlán mission. Perhaps most endearing to Father Rother was the agricultural co-op and "the fields [he] so carefully cultivated." On a ninety-acre farm, "Father Stan had cleared the land of huge rocks and had set up an irrigation system so that wheat, potatoes, tomatoes and onions could be raised," said his father, Franz Rother. Rother read engineering books "to find out about laying water pipes and installing electricity." These projects came on top of his pastoral duties, which included translations. From a completed two-hundred-page bilingual prayer book, Father Rother

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began translating the New Testament to Tzutujil, an unwritten language until Father Ramon Carlin actively pushed for the study of the language soon after the Oklahoma City archdiocese established the mission. Rother devoted himself to the Tzutujil because “despite all of this [poverty], you see happiness in the people. Their zest for life—to live and enjoy what they have—the friendliness, their spirit of cooperation . . . they are remarkable.” Captivated by his new home Father Rother concluded by saying, “I want to stay as long as I can.”¹³

Unfortunately, as all this was taking place, Central America was descending into a series of civil wars. Nicaragua’s Sandinista Revolution of 1979 succeeded, much to the displeasure of US policymakers. Fearing a similar outcome, the Salvadoran military regime responded with harsh repression. The death of Archbishop Óscar Romero in March 1980 in San Salvador awoke many to the reality in the region, and the brutal killing of four churchwomen in December of the same year only confirmed the situation. Similarly, under General Efraín Ríos Montt (1982-83), the Guatemalan civil war descended into a genocidal campaign where “the military swept through indigenous communities, committing over six hundred massacres and turning the rural highlands into a slaughterhouse.” Attempting to reverse the inhibiting effect of the Vietnam War on US foreign policy, the Reagan administra-

This wall represents the people who disappeared during the Guatemalan civil war. Behind the wall, the Guatemalan Forensic Anthropology Foundation unearthed thousands of bodies in large cemetery pits, possibly of those missing from that thirty-year conflict (photograph courtesy of the author).



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A church building in Santiago de Atitlán dating to the sixteenth century. Father Rother was killed in one of the rooms to the left of the church (photograph courtesy of the author).

tion fought to restore military aid that had been partially curbed under Jimmy Carter, fortifying Guatemala's security forces and promoting nonconventional warfare. The clergy, missionaries, and thousands of displaced Guatemalans—of which roughly two hundred thousand settled in refugee camps in southern Mexico—now found themselves caught in the crossfire.¹⁴

At the height of the conflict, Father Rother became a witness to and a victim of the violence. Santiago de Atitlán was first occupied by the military on October 22, 1980, in response to a brief visit by the guerilla group Revolutionary Organization of Armed People (*Organización Revolucionaria del Pueblo en Armas* or OPRA). Father Monahan reported that five hundred troops entered the region in eighteen trucks and two tanks. On November 3 the village radio station was broken into and sabotaged. Exactly two months later, Father Rother saw three men take Diego Quic from the mission: "I had just witnessed a kidnaping of someone that we had gotten to know and love and were unable to do anything about it. They had his mouth covered, but I can still hear his muffled screams for help." Seventeen other people went missing. "Their bodies were found in different parts of the country. They,

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these bodies, were badly tortured, e.g. skin peeled off their faces, etc.," wrote Father Rother. In late January, as a result of the increased violence and after finding out they were on a death list, Father Rother and his assistant, Father Pedro Bocel (Cakchiquel Indian), briefly relocated to Oklahoma. In a letter to a "Christian Brother in Minneapolis," Father Rother explained he felt Guatemalan and wanted to return, yet he asked himself, "Should I take a chance and go back? Nobody has yet convinced me to stay here." By the eve of Palm Sunday (April 11) Father Rother had returned to serve his people in Santiago de Atitlán.¹⁵

"Be careful about sending letters here mentioning relief etc.," warned Father Rother. As the situation worsened he wrote, "In the Country in general, the situation is bad. There were two big shoot-outs in the City last week, that is Guatemala City. And in the rural areas, there are always a large number of bodies that show up each day, tortured and unidentified." Taking precautions, he began sleeping on the ground floor in a room with a stouter door and with his boots on. On July 28, three masked men broke into the rectory of the church and made their way to where he slept. The associate pastor heard two shots, those that claimed the life of the Oklahoma priest. At age forty-six, Father Rother died in the early hours of the morning. According to an autopsy report completed in the Atitlán hospital, he was shot in his jaw and "his body was said to have been covered with bruises."¹⁶

Immediately, the local community responded to his death. A US Embassy worker arrived in Santiago de Atitlán later that day to claim his body; he saw that around a thousand Tzutujil Indians "stood silently in the plaza looking toward the church." Others gathered immediately to carve a wooden casket for his body. After a Mass ceremony, his remains were repatriated to Oklahoma, while his heart was laid to rest in Santiago de Atitlán by request of the Tzutujil people.¹⁷

Solidarity in Oklahoma

Little by little, the story of Father Rother rippled outward to affect Oklahomans. Needless to say, his violent death left the Catholic community in Atitlán in shock. The motive and murderers were a mystery. A month before his death the *Los Angeles Times* captured Father Rother's suspicions: "I have found that I am on a list of those to be killed . . . I talked too much when I was in Oklahoma, and some of it got back to Guatemala." First the death of Archbishop Romero brought international attention to attacks against the church, with campaigns like "Be Patriotic: Kill a Priest." "The painful reverberations of that gunshot have caused us to turn our heads toward Central and South

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Burial stone in Santiago de Atitlán for Father Rother (photograph courtesy of the author).

America,” reflected Father Monahan on the passing of Romero. With the murder of Father Rother, Oklahomans turned their attention to Guatemalans and the Tzutujil. Print media, particularly the *Sooner Catholic*, kept a close focus on Atitlán, because “in the decade or so before Father Rother’s death, it must be admitted that the church at Santiago Atitlan was overlooked or taken for granted by Oklahoma Catholics,” wrote Monahan as editor of the weekly paper. This fact, however, changed when the Guatemala mission and the city archdiocese grew closer together, making the Tzutujil archetypes for spiritual renovation.¹⁸

Immediately after Rother’s death Catholic representatives pressed for political action. Archbishop Charles A. Salatka disputed the initial reports that claimed the death resulted from a robbery, a charge that led to the arrest of three Tzutujil men Catholic officials presumed innocent. In a news conference Salatka said, “I find this explanation of Father Rother’s murder to be implausible. I do not accept it as an adequate explanation.” By then he had already sent Secretary of State Alexander Haig a written request for a full investigation of the incident. A similar petition by Senator David Boren followed. In Washington, DC, Frankie Williams testified before the Subcommittee on Human Rights and International Relations only days after the murder. “I am here to protest the killing of my friend, Father Stanley Rother.” Williams explained Rother was not an antigovernment instigator, attested to “the brutal madness of the terrorizing, kidnappings, tortures, mutilations, and killings by the Guatemalan Security Forces,” and pleaded for an

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end to economic aid or “anything to help the Guatemalan Government kill these innocent people.”¹⁹

Petition signing and fundraising followed. In August Father Monahan urged readers of the *Sooner Catholic* to contact their elected representatives “about a thorough investigation.” A month later, thousands of Catholics had signed a petition addressed to President Reagan and Secretary of State Haig demanding diplomatic action on the matter. By the end of the month, Benedictine Sister Miriam Schnoebelen and Father Paul Gallatin mailed some eight thousand signatures from the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City and six thousand from Tulsa. Other Catholics expressed their support by creating and donating to the Father Rother Memorial Fund. The Pastoral Office of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City reported a total of \$4,462 in contributions for the Atitlán mission. Meanwhile, excerpts of Father Rother’s letters reached the national media, boosting coverage on the subject.²⁰

Commemorative events took place in Father Rother’s hometown of Okarche. In December some two hundred people honored him in a three-mile pilgrimage organized by the Benedictine Peace House. Darrell Barton, a photojournalist who first reported the “Rother story” in Guatemala for the NBC affiliate KTVY of Oklahoma City, covered the event. Barton went on to produce documentary films like *Death of a*

A portion of the room in which Father Rother was murdered. The dark spot visible is what remains of his blood (photograph courtesy of the author).



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Priest (1981) and the series *Return to the Mission*, the latter airing in a five-part series in August 1983. This national award-winning television news photographer stated he took the Guatemala assignment because he sought adventure, like any overseas assignment affords. Over time, Barton made important contacts, including a source in the US Embassy in Guatemala, from whom he learned about the conviction of the three indigenous men for the murder of Father Rother. At one point, he even considered writing the story of Father Rother, a task he found difficult to complete given the lack of documented sources.²¹

Commemorative events for Father Rother and projects for the mission continued. The archdiocesan Office of Evangelization, the Catholic Daughters of America, the Knights of Columbus, and the Legion of Mary sponsored the "Guatemala Mission" booth at the September 1982 Oklahoma State Fair. Father Stephen Bird organized the exposition, which included painted scenery of the Atitlán mission by University of Oklahoma Professor Ray Larson and photographs of the Santiago de Atitlán parish. In December 1982 the *Sooner Catholic* announced the building of a Rother Memorial Park at an estimated cost of \$20,000 to 30,000. On an acre of land about two miles from the mission, the park proposal integrated learning and recreational areas to an existing elementary school that, once completed, would "include the classrooms, an auditorium, a kitchen, an office and a playground with basketball court." These were only a few examples of honoring Rother's work and his tragic passing.²²

Of all the events dedicated to keeping the memory of Rother alive, pilgrimages to Atitlán proved the most emotionally binding. Receiving extensive coverage in the church paper, the first pilgrimage in 1983 led by Archbishop Salatka and Bishop Eusebius Beltran of Tulsa set a precedent for future exchanges. On July 28, exactly two years after the murder, a delegation of some twenty Oklahomans, including Rother's parents and sister, dedicated the chapel and school. Days before on July 25, Atitlán's feast day, some eighty-seven couples had their marriages blessed, giving the Tzutujil leaders the opportunity to ask Archbishop Salatka for "a pastor for the church." Alternating priests, nuns, and Catholic Action representatives from neighboring communities helped maintain the mission. Rother's father Franz also surveyed some of his son's work and found the fields and irrigation in disrepair.²³

This pilgrimage was also politically charged. The trip coincided with the Annual Guatemalan Bishops Conference, which the Oklahoma delegates attended. While Salatka had already asked Reagan "not to provide any military assistance to Guatemala," this time around he stood before the Guatemalan president. The bishops spoke with Presi-

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dent Ríos Montt and US Ambassador Frederic Chapin, and according to Salatka the bishops were “very disappointed.” Perhaps hoping for some kind of resolution, the reality of the matter was that the church had lost thirteen priests since 1978, and the conflict would continue to claim more lives. While the US government maintained that the human rights situation under Montt improved, an argument used to resume the sale of arms, the bishops challenged such assertions. By then the bishops had punctured official prerogative when they “issued a statement saying rural Indians were facing genocide,” a provocative charge indicative of the church’s stance on human rights violations.²⁴

The death of Father Rother and the violence against the Tzutujil people thus reinvigorated the Oklahoma Catholic Church. By the 1983 pilgrimage the new Oklahoma-Atitlán bond had been sealed. “Our emotions are spent. We are tired. Not sad, but certainly reflective. We have been touched by Stanley Rother,” reminisced Monahan. *Sooner Catholic* reporters had solidified an image of the people of Santiago de Atitlán as humble and poor Catholics to be emulated, if not admired. Father F. Marvin Leven described the Tzutujil faith and “their charitable nature, although they have little they give.” For Monahan, the Atitlán mission was “a God-given practical means to keep us, the Church here, from becoming too introverted and too parochial and too self-centered. In plain language, the mission is a way by which we can save our Catholic soul.” While Monahan’s writings were not the official positions of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, as editor of the *Sooner Catholic* he had considerable influence on the portrayal of Rother and of Atitlán that Catholics read.²⁵

The paternalistic portrayal of the Tzutujil Indians as poor and victims of violence served to invoke compassion; it also provided a lasting symbol for Catholic activism. Father Monahan believed that through the Guatemalan mission, and more specifically from “the gentle, long-suffering people” of Atitlán, Catholics could learn about the Third World. If the Guatemalan mission could be incorporated into “planned activities in adult education, Catholic schools and the CCD classes” as well as parish celebrations, with additional coverage in the Church newspaper, then Santiago de Atitlán could be constantly evoked. At the Archdiocesan Teachers’ Institute, Salatka announced the incorporation of Father Rother into the church’s educational ministry:

This year Father Rother’s life will be studied in all the Catholic schools of the archdiocese with a view to renewing the Christian life in schools, principals, teachers, and students. Father Rother’s life will be studied as an example of faithful response to the grace of the sacrament of Baptism.²⁶

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Hispanics, Father Rother, and the Oklahoma City Archdiocese

The death of Father Stanley Rother also drew the Catholic Church closer to the Oklahoma Hispanic community. Concerns raised in print-media over the violence in Atitlán alerted many Oklahomans to political and cultural concerns in Latin America, which eventually awoke church officials to the needs and culture of Latinos within the state. “We think you will find Hispanics speaking to the Catholic community in ways that inspire, in ways that challenge, in ways that move to sadness, and in ways that sting,” published the *Sooner Catholic*, resonating the language used to describe the Tzutujil. The struggles Mexican-Americans in Oklahoma and the Tzutujil in Guatemala faced became two sides of the same coin; the *Sooner Catholic* depicted disadvantaged groups in the United States as victims of similar processes in Latin America. It was, however, the emotional loss of Father Rother more than any other event in Oklahoma history that first opened this special place within the archdiocese for Hispanics. Key individuals carrying out the integration included Archbishop Charles Salatka, whose reign coincided with a wave of migrants and refugees to the United States. Upon his retirement in 1992 he described the Ministry to Hispanics as having been “very dear” to his heart and the reason for taking on the task of learning Spanish at the age of sixty-eight and requiring those ordained to do the same. Monahan wrote in 1990: “If there is any one thing that stands out above the others in Archbishop Charles Salatka’s ministry in central and western Oklahoma it has been his effective concern for ministry to Hispanic people.” A concern also shared by Father David Monahan.²⁷

This process of cultural bridging dates to the early 1980s, chiefly through Spanish-language pastoral work. Father Monahan reported that the “third priority in order of importance as proclaimed for the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City by Archbishop Charles Salatka” in 1981 included the establishment of ministry to minorities. According to Monahan, the “Catholic Church in Oklahoma largely took for granted the presence of a certain number of Hispanics, especially Mexican-Americans.” In response to this growing population, Salatka believed in the expansion of services, including language and educational programs and immigration amenities. In monetary terms, the 1983 annual report showed expenses for Hispanic ministry at less than \$20,000, but by 1988 the number had gone up to more than \$100,000, and in 1991 the amount almost doubled again. Behind these efforts stood a real concern for building cultural tolerance and easing ethnic tension that could result in prejudices against Latinos.²⁸

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Yet the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City was no stranger to the problems of immigrants. Since 1975 the church had sponsored a Refugee Resettlement Program that by 1982 had aided some sixty-five hundred individuals, mostly from Southeast Asia. Through Catholic Social Ministries (CSM), refugees found homes and sponsors in central and western Oklahoma. And for the rising numbers of Hispanics in the 1980s the archdiocese recruited bilingual priests and religious women. For example, Salatka assigned exiled Father Pedro Bocel, associate pastor to Father Rother before his death, to Assumption parish in Duncan. In 1983 two Carmelite sisters moved to Clinton and another seven tended to Latinos in southwestern Oklahoma. The following year, the Catholic Church Extension Society gave Ministry to Hispanics a \$16,200 grant to sustain a bilingual sister.²⁹

Meanwhile, Monahan used the *Sooner Catholic* to serve as a forum for Hispanics. Reflecting this new priority, facilitated by the Central American conflict that shed light on the richness of the Latin American culture, the August 12, 1984, edition of the *Sooner Catholic* included Hispanic-centered reports ranging from business news, language, local organizations, and family values to the distinctive sense of community. By 1991 the newspaper included a Spanish-language section titled *Acción Latinoamericana* with various articles written by Iris and Wilfredo Santos Rivera.³⁰

In response to federal legislation of 1986, the archdiocese established an immigration department. In the height of the Sanctuary Movement, when religious groups illegally sheltered Central Americans while protesting US immigration regulations that refused to recognize them as refugees, the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City took the legal route. This response stands out in comparison to the border states, where the influx of Salvadorians and Guatemalans was larger. This meant that the Catholic Church in Oklahoma City promoted legalization rather than sanctuary, processing immigrants living in the United States since before January 1982, as outlined in Ronald Reagan's 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA). According to Shirley Cox, director of Catholic Charities' Immigration Assistance Program for some ten years, this simply meant that the Catholic Church in Oklahoma "was never really presented with that issue [sanctuary] because . . . there was a legal means for them to stay here." Because "once amnesty came about in November of 1986, all those people who were here, many of them qualified for amnesty so this whole idea of Sanctuary kind of went away." While some groups within the state flirted with the idea of sanctuary, this form of protesting US foreign policy did not take root.³¹

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Altar in the chapel at Santiago de Atitán (photograph courtesy of the author).



Although narrow in scope, IRCA nevertheless proved a suitable path for immigrants to rise from the shadows. For years, if not decades, many lived outside the purview of the state, without proper representation or any channels to voice their needs. IRCA and subsequent reforms changed that, legalizing some three million people. Even then, the Catholic bishops understood the law's limitations and its possible repercussions for families. Immediately they called for the expansion of the law, so that family members and those who entered the country after January 1982 could be eligible. The church also protested the criminalization of sanctuary workers. In 1991 many cheered the joint efforts that resulted in the "Family Fairness" legislation granting "temporary status to the spouse and unmarried children under age 18 of immigrants legalized under" the Immigration Reform and Control Act. For the Reagan administration the reform act of 1986, in more than one way, responded to several problems. First, IRCA legalized many Central Americans, often under an agricultural provision and not through political asylum; second, it provided a legal path to ease the increasingly uncomfortable pressures from the Sanctuary Movement; and third, it managed all of this without addressing, questioning, or altering foreign policy toward Central America.³²

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Meanwhile at the local level, the city archdiocese stood at the forefront of implementing this legislation, while asking Oklahomans for acceptance. Father Monahan argued from a Christian standpoint why this wave of immigrants was “good for the United States” and urged Catholics to “let them come. Make them welcome.” At the same time the most diligent work came from the Immigration Assistance Program, incorporated into Catholic Charities, the latter previously part of Catholic Social Ministries—an umbrella that included organizations like Saint Ann’s Nursing Home and Saint Joseph’s Children’s Home. The planning behind this endeavor started in 1986 after amnesty, when Archbishop Salatka became “concerned about what the Church was going to do about all these applications.” Shirley Cox had joined Catholic Charities as a board member only a year before; Cox, Tim O’Connor, executive director of Catholic Charities, and Pat Keith, staff member in the same institution, “went out to meet with Archbishop to talk to him about what we were going to do because everyone knew this program was coming down in November,” and what to do about the potential “hundreds and hundreds of cases.” All three came up with the plan, and Archbishop Salatka provided the funding for the immigration program, making it the only nonprofit organization in Oklahoma that employed a full-time immigration attorney at that time.³³

Catholic Social Ministries provided a number of critical services. The organization offered “confidentiality, help in filling out forms, suggestions and encouragement in seeking documents from former employers, and a constant flow of information about changes in the law.” As Cox put it, CSM mattered because it helped “people who are most vulnerable. They have no one. They make decisions that can affect their whole lives, and yet they do not have the information to understand their rights and what benefits are available to them.” By 1991 the organization helped around 750 people per year, of which 85 percent were Hispanic. What made this program stand out above others was the work Cox and her assistants invested into outreach visits to inform people about the amnesty law before the immigration submission deadline, often traveling as far as Altus, Clinton, Enid, Frederick, Weatherford, and Woodward. Cox oversaw the processing of some twelve hundred applications between 1986 and 1988. She remembers how, in one instance, she and her assistants arrived in Altus at 6 p.m. and worked through the night, “just talking with people about whether they qualified for amnesty or not, and they all just waited until two o’clock in the morning.” As long as they were willing to wait, Cox was willing to help. Since then, Catholic Social Ministries has only grown, and although Shirley is no longer at Catholic Charities, her experi-

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ence has bound her to the Hispanic community. She has ardently campaigned against Oklahoma anti-immigration bills and even appeared on Lou Dobbs's nationally syndicated TV show.³⁴

The relationship between the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City and the Hispanic community offers an important insight into the history of Latinos in Oklahoma. For a state with a small Hispanic population compared to places like California and Texas, this relationship between the archdiocese and Latin Americans gave Oklahoma Catholics a glimpse of the culture of a people who today constitutes the largest minority in the United States. It was during the late 1980s and early 1990s that this cultural responsiveness grew, when Governor David Walters (1991-95) proclaimed September 15 thru October 15 Hispanic Month. Today, the Father Stanley Rother Hispanic Cultural Institute, created by a group of Latino parishioners of Saint Joseph's Catholic Church in Norman, bears witness to the contribution and legacy of the Okarche martyr. This organization takes as part of its mission "to help our Pastors, Deacons, lay leaders, English-speaking parishioners and the general public learn the Spanish language and understand Hispanic culture," standing as emblem of what the Central American peace movement struggled for: cultural understanding, responsiveness to the ethnic transformation of the country, and above all, empathy.³⁵

Endnotes

* Ariana Quezada is a PhD candidate in Latin American history at the University of Oklahoma. Quezada wishes to acknowledge the people who assisted her in the writing of this article. "This article began as an assignment for a research seminar taught in the fall of 2009 at the University of Oklahoma by Dr. Terry Rugeley. As part of the curriculum for the then-newly created graduate program in Latin American history, Dr. Rugeley designed the course so that each student could engage in serious primary investigation that could be submitted for publication. Because I had done previous work on Guatemalan refugees in Mexico, Dr. Rugeley introduced me to Chris Houk, whose connection to the Tzutujil led me to this story. *Muchas gracias*, Chris. I would like to thank Darrell Barton, Shirley Cox, Robert and Marge Delaney, Rex Friend, Chris Houk, and Sister Miriam Schnoebelen, OSB, for trusting me with their stories of struggle and defiance. Dr. Rugeley, your faith in your students marks lives, *gracias*. To my fellow Mexican history colleagues who read (and re-read) and critiqued this work: Matt Caire, Justin Castro, Gary Moreno, and Teryn Piper, thank you. In summer 2010 I had the pleasure to visit Santiago de Atitlán after a trip to Mexico. Part of this trip was sponsored by research funds from the University of Oklahoma History Department."

The title of this article came from Chris Houk. Chris Houk's encounter with the realities of Guatemala reveals much about the personal process of politicization, an individual experience revelatory and pertinent to the narrative of historical movements. This personal transformation came about by encouragement of the Benedictines, who believed if someone lived in the climate of a military state that a person would feel compelled to get involved. In Houk's case, the religious pilgrimage to Santiago de Atitlán in 1989 allowed her a direct look into a society scared by death. She rubbed shoulders

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with military personnel; she spoke to victims and witnessed an atmosphere governed by fear and silence. She returned to Oklahoma with a sense of angst and a sense of responsibility to act on what she learned. For Chris Houk, the privilege of learning about social realities came with the burden of never being able to do enough to ease the terrible encumbrances that situations of violence create.

¹ *Sooner Catholic*, September 17, 1989, 6. In this issue with articles on Santiago de Atitlán, the editorial and opinion section included a photograph of a young boy leaning on a window ledge. These words correspond with the photograph of the Guatemalan boy who in a contemplative manner looks straight into the camera, Note on spelling: When in quotations, the name of the indigenous group Tzutujil will be written in the original spelling used by the Oklahoma Archdiocese newspaper, the *Sooner Catholic*.

² For additional readings on the Sanctuary Movement see Ignatius Bau, *This Ground Is Holy: Church Sanctuary and Central American Refugees* (New York: Paulist Press, 1985); Robert Tomsho, *The American Sanctuary Movement* (Austin: Texas Monthly Press, 1987); Ann Crittenden, *Sanctuary: A Story of American Conscience and the Law in Collision* (New York: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1988); Miriam Davidson, *Convictions of the Heart: Jim Corbett and the Sanctuary Movement* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1988); Robin Lorentzen, *Women in the Sanctuary Movement* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991); Susan B. Coutin, *The Culture of Protest: Religious Activism and the US Sanctuary Movement* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993); Hilary Cunningham, *God and Caesar at the Rio Grande: Sanctuary and the Politics of Religion* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995); Hilary Cunningham, "Sanctuary and Sovereignty: Church and State Along the US-Mexico Border." *Journal of Church and State* 40 (1998): 371-85; Norma Stoltz Chinchilla, Nora Hamilton, and James Loucky, "The Sanctuary Movement and Central American Activism in Los Angeles," *Latin American Perspectives* 36, no. 6 (November 2009): 101-26.

³ Chinchilla, Hamilton, and Loucky, "The Sanctuary Movement and Central American Activism in Los Angeles," 107. For the most extensive work on the Central American solidarity movement see Christian Smith's *Resisting Reagan: The US Central America Peace Movement* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996); Sharon Erickson Nepstad, *Convictions of the Soul: Religion, Culture, and Agency in the Central America Solidarity Movement* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Héctor Perla, Jr., "Grassroots Mobilization against US Military Intervention in El Salvador," *Socialism and Democracy* 22, no. 3 (November 2008): 143-59 and "Heirs of Sandino: The Nicaraguan Revolution and the US-Nicaragua Solidarity Movement," *Latin American Perspectives* 36 no. 6 (November 2009): 80-100. Michael Ignatieff describes the proliferation of human rights as deriving from a "revolution of moral concern." David Rieff, *A Bed for the Night: Humanitarianism in Crisis* (London: Vintage, 2002), 51, 102.

⁴ David McCreery, *Rural Guatemala, 1760-1940* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994).

⁵ See Stephen C. Schlesinger and Stephen Kinzer, *Bitter Fruit: The Untold Story of the American Coup in Guatemala* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1982); Jim Handy, *Revolution in the Countryside: Rural Conflict and Agrarian Reform in Guatemala, 1944-1954* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994); Piero Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope: The Guatemalan Revolution and the United States, 1944-1954* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991); Leslie Bethell, and Ian Roxborough, *Latin America between the Second World War and the Cold War, 1944-1948* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Greg Grandin. *The Last Colonial Massacre: Latin America in the Cold War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

⁶ Alliance for Progress was an economic program established during the Kennedy administration aimed at raising the standard of living as a way to curb the spread of revolutionary ideas in Latin America. The economic aid offered through Alliance for Progress

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often resulted in the expansion of military institutions. Bruce J. Calder, "Interwoven Histories: The Catholic Church and the Maya, 1940 to the Present" in *Resurgent Voices in Latin America: Indigenous Peoples, Political Mobilization, and Religious Change*, edited by Edward L. Cleary and Timothy J. Steigenga (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2004), 94-101; Betsy Konefal, *For Every Indio Who Falls: A History of Maya Activism in Guatemala, 1960-1990* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2010), 29-33.

⁷ Edward L. Cleary and Timothy J. Steigenga, "Resurgent Voices: Indians, Politics, and Religion in Latin America" in *Resurgent Voices in Latin America*, 9-13. For additional information on Liberation theology see Gustavo Gutiérrez's *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1988).

⁸ Jon P. Dayley, *Tzutujil Grammar*, 1-3; Jeffrey S. Smith, "The Highlands of Contemporary Guatemala" *Focus On Geography* 49, no. 1 (Summer 2006), 16-18. A note on language: typically, the Mayan language lacks the letter *f*, *r*, and *g*.

⁹ "Mission life in Guatemala: Renovation, deaths, delays," *Sooner Catholic*, December 23, 1979, 3; Stanley Rother, *The Shepherd Cannot Run: Letters of Stanley Rother, Missionary and Martyr* (Oklahoma City, OK: Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, 1984), 1-2; *Sooner Catholic*, July 23 1989, 3; Henri J. Nouwen, *Love in a Fearful Land: A Guatemalan Story* (Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1985), 30; "There were three priests—Father Ramon Carlin, Bob O'Brien and Tom Stafford, and four lay people—Dr. Joe and Kay Trimble, Jerry Arledge and Pat Pyatt," from "A glance at the mission of Santiago Atitlan," *Sooner Catholic*, August 16, 1981, 4.

¹⁰ "Father Stanley 'Francisco' Rother: Snowball, Earthquake, and 'Oh, those legs!'" *Sooner Catholic*, February 6, 1977, 3; Stanley Rother, *The Shepherd Cannot Run*, 3-6; Martha Mary McGaw, CSJ, "Father Marvin Leven: He values his long friendship with Father Rother," *Sooner Catholic*, August 30, 1992, 20.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² "A glance at the mission of Santiago Atitlan," *Sooner Catholic*, August 16, 1981, 4; "Rother honored," *Sooner Catholic*, July 31, 1983, 2; "Mission life in Guatemala: Renovation, deaths, delays," *Sooner Catholic*, December 23, 1979, 3; "Here to protest the killing of my friend," *Sooner Catholic*, August 16, 1981, 12; Martha Mary McGaw, CSJ, "Nuns continue work of evangelization: Williams reports violence is down in Guatemala," *Sooner Catholic*, July 15, 1984, 2; "Marcella Faudree speaks: Father Rother had good ideas and wasn't afraid," *Sooner Catholic*, January 3, 1982, 2; Martha Mary McGaw, CSJ, "Father Stanley Rother: 'My people need me,'" *Sooner Catholic*, August 16, 1981, 20. Other volunteers included Joe and Mary Tinker of Saint Francis Parish in Oklahoma City.

¹³ "Marcella Faudree speaks," *Sooner Catholic*; "Rother Memorial Park completion due by March," *Sooner Catholic*, December 19, 1982, 5; "Mission alive, pastor needed," *Sooner Catholic*, August 17, 1983, 1; Martha Mary McGaw, CSJ, "Guatemala visit brings sorrow and joy," *Sooner Catholic*, August 28, 1983, 1, 3; "Father Rother Reports from Guatemala," *Sooner Catholic*, January 7, 1979, 3; "Father Stanley 'Francisco' Rother" *Sooner Catholic*.

¹⁴ Greg Grandin in *The Last Colonial Massacre: Latin America in the Cold War* marks what he believes to be the transition between civil war conflicts into a state and nationally driven genocidal campaign. Grandin worked for the Guatemalan United Nations truth commission, which investigated human rights violations. *Empire's Workshop: Latin America, the United States, and the Rise of the New Imperialism* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006), 109, 90; Beatriz Manz, *Refugees of a Hidden War: The Aftermath of Counterinsurgency in Guatemala* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988); Ricardo Falla, *Masacres de la selva: Ixcán, Guatemala, 1975-1982* (Guatemala: Editorial Universitaria, 1992).

¹⁵ David Monahan, "Troops occupy Oklahoma's mission village," *Sooner Catholic*, No-

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vember 23, 1980, 1-2; Martha Mary McGaw, CSJ, "Father Stanley Rother: 'My people need me,'" *Sooner Catholic*, August 16, 1981, 20; "Archbishop: It's murder not robbery," *Sooner Catholic*, August 16, 1981, 2, 7; "A letter from Father Rother: 'I have never hurt anyone, why do they want to kill me?'" *Sooner Catholic*, September 13, 1981, 7; "Father Rother on death list, leaves Guatemala," *Sooner Catholic*, February 15, 1981, 2; Rother, *The Shepard Cannot Run*, 70-71.

¹⁶ "A letter from Father Rother: 'I have never hurt anyone, why do they want to kill me?'" *Sooner Catholic*, September 13, 1981, 7; Rother, *The Shepard Cannot Run*, 84-85; Martha Mary McGaw, CSJ, "Father Stanley Rother: 'My people need me,'" *Sooner Catholic*, August 16, 1981, 20; "Archbishop: It's murder not robbery," *Sooner Catholic*.

¹⁷ Rother, *The Shepard Cannot Run*, 88-89; Martha Mary McGaw, CSJ, "His Indian friends kept his heart in Guatemala," *Sooner Catholic*, August 16, 1981, 3.

¹⁸ "Reverberations of Rother death: Thousands sign petition, congressmen are 'peons,'" *Sooner Catholic*, September 13, 1981, 3; David Monahan, "What now for Latin America," *Sooner Catholic*, April 13, 1980, 6; David Monahan, "Return to the mission," *Sooner Catholic*, July 29, 1984, 6. Father Monahan includes a note to one of Rother's letters and says, "After Father Rother spoke to the Catholic congregation at Saint John the Baptist Church in Edmond Oklahoma, an individual there responded by writing to the Guatemalan Embassy in Washington, D.C., and accusing the missionary of advocating the overthrow of the Guatemalan government," Rother, *The Shepard Cannot Run*, 70.

¹⁹ "Archbishop: It's a murder not robbery," *Sooner Catholic*; David Monahan, "Why Father Rother?" *Sooner Catholic*, April 30, 1981, 6; "Rother Murder: Three convicted in killing, but archbishop cries foul," *Sooner Catholic*, February 14, 1982, 1; "Here to protest the killing of my friend," *Sooner Catholic*, August 16, 1981, 12; Martha Mary McGaw, CSJ, "Nuns continue work of evangelization: Williams reports violence is down in Guatemala," *Sooner Catholic*, July 15, 1984, 2. Frankie testified on July 30, 1981 before the mentioned subcommittee of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the US House of Representatives.

²⁰ David Monahan, "Let there be light," *Sooner Catholic*, August 16, 1981, 12; "Reverberations of Rother death: Thousands sign petition, congressmen are 'peons,'" *Sooner Catholic*, September 13, 1981, 3; "14,000 sign Rother petition," *Sooner Catholic*, September 27, 1981, 3; "A letter from Father Rother: 'I have never hurt anyone, why do they want to kill me?'" *The Sooner Catholic*, September 13, 1981, 7. At the time, Sister Schnobelen was a member of the archdiocesan Commission for Justice and Human Development, and Father Gallatin was from the Senate of Priests.

²¹ Sister Miriam Schnobelen, OSB, interview by the author, August 11, 2012. Barton traveled to Guatemala on September 2 with newsman Larry Audas. They were two of the first to provide extended and visual coverage on the death of Father Rother and Atilán for Oklahomans. Barton's documentaries were the result of his work for Channel 4 and the Canadian Broadcasting Company. Martha Mary McGaw, CSJ, "Okarche church to cemetery: Martyrs honored in walk," *Sooner Catholic*, December 20, 1981, 5; "Reverberations of Rother death" *Sooner Catholic*; "Rother case update: Bishops to debate statement on reality in Central America," *Sooner Catholic*, November 8, 1981, 3; "TV series on Guatemala mission," *Sooner Catholic*, July 31, 1983, 10; David Monahan, "Rother Murder: Three convicted in killing, but archbishop cries foul," *Sooner Catholic*, February 14, 1982, 1; Darrell Barton, phone interview with the author, May 9, 2011.

²² "Guatemala mission at State Fair," *Sooner Catholic*, September 26, 1982, 2; "Rother Memorial Park completion due by March," *Sooner Catholic*, December 19, 1982, 5.

²³ Some of the documented individuals attending the July 26-30 pilgrimage included: Archbishop Charles Salatka, Bishop Eusebius Beltran, Bishop Raymond Luckner (New Ulm, MN), Bishop Thomas Quigley, Franz and Gertrude Rother, Precious Blood Sister Marita Rother, Marcella Faudree (original nurse), Joe and Mary Tinker (volunteers),

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Carolyn Merritt, Richard Dowdell, and more than ten Oklahoma priests. "Last call for Guatemala trip," *Sooner Catholic*, July 3, 1983, 4; "Archbishop leads delegation to Guatemalan bishop's meeting," *Sooner Catholic*, July 17, 1983, 4; "Rother honored," *Sooner Catholic*, July 31, 1983, 2; "Mission alive, pastor needed," *Sooner Catholic*, August 17, 1983, 1, 3; "Father Rother's work goes on: Eyewitness in Guatemala," *Sooner Catholic*, February 13, 1983, 4.

²⁴ David Monahan, "Martyred priest remembered in Guatemala and Oklahoma," *Sooner Catholic*, August 15, 1982, 3; "Over Church's protest, U.S. military aid to Guatemala," *Sooner Catholic*, January 30, 1983, 12; "Pope enters Central American turmoil," *Sooner Catholic*, February 27, 1983, 1, 13; "Delegation hears of violence," *Sooner Catholic*, August 14, 1983, 2; David Monahan, "Archbishop Salatka heads: U.S. delegation to Guatemala hears of widespread violence against innocent," *Sooner Catholic*, August 17, 1983, 1.

²⁵ Darrell Barton, phone interview by the author, May 9, 2011. Photojournalist Darrell Barton commented on the religious marketing that succeeded the death of Father Stanley Rother. Numerous publications, particularly those by Father Monahan, support Barton's observation. David Monahan, "Santiago Atitlan: step into another world," *Sooner Catholic*, August 14, 1983, 6; "Father Leven: We Could Learn from Guatemala," *Sooner Catholic*, December 10, 1978, 3; "Let's go Guatemala," *Sooner Catholic*, August 14, 1983, 14; "Catholic schools to study Rother," *Sooner Catholic*, September 23, 1984, 4.

²⁶ David Monahan, "Return to the mission," *Sooner Catholic*, July 29, 1984, 6.

²⁷ The Office of Hispanic Ministries was created in the 1970s, under Salatka's reign as archbishop. In 1990, Monahan also wrote, "People of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City should be grateful that Archbishop Charles Salatka, since his arrival here in 1977, has anticipated necessary changes in the church to make hospitable room for Hispanics in our common spiritual house." "Called to welcome," *Sooner Catholic*, November 25, 1990, 8; David Monahan, "Revolution brought the first wave of Mexicans to state," *Sooner Catholic*, April 26, 1992, 7; "Archbishop Salatka remembers with gratitude," *Sooner Catholic*, December 6, 1992, 4; David Monahan, "In your service: From ministry to Hispanics to ministry to prisoners," *Sooner Catholic*, January 21, 1990, 6; "An Era of Hope 1977-1991, Archbishop Charles A. Salatka," Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, <http://www.catharchdioceseokc.org/history/Salatka.htm>.

²⁸ For more information on the history of Mexicans in Oklahoma see Michael M. Smith's *The Mexicans in Oklahoma* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980); David Monahan, "Ministry to Hispanics," *Sooner Catholic*, February 15, 1981, 6; "Hispanic priority," *Sooner Catholic*, August 12, 1984, 14; "Oklahoma City, Pastoral Office Operating Fund, Statements of Revenues and Expenses," *Sooner Catholic*, January 2, 1983, 3; "Pastoral Office Undesignated Operating Fund, Statements of Revenues and Expenses and Changes in Fund Balance," *Sooner Catholic*, January 24, 1988, 3; "Pastoral Office Undesignated Operating Fund: Statement of Revenues and Expenses and Changes in Fund Balance, Year ended June 30, 1991, Supplement to *The Sooner Catholic*, December 22, 1991, 3. By the end of 1991, the Hispanic Ministry received some \$195,445.

²⁹ "A Nation of Immigrants," *Sooner Catholic*, July 4, 1982, 1; "CSM program assists 397 new refugees in 1984," *Sooner Catholic*, January 13, 1985, 2; "Official," *Sooner Catholic*, January 3, 1982, 2; "Father Pedro RENEWS Hispanics," *Sooner Catholic*, November 4, 1984, 4; "Two more Hispanic Sisters to serve Spanish-speaking," *Sooner Catholic*, September 25, 1983, 2; Martha Mary McGaw, CSJ, "Region Four: Return to Guatemala and World War II memory," *Sooner Catholic*, October 9, 1983, 4.

³⁰ "Let us hear their voices," *Sooner Catholic*, November 17, 1984, 1; David Monahan, "Region Five: People hear church calling through seven Hispanic nuns," *Sooner Catholic*, March 11, 1984, 6; "Extension gran for Hispanic nun," *Sooner Catholic*, May 20, 1984, 5; "Let us hear their voices," *Sooner Catholic*, August 12, 1984, 1.

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³¹ Shirley Cox, interview by the author, August 6, 2010.

³² Lisa Smith, "In Search of the Green Card," *Oklahoma Gazette* (Oklahoma City, OK), May 8, 1991, 1; "U.S. bishops join Canadians, Latin Americans in urging junking of Vatican's first draft on bishops' conferences," *Sooner Catholic*, November 27, 1988, 14; "Amnesty ends on May 4," *Sooner Catholic*, April 17, 1988, 2; Laurie Hansen, "Deporting Central Americans stalled by landmark decision," *Sooner Catholic*, January 6, 1991, 17; Laurie Hansen, "Church Cheers: INS's new 'family fairness' policy," *Sooner Catholic*, February 18, 1990, 14.

³³ David Monahan, "Immigrants, refugees," *Sooner Catholic*, February 18, 1990, 6; Nichols Hills Publishing, "O'Connor celebrates 25 years at Catholic Charities," *Oklahoma City Friday*, <http://okcfriday.com/oconnor-celebrates-years-at-catholic-charitiesp4765.htm?twindow=Default&smenu=113&mad=No>; Lisa Smith, "In Search of the Green Card," 2; Shirley Cox interview.

³⁴ Martha Mary McGaw, CSJ, "Amnesty: Helping the undocumented to qualify for legalization," *CSM Appeal Supplement to the Sooner Catholic*, September 4, 1988, 2. "Hispanic Ministry," *Supplement to the Sooner Catholic*, February 3, 1991, 3; "Amnesty office completes 210 cases, praises volunteers and their work," *Sooner Catholic*; Shirley Cox interview; Immigrant Services, "Immigrants have no one; we make arguments for them," *Supplement to the Sooner Catholic*, September 3, 1989, 3.

³⁵ "The State of Oklahoma, Proclamación," *Sooner Catholic*, June 9, 1991, 15. For additional information on the Father Stanley Rother Hispanic Cultural Institute (previously the Hispanic Cultural Institute), see the organization's blog <http://hculturalinstitute.blogspot.com/>. The Catholic Church has begun the process of sainthood for Father Stanley Rother. Recently, Rios Montt, the president of Guatemala at the time of Father Rother's death, has been in court for his actions in the genocide in Guatemala.