June 12, 2018

**Statement on Nicaragua**

For over a month, Nicaraguan police and pro-government forces have attacked Nicaraguan citizens engaging in non-violent protests against the government of Daniel Ortega. These unjust attacks have resulted in multiple deaths and injuries, including the death of a fifteen-year-old student who died after being shot in the throat with a rubber bullet at close range by police. In the midst of this violence, the University of Central America (UCA) of Nicaragua, a Jesuit Institution located in Managua, has exemplified the Jesuit commitment to peace, social justice, and human rights, including the ability of individuals to peacefully protest without fear of violent retribution. Father José Alberto Idiaquez, S.J., UCA Rector and President, has led calls for peaceful negotiations between anti-government protesters and Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega. In an act of kindness and mercy, the UCA community opened its campus to thousands of peaceful protesters seeking shelter from the violence that erupted during a demonstration. In response to these gestures of peace, Father Idiaquez has faced death threats and the UCA campus has been the target of violence. On May 27th, masked men fired a mortar at two UCA campus guards. Fortunately, the guards survived, but the message was clear.

The College of the Holy Cross joins our fellow Jesuit institutions in calling for an end to this violence and a renewed commitment to peace. We stand in solidarity with Father Idiaquez and all members of the UCA community who exemplify the teachings of Jesus Christ through their efforts to promote peace and social justice through non-violent means. We also stand with all Nicaraguan citizens engaging in peaceful protests. We urge the Nicaraguan government to respect the constitutional rights of its citizens, including their freedom to express their views safely without repression. We call on members of the Holy Cross community to join us in condemning this violent oppression and praying for a peaceful, just, and swift resolution to the suffering and bloodshed that has fallen upon the people of Nicaragua.

Sincerely,

Rev. Philip L. Boroughs, S.J., President