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El Salvador: Auxiliary Archbishop On Political Violence, Potential Xmas Truce

by Deborah Tyroler

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On Dec. 11, San Salvador's Auxiliary Archbishop Gregorio Rosa Chavez said that political violence in the past 15 days had claimed 48 victims. He lamented the fact that "Salvadorans will have to experience a Christmas characterized by the madness of war." In his homily, the priest said that during the holiday festivities, "we have as a background lack of respect for the civilian population, destruction of workplaces, extortion, abductions..." Later, after referring to the 40th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights commemorated Dec. 10 by the United Nations, Rosa Chavez asserted that "respect for the dignity of humankind is the base of individual rights." Rosa Chavez stated that as a result of previous experiences, the Catholic Church in El Salvador will not formally request a Christmas season ceasefire. According to the priest, "Salvadorans do not want a momentary truce, but rather an end to the nightmare of war which in the past eight years has left more than 65,000 dead." The priest also criticized the judicial system. He said that the human dignity "will be more protected if [this system] overcomes its deficiencies and gains the confidence of the people..." (Basic data from Notimex, 12/11/88)

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