



**IN LIGHT OF THE MURDER OF THE REV. FATHER
FRAY JUAN ANTONIO OROZCO ALVARADO, O.F.M.**

Mexico City, June 14, 2021

**"The martyrs are a treasure and a hope for the church."
Pope Francis**

**To the Federal Authorities of Mexico;
To the Authorities of the States of: Jalisco, Durango, Zacatecas and Nayarit;
To the National Human Rights Commission;
To the State Commissions for Human Rights;
To all the people of Good Faith:**

May God grant you peace!

With deep sorrow, the Commissions of Justice, Peace and Integrity of the Creation of the Franciscan Family in Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean, regret to inform of the death of Rev. Friar Juan Antonio Orozco Alvarado, O.F.M., belonging to the Franciscan Province of Saint Francis and Saint James in Mexico, JPIC coordinator and composer of the Hymn of the Laudato Sí´ Revolution. We repudiate the events that occurred on June 12 of this year at 11 a.m., when our brother was going to celebrate the Eucharist in the Tepehuana de Pajaritos Community, belonging to the municipality of Mezquital, Durango. Regrettably, he was deprived of life in the crossfire during an armed confrontation between organized crime cartels that are in dispute over the territory of that area.

The systematic violence that is experienced in the Mexican national territory derived from the activity of organized crime cannot be made invisible; nor can the limited or nonexistent commitment and training of federal, state and municipal authorities to not only protect citizens, but also to carry out an adequate investigation to process and punish this type of crime, thereby violating the human right to life, dignity and security of the general population.

Therefore, we demand the following of the authorities at their three levels:

- 1. To the Attorney General of the State of the corresponding entity, the full integration of the investigation file, in which the correct collection of evidence and exhaustive investigation of the crime scene so that the murder of our brother Fray Juan Antonio Orozco does not go unpunished.**
- 2. To the judicial authorities, respect for due process, as well as reparation for damages to the victims.**



3. In the event that there are more victims, we request that they be treated with dignity and respect for their human rights, in accordance with the provisions of the Political Constitution of the United Mexican States, as well as the various international Human Rights standards.

4. To the federal, state and municipal authorities, we demand the creation of public policies dedicated to guaranteeing the defense of the security of the population in general in accordance with international standards, thereby guaranteeing public order.

We commit ourselves, as a Franciscan family, to continue proclaiming justice and peace, in an active commitment with other organizations and Christian churches that defend Human Rights and the victims of this system of institutional violence.

Furthermore, we sympathize with the pain of the family of Fray Juan Antonio Orozco Alvarado, O.F.M., and we ask the God of Life to receive this new martyr with open arms and that his death become for us a sign of hope and of struggle so that in our country justice is the banner with which we Christians raise our voices to say, "Stop the violence," a violence that contaminates our society and has permeated our families.

May his death become a seed of hope for all those who struggle!

Peace and all good!