



ARCHDIOCESE OF CEBU
Office of the Archbishop

Archdiocesan Statement

On the Commemoration of the 28th Anniversary of the Disappearance of Fr. Rudy Romano, CSsR

July 11, 2013

My dear Brothers and Sisters in our Lord Jesus Christ,

The Fourth Diocesan Synod of Cebu in 1986 declared, “Option for the poor is a Christian option. Defending the human dignity of the poor and their hope for a human future is not a luxury of the Church. It is its duty” (Cebu Synod 4, The Servant Church, #6).

Similarly, our Holy Father Pope Francis, said that the Year of Faith should be “less preoccupied by non-essential rituals but more focused on our being agents of God’s mercy to the poor, the suffering and those alienated from the Church because the mercy of God is always victorious!”

He also expressed his wish, “Ah, how I would like a **Church that is poor** and that is **for the poor.**”

Our Holy Father would be happy to know that in the 1980’s, this was realized in the life and advocacy of Fr. Rudy Romano and other church people. Fr. Rudy and other church people defended the rights of the poor and the oppressed, “even when doing so meant alienation or persecution from the rich and powerful” (PCP II, 131).

The Archdiocese of Cebu notes that in 1986, the City Government of Cebu installed a marker at Tisa, Labangon, Cebu City to mark the place “where Fr. Rudy Romano, a Redemptorist Father and human rights fighter was abducted by armed men of the deposed Marcos Regime on July 11, 1985.”

Likewise, the Cebu Provincial Government in 1987, passed a resolution “Adopting Fr. Rudy Romano as a Son of the Province of Cebu” since even if he was from Samar, “prior to his disappearance, Fr. Romano contributed much in terms of promoting human rights, rendering concrete assistance and social service to less-privileged Cebuanos and in making Cebu a strong bastion of the people’s successful fight for freedom and justice during the dark years of the deposed dictatorship.”

The abduction and disappearance of Fr. Rudy and a student leader, Levi Ybañez, 28 years ago have not been resolved. Meanwhile, until today, the poor peasants, fisherfolks, workers, urban poor and other marginalized sectors continue to strive for their human dignity to be upheld.

We are called to follow Jesus, the Good Shepherd, who “lay down his life for the sheep” (John 10:11). Fr. Rudy showed us how to be advocates for social renewal. He showed us how to be like Jesus, who loved the poor, lived and died for the salvation of all. In Christ,

Non nobis Domine,


+JOSE S. PALMA, D.D.
Archbishop of Cebu