

The following is a statement of support for Father Javier Giraldo S.J. by Father Francisco de Roux S.J. who is the Head of the Jesuit Community in Colombia

JAVIER GIRALDO S.J.

By the Provincial Company of Jesus

(Translated by Emily Hansen, a CSN volunteer translator)

Over the last few days graffiti has appeared in the city of Bogotá directed against Father Javier Giraldo S.J., which seeks to destroy his good name and moral authority, and which seeks to provoke his assassination.

As Father Giraldo's superior, I would like to express publicly that he is a member of our community and that he has the support of the Company of Jesus in his fight for human rights.

For thirty years, with unconditional devotion to the victims and with impressive rigor in demonstrating the evidence of his claims, Javier Giraldo S.J. has been denouncing human rights violators. He has accompanied the denunciations with lots of evidence and has asked that the Colombian justice system take action on behalf of the victims. He has been an extraordinary witness to the way that the Colombian justice system has left the criminals in impunity.

Those of us who have followed Javier Giraldo's struggle for truth and justice understand how he came, after numerous experiences provided him with evidence, to conclude that in the depths of his personal conscience he could not believe in the Colombian justice system, that he could no longer testify in that system, and he could no longer seek to have investigations carried forward by this system. We know that Javier's decision contradicts the citizen's duty to support institutions, but nevertheless we are witnesses that it is the moral integrity of Javier Giraldo S.J. which brings him to this position of conscience.

The Provincial of the Company of Jesus respects Javier profoundly in this decision in which he puts in the first place his fidelity to his conscience and his coherence and human authenticity even at the risk of punishment which could be meted out to him by this same system of justice.

Regarding the graffiti campaign to destroy his name and person, we want to make it clear that we see in Javier Giraldo S.J. a man of the highest moral character, a very serious seeker of truth, a tireless fighter on behalf of the excluded, an unconditional defender of human dignity, and a man convinced that the state and its security forces should be at the service of life and protect all men and women. We want to make it clear that Javier Giraldo S.J. is not and never has been a guerrilla, as his detractors claim.

Javier has no weapons other than calling upon people to tell the truth without offering rewards to anyone for them to be true to their conscience. For that reason he has firmly rejected the purchasing of witnesses in the Colombian justice system. And because of this he has never accepted that anyone bearing any kind of arms protect him.

Javier Giraldo S.J. is a man of faith. He will be a follower of Jesus Christ until the day he dies. He is an authentic Jesuit with a profound inner life, and he is a tireless companion of poor communities and of those displaced by the war.

As a superior of the Jesuits I repeat my recognition of the moral greatness of Javier Giraldo S.J. and I invite all men and women among us who search for truth and justice to surround with our moral support a man who has taught us, with the message of his life, to be consistent with God and with ourselves.

Francisco de Roux S.J.