

COAR Peace Mission to Honor Twenty Northeast Ohio Schools on March 23

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The Cleveland-based **COAR Peace Mission** - the community of Oscar A. Romero in El Salvador - has been providing quality education, health care, spiritual richness and a safe and loving home for vulnerable children in that country for nearly 40 years. Romero, the fourth Archbishop of San Salvador, was assassinated in 1980 for denouncing the violence in El Salvador's civil war. He was canonized last October by Pope Francis.

Founded in 1980 by a Cleveland priest, COAR Children's Village in Zaragoza, El Salvador provides foster care for 50-100 children, schooling for 1,000 children, as well as a clinic, pharmacy, and other services for the entire community.

Each year, COAR Peace Mission holds a benefit event that spotlights exceptional people and organizations that have assisted in its mission. On **Saturday, March 23**, COAR will honor 20 Northeast Ohio schools with the **St. Romero Solidarity Award** for providing translation services that are critical to the non-profit's "sponsor a child" outreach.

"Sponsorship is the essence of solidarity between vulnerable children in El Salvador and kind and caring people throughout North America and the world who wish to support them," explained Mary Stevenson, executive director of COAR Peace Mission. "It surrounds the children with a home, a family, health, education, love and safety. It puts a name and face and a relationship at the center of that generosity. This year, we honor the schools and the Spanish teachers that have built this bridge of solidarity between the COAR children and their sponsors."

The honorees, listed by years of service, are: Padua Franciscan High School, Beaumont School, St. Edward High School, St. Ignatius High School, Strongsville High School, Hudson High School, Trinity High School, Gilmour Academy, Saint Joseph Academy, Brunswick High School, Baldwin Wallace University, Solon High School, Villa Angela-St. Joseph High School, Norton High School, Barberton High School, Archbishop Hoban High School, Magnificat High School, Notre Dame-Cathedral Latin High School, University School and John Carroll University.

Sponsors can provide tuition for one child for a year for a \$180 contribution, and provide annual living costs for a child for \$300. Sponsor levels begin at \$15, and contributions of any amount are greatly appreciated. Sponsors received a picture and a letter from a child at COAR twice a year.

The work behind the sponsorship program is daunting. It requires translating 1,000 letters a year from Spanish into English, and a few hundred more from English into Spanish. More than 14,000 students from over 20 high schools and colleges have translated approximately 17,000 letters since 2004. Each letter represents a child saved from poverty.

COAR Peace Mission provides full financial support for the COAR Children's Village and other projects committed to assisting Salvadoran children who are displaced or are victims of poverty, drugs, and gang violence.

"Generations of children have gone on from COAR to form stable, loving families," added Stevenson. "With the support of these schools and our sponsors and patrons we are able to continue the tradition exemplified by St. Romero."

The benefit takes place at the Center for Pastoral Leadership at 28700 Euclid Ave. in Wickliffe. The event begins with Mass at 5 p.m., followed by heavy hors d'oeuvres and cocktails from 6:30 – 9 p.m. Tickets are now on sale and patron levels allow supporters to be part of the COAR's legacy.

To purchase tickets and learn more about COAR's Annual Benefit, visit <https://coarpeacemission.org/> or call 440-943-7615.

COAR Peace Mission is a 501(c)(3) charity of the Catholic Church established in the U.S. to facilitate outreach, fundraising, funds transfer and other business for the COAR Children's Village.

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