

## **We cannot remain silent**

*Maryknoll has endorsed the following statement of conscience against torture, which was circulated by the interfaith [Call for Justice Coalition](#). It was released in conjunction with the Call for Justice Weekend, Sept. 24-26, 2005. Go [here](#) for more information on the STOP Torture campaign.*

As men and women of faith and conscience, we write today to express our profound opposition to the torture practices being utilized by the United States government today. The ever-increasing evidence makes it all too clear that these grim abuses are not isolated incidents but rather, constitute official policy.

Although our beliefs are rooted in many different religions, and although we worship in different ways and in different languages, we stand firmly united on this crucial moral issue. We have weighed and considered the many statements offered by our government officials to excuse or justify the practices in question. We remain unswerving in our demand for an immediate cessation of the use of torture. Our condemnation of torture is not based upon any political opinion or on the laws or treaties of any nations. Rather, we are guided today by a higher law that serves as a compass for all of humanity.

An act of torture is an act of evil. There are no exceptions. Such actions dehumanize both the victim and perpetrator. In many sacred writings, it is said that men and women are created in the beauty of God's image. The wanton cruelty and horror of torture is a desecration of that image. It denies and debases the splendor of creation and the beauty of life itself.

For centuries, our most revered moral and religious leaders have given their very lives in the quest for peace, humanity, and justice. So have many of our beloved friends and colleagues. Today we honor their memories and the tenets that guide us all, by speaking out in one voice. As we witness the pain and suffering of so many human beings, we cannot remain silent. Stop the torture now.