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October 18, 2011

Fr. José María Tojeira, S. J.  
c/o Universidad Centroamericana José Simeon Cañas  
San Salvador, El Salvador

Dear Father Tojeira and All the Family, Friends and Colleagues of Father Dean Brackley:

I wish that I could be with all of you today at the Mass celebrating the life of our beloved Father Dean Brackley.

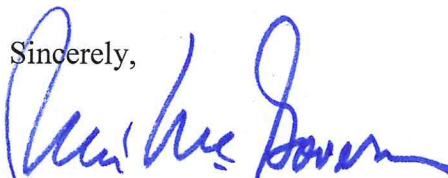
For us in the United States, Dean was a bridge between two worlds. When the six Jesuits and two women were killed at the UCA in November 1989, Dean immediately stepped up to offer his talents, his passion and his life to the university community and to the Salvadoran people. In doing so, he also offered himself up to the people of the United States. He was our anchor and our conscience, not just for the faith community, but for all of us in America who share his love for the Salvadoran people and who remain engaged in their hopes and struggles. Dean became our bridge of solidarity, our commitment to justice, faith and love.

Dean told everyone he met in the U.S. to come see El Salvador first hand – students, religious, Members of Congress, reporters, ordinary citizens. He would say, “El Salvador will break open your heart, and then heal it again.” On my many trips to El Salvador, his enthusiasm, intellect, humor and passion kept my spirits lifted, my mind focused, and my heart engaged. Life was never dull around Dean.

Dean was and is one of my heroes. For me, he embodied the very best America has to offer the world. He touched so many lives, and now he lives on in us. He joins Monseñor Oscar Romero, my friends the martyred Jesuits, the four U.S. churchwomen, and so many Salvadorans as a beacon of integrity and hope. He will always be “presente” in our lives and work.

He was a good and beautiful man. I will miss him.

Sincerely,



James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress

JPM:cmb