



# IMCS-MIEC Pax Romana

*International Movement of Catholic Students*  
*Mouvement International des Étudiants Catholiques*  
*Movimiento Internacional de Estudiantes Católicos*

## *International Secrétariat*

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## Statement by IMCS-MIEC Pax Romana on the Passing of Fr. Gustavo Gutiérrez, OP

With deep sorrow and immense gratitude, we, the members of the **International Movement of Catholic Students (IMCS-MIEC) Pax Romana**, mourn the passing of **Fr. Gustavo Gutiérrez, OP**, on **October 22, 2024**, at the age of 96. Fr. Gutiérrez was more than just a theologian—he was a mentor, a visionary, and a relentless advocate for the dignity of the poor and oppressed. His life and teachings indelibly impacted our movement and the world.

Fr. Gustavo Gutiérrez served as the chaplain of the **Unión Nacional de Estudiantes Católicos (UNEC) in Peru**, a vital branch of our global movement. In this role, he helped nurture a generation of young Catholic leaders committed to justice, peace, and transformative action. His time with UNEC was formative, not just for the students he guided but also for him as he developed the groundbreaking ideas that would soon revolutionise the Catholic Church's response to poverty and inequality.

At the heart of Fr. Gustavo's theology was the **preferential option for the poor**, a call for the Church—and for each of us—to stand in solidarity with those who suffer and to work toward the transformation of unjust social systems. This vision challenged the Catholic Church to go beyond charity and spiritual consolation and to become an active participant in the struggle for justice. His seminal work, **“A Theology of Liberation”**, not only reshaped the landscape of Latin American theology but inspired countless movements worldwide, including our own, to embody a faith that is both reflective and deeply engaged with the world.

Fr. Gustavo's life was a testament to what it means to be deeply committed to the Gospel, even in the face of significant opposition. During times when Liberation Theology was met with suspicion and resistance, Fr. Gutiérrez never wavered. He stood firm in his conviction that the Church's mission was not just to minister to the souls of the poor but to work for their liberation from the structures that kept them marginalised. His courage to speak truth to power and to remain steadfast in his mission inspired countless students, clergy, and laypeople to do the same.

For those of us in **IMCS-MIEC Pax Romana**, Fr. Gustavo's teachings are not just theological principles but calls to action. He reminded us that our faith compels us to work for the liberation of all people, especially the most vulnerable, and to resist the temptation to separate our spiritual lives from the pressing social issues of our time. His example urged us to take responsibility for shaping a more just and humane society, starting with the communities we are part of.

As a movement that seeks to empower students to be leaders of positive change in the Church and the world, we are forever indebted to Fr. Gustavo Gutiérrez. His life's work resonates deeply with the mission of IMCS-MIEC Pax Romana as we strive to engage young Catholics in social transformation through faith and action. His ability to intertwine theology with the reality of the world's suffering has equipped us with a powerful framework to approach our mission, to walk with the marginalised, and to work tirelessly for a world where justice and human dignity prevail.

In the wake of his passing, we are reminded of the enduring relevance of his message. Fr. Gustavo taught us that liberation is not just a distant goal—it is a journey we must embark upon each day, in every choice we make and in every action we take. As we continue this journey, we carry with us the lessons of compassion, courage, and hope that he embodied so profoundly.

Our deepest condolences go out to his Dominican community, the Church in Peru, and all those who were privileged to know him personally. We also share in the collective mourning of those whose lives were touched by his teachings, from the poorest corners of Latin America to the classrooms of theology students around the world. Fr. Gustavo's legacy will live on in the hearts of all those who continue to fight for a world where the dignity of every person is recognised and cherished.

May Fr. Gustavo Gutiérrez rest in the peace he so richly deserves, and may his spirit continue to guide and inspire us as we work for justice, liberation, and the full realisation of the Gospel in our time.

In prayerful solidarity,  
On behalf of the IMCS-MIEC Pax Romana

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