

Coach, Teacher, Department Chair, Founder, Pastor, Missionary to Latin American, Reverse Missionary to the U.S. Church, Historian, Living Memory, Advocate for Justice, Sage, Networker, Chicago Priest, Unsettling Gadfly, and Loyal Friend—all of these epithets and more apply to Fr. Bob. Many speak of his longevity, but this is not the first quality that comes to mind. During this past year in which I have been blessed to serve as Interim Director of LANACC, I think of Fr. Bob more as the model aspirant for a new position in the academy or the Church—intellectually curious, spontaneously energetic, and brimming with limitless hopes and dreams for a vibrant future. If you want to learn about youth and vitality, then Fr. Bob should be your guide.

St. Paul talks about the importance of *parrhesia*, boldness and candor in one's speech, as a means of proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ. Fr. Bob has spent decades studying contemporary models of evangelical boldness like Bless Archbishop Óscar Romero and Archbishop Marcos McGrath, C.S.C. and honing their techniques with all of its nuances. More than anyone else I have ever met, he rises to the occasion to unsettle those who are complacent in the Church and in the world. He forces us to rethink our presuppositions and forge a more just and egalitarian community of the faithful and citizenry. No stone remains unturned and his gentle means to proclaiming these difficult messages sometimes belie their revolutionary depth and transformative power.

LANACC is a gift that Fr. Bob has given to all of us, to teach, to witness, and to disseminate. Participating in LANACC has been a great impetus for me to think about the freshness of the Gospel and the new challenges we face today in seeing, judging and acting as partners in interamerican and interchurch gift exchange. I hope everyone who is here to celebrate the life and witness of Robert Pelton, C.S.C. will join me in this exciting journey that Fr. Bob has graced and guided us by initiating and sustaining.

Peter Casarella