**Wednesday, May 21st • 6:30 PM**

**Monsignor Raúl Vera López,**
**Bishop of Saltillo, Coahuila, Mexico**

**Luces y Sombras: Light and Shadows in the Struggle for Human Rights**

Bishop Vera will speak in Spanish, with accompanying translation.

**Social Sciences Research Building, Room 122**
**1414 East 59th Street**

This event is free and open to the public.
A reception will follow the lecture.

Bishop Raul Vera Lopez was ordained a priest in 1975 and ordained a bishop in 1988. After serving as Bishop of Cd. Altamirano, Guerrero, Mexico, he was named in 1995 as Co-Bishop of Chiapas, serving with Don Samuel Ruiz Garcia. According to Bishop Vera, his work with the poor indigenous communities in Chiapas became, for him, a conversion experience. He worked alongside Bishop Ruiz in the peace and reconciliation process in Chiapas and has since become an outspoken advocate of the poor and dispossessed in Mexico.

He is currently the Bishop of Saltillo, Coahuila and presides over the Diocesan Center for Human Rights Fray Juan de Larios, which works with various vulnerable groups. Among the issues taken up by the Center for Human Rights are the rights of migrants and of the indigenous, as well as discrimination against women, homosexuals, and sex workers. Under his leadership, the Diocese founded a shelter for migrants, the Belen Posada del Migrante. Bishop Vera has been particularly active in the struggle for justice by the surviving families of the 65 coal miners killed in the blast at the Pasta de Conchos mine in Coahuila in 2006.

On December 11, 2007 (between Human Rights Day and the Feast of the Virgin of Guadalupe) Bishop Vera was honored at an event in Mexico City convened by a coalition of Mexican human rights organizations. The United Nations High Commission for Human Rights presented Bishop Vera with a special recognition for his work as a human rights defender, expressing official concern for the lack of protection afforded Bishop Vera by the Catholic Church and the Mexican government.

**Ignacio Martín-Baró Human Rights Essay Prizes Award Ceremony**

The prize honors the memory of Ignacio Martín-Baró, a Jesuit priest from El Salvador who earned a Ph.D. in social psychology at the University of Chicago. Martín-Baró taught at the Universidad de Centro America in El Salvador and was a leading scholar on social justice and human rights. In 1989, Martín-Baró and seven others were assassinated by the Salvadoran Army for their commitment to El Salvador’s dispossessed.