

## Afterword

Shortly after midnight on July 28, 1981, three tall men wearing masks quietly worked their way into the rectory of the church at Santiago Atitlan. They moved quickly to the bedroom of Father Rother, but he wasn't there.

The men found Francisco Bocel, the brother of the absent associate pastor. They whispered to the terrified young man that they would kill him if he did not take them immediately to Father Rother.

Francisco led them down the stairs to the first floor. He knocked at the door to the side of the staircase. It was the room in which the pastor had been sleeping for his own safety. "Father, they are looking for you," Francisco called in the direction of the door. There was a pause. Stanley Rother, aroused suddenly from sleep, must have been making a quick estimate of the situation. It was the moment he had feared for the past year. There were windows, possible escape routes. But they had Francisco, and if he didn't answer the intruders, Francisco certainly would be the victim. The priest deliberately reached out and opened the door.

An elemental fight for life began. Francisco, retreating to the second floor, heard Father Rother cry out, "Kill me here!" (Having witnessed the gruesome corpses of many tortured victims and fearing what he might say under demonic brutality routinely applied during interrogations, the pastor had told a number of people that he would never be taken alive.)

The struggle continued for what seemed to Francisco like two minutes. There was a shot — a clean, deadly period to the fight. A second shot. Silence.

**When Raymond Bailey**, a staff member of the U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City, arrived at Santiago Atitlan later the same day, he found "at least a thousand" Tzutuhil Indians standing silent-

