

I Surrender

Are you ready for a riveting story? Travel back to the mid-1970s with Kathleen Osberger to Santiago, Chile, under the Pinochet dictatorship. In her book, I Surrender, Kathleen describes the fateful coup d'état in Chile on September 11, 1973, which deposed the democratically elected president, Salvador Allende, and its tragic aftermath.

Kathleen said, "I believe my memoir will be a great resource for those wanting to have an intimate look at the fierce dynamics in Chile under the Pinochet dictatorship, and the role of the ecumenical *Comité Pro Paz* and the Catholic Church in the struggle to restore human rights and defend the poor and persecuted."

Her story is multi-faceted and told in the voice of a 22-year-old who had just graduated from Notre Dame and was offered a stipend to do volunteer work in Chile for two years, in collaboration with the Holy Cross (CSC) priests in Santiago. "I was the only woman in the group going to Chile so the CSC priests asked the School Sisters of Notre Dame, who had shared ministries with them in Santiago, to host me in their convent," she said. "I lived with the SSND sisters and two other lay women, one a Chilean and one Peruvian. The story takes place between July and December of 1975 -- in the second year of the dictatorship -- at a time of extreme poverty and repression."

Kathleen said these threads are woven into her story:

- Growing up years in South Bend, Ind., my desire to see a larger world, speak Spanish, and understand the world of the poor.
- An intuitive journey and spiritual encounter while in the hands of the secret police, the DINA, and how my experiences in Chile set a path for my life.
- A look into the lives of the sisters, priests, and my housemates, who were deeply influenced by the 1968 Medellín Conference of Latin American bishops; the seismic shift of the Catholic church to serve the poor and persecuted; and the prophetic roles undertaken by religious, priests and the laity, to save the lives of others.
- The haunting repression of the dictatorship and the collusion of the U.S. government with it – re: links to the School of the Americas, *Operación Condor*, and an "American Commander."
- The workings of the U.S. consulate and embassy.
- The solidarity and prophetic witness of many Chileans, including Church leaders (Lutheran Bishop Helmut Frenz, Cardinal Silva, the Papal Nuncio, Pope Paul VI).
- The international solidarity that challenged Chile's human rights abuses in the United Nations, and the U.S. Senate's Select Committee's condemnation of the U.S. involvement in the overthrow of Chile's democracy, led by Senator Frank Church.

"These forces converged and directly impacted me during these five months of my young life," Kathleen said. "All of which makes me feel that you will resonate with this story."

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