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**PRESS RELEASE**

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**Local Bishops and COPA organize Regional Procession for Peace**

**“Cultivating Peace through Faith and Action”**

**Saturday, October 20, 2012, 11a.m.-2p.m.**

In recognition of those working to build safer, more peaceful communities, COPA (Communities Organized for Relational Power in Action) is holding a Procession for Building Peace on Saturday, October 20, 2012, in Salinas.

Bishop Richard Garcia of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Monterey and Bishop Mary Grey-Reeves of the Episcopal Diocese of El Camino Real, are leading the procession. About 500 families are expected to participate as the peace procession begins at 11:00a.m. at St. George Episcopal Church, 98 Kip Drive, Salinas, CA. 93906. This movement is an expansion of the work initiated by Bishop Richard Garcia and the Committee for Building Peace, which has grown to include several religious denominations including the Episcopal Diocese of El Camino Real and the Methodist Church as well as schools and non-profit organizations.

At approximately 12:30p.m. when the procession arrives at Madonna del Sasso Catholic Church, 320 East Laurel Drive, Salinas, CA. 93906, Salinas Chief of Police Kelly McMillin will give a keynote address. He is expected to highlight the effective work of various schools, churches, and non-profit organizations aimed at creating safe communities, illustrating the issue is not exclusively that of the police. He will also emphasize the importance of building on what is already in place to help address this region-wide problem.

The Co-Chairs for the procession will be Deacon Jose Valenzuela from the Roman Catholic Diocese of Monterey and Deacon Rob Sommer from the Episcopal Diocese of El Camino Real.

Examples of the local work being highlighted includes one community's indoor, after school soccer program; another's night walks take back their neighborhoods; and various parent education and support programs to strengthens parental involvement and effectiveness.

At the conclusion of the program at the Catholic Church, the procession will return to St. George Episcopal Church for a final blessing by both Bishops together.

COPA is an affiliate of the Industrial Areas Foundation, the oldest and largest organizing network in the U.S. Communities Organized for relational Power in Action (COPA) is a multi-issue, nonpartisan organization consisting of 24 member institutions across Santa Cruz and Monterey counties, including congregations, synagogues, schools and nonprofit organizations.