

Romeronews

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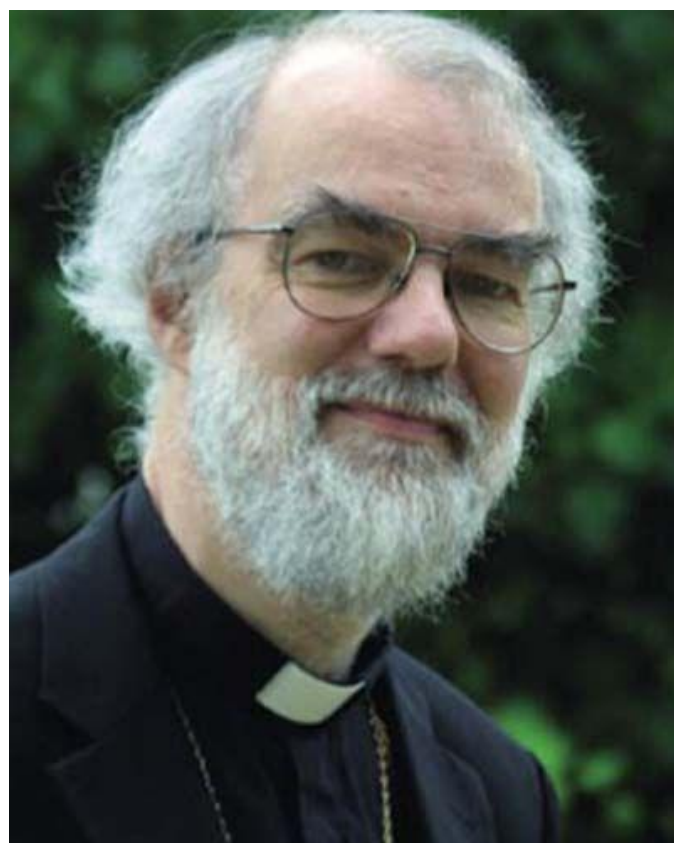
Bargain books

Annual subscriptions welcome

The event will be hosted by Archbishop Bernard Longley. Archbishop Bernard is co-Chair of ARCIC, the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission, and so it will be a great ecumenical occasion.

Romero is admired and honoured ecumenically, especially in the Anglican Communion, as well as in the Roman Catholic Church.

All are welcome. Please put it in your diaries.



*Archbishop Rowan Williams, who will give this
year's Romero Lecture*

**Romero Lecture – 12 December 2014
Archbishop Rowan Williams**

You are warmly invited to this year's Romero Lecture. It will take place on Friday 12 December at 7.00pm in St Chad's Cathedral in Birmingham. Lord Rowan Williams, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, will speak on "A saint for the whole people of God: Romero and the ecumenical future".

Holy Island Pilgrimage 2014

Dedicated to the Legacy of Oscar Romero

On a very wet and blustery Saturday in early July, several hundred parishioners and CAFOD supporters from across the North East joined forces with members of the Romero Trust to walk the Pilgrim's Way across the sands to the magical and haunting setting of Lindisfarne – Holy Island.

Busloads of supporters set off in the early morning from the Dioceses of Hallam, Leeds and Middlesbrough to join the pilgrimage organised annually by the CAFOD diocesan office for Hexham and Newcastle.

This year the theme of the pilgrimage was the "Legacy of Oscar Romero". Led by Romero Trustee, Bishop John Rawsthorne in his last official duty as Bishop of Hallam before his retirement, the walkers prayed and reflected on the testimonies of several of the pilgrims who had visited El Salvador in November last year with the Romero Trust.

For those who couldn't face the perils of getting stuck in quicksand or tramping barefoot through driving rain and the receding tide, a liturgy was held in the Catholic parish church of St Aidan. The wet weather meant that plans to hold an open-air Mass in the grounds of Lindisfarne Priory had to be abandoned, but the Anglican Vicar of St Mary's parish stepped in to save the day. He welcomed the pilgrims to his Church where there was standing room only to hear the inspirational homily from Bishop John during the Mass of thanksgiving.

A truly moving and unforgettable - albeit wet and windswept - day for all!



Bishop John blessing pilgrims at start of pilgrimage



Pilgrims setting off



Lindisfarne, Holy Island

Will it be Saint Romero in 2017?

Will it be 'Saint' Romero in 2017? "That is the question!"

Julian Filochowski reports:

Oscar Romero was born on the Feast of the Assumption, 15 August 1917, in the small town of Ciudad Barrios in El Salvador. 2017 will therefore be the centenary year of his birth. On 15 August 2014, a 3-year programme to prepare for that special Romero Jubilee will be launched in El Salvador with the formal backing of the Bishops' Conference there. With the election of Pope Francis, hopes have risen that not only Archbishop Romero's beatification but also his canonisation might be decreed in time for the centennial celebration.

Last year Pope Francis, in his own words, "unblocked" the cause for Romero's beatification. We know too that this year, in private conversations, he has reassured anxious enquirers that there is nothing to worry about now that Romero's sainthood process is moving again. Indeed, by all accounts, it is making solid progress especially after Pope Francis reportedly instructed all Vatican departments to offer their full cooperation by releasing to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints all the documents they hold in their archives that might be relevant to Romero's canonisation. We are told the process is now going forward following the regular norms, with the clear message having been put out that there will be no 'premature announcements' from anyone. This would explain the rather puzzling silence from official Vatican quarters so far this year.

In May 2014, during a most unusual ten day visit to Rome, Archbishop Escobar Alas of San Salvador, together with three other episcopal colleagues, held detailed discussions regarding the next (and final) steps towards beatification. They handed over a further letter, personally signed by every single member of their Bishops' Conference, petitioning Pope Francis for Romero's prompt beatification and requesting him to come personally to El Salvador to preside at the ceremonies.

"I would say that he accepted with pleasure, but we did not talk about timing, because the cause is still in course" was Escobar Alas's subsequent statement. This followed only days after the newly-elected President of El Salvador, Santiago Sánchez Cerén, had a private meeting in Rome with Pope Francis and, on behalf of the Salvadoran government, formally invited him to visit El Salvador.



Pope Francis being presented with a portrait of Oscar Romero, during World Youth day in Brazil

The 'positio', the critical volume which sets out the basis for the beatification cause and provides all the crucial documentation on which the ultimate decision will be made, is apparently in the last stages of preparation. It should be completed before the end of 2014.

After that we must wait until, hopefully, we learn that Archbishop Romero's martyrdom has been formally certified - which should be followed soon afterwards by an official announcement that he will indeed be beatified. This would then lead us, in the normal course of events, to anticipate Romero's beatification taking place later in 2015 or in 2016. But there is still the 2017 factor to be taken into account.

As he left Brazil last year, Pope Francis unexpectedly announced that he would return to Latin America in 2017 for the 300th anniversary of Our Lady of Aparecida. 2017 is Romero's centenary. And Pope Francis is hardly hiding his enthusiasm to canonise Romero in El Salvador. Pope Francis' travels overseas from Rome are limited. It is of course possible, but seems rather unlikely, he would travel twice to Latin America in the next three years. So the speculation centres on whether it will be 2016 or 2017 for Archbishop Romero's beatification - with Pope Francis present on Salvadoran soil.

And still yet the intriguing possibility remains: full canonisation in 2017. Perhaps we could imagine an early decision on beatification (announced or unannounced) being followed by an extraordinarily rapid canonisation process in which Pope Francis 'dispenses with' many of the existing canonical requirements, just as he has done with Pope John XXIII and the early Jesuit, Peter Faber.. As one Vatican official, who was dealing with Pope John Paul II's canonisation, put it last year: "Of course if the Holy Father wishes it then processes which normally take years can be completed in months". But we have to admit it is highly improbable.

Either way, beatification or canonisation, the raising to the altars of Archbishop Romero, the great

devotee of Our Lady Queen of Peace, on his 100th birthday, the Feast of the Assumption 2017, would be beautifully appropriate. And how fitting it would be if the recognition of the sanctity of this illustrious Father of the Latin American Church were to be incorporated into the continent-wide celebrations for the tri-centenary of the fishermen's discovery of the Aparecida statue.

Watch this space!

Remembering the UCA Martyrs 25 years on

As the 25th anniversary of the UCA martyrs approaches, Clare Dixon, a close friend of many of those who died, retraces their lives.



In the Rose Garden of the UCA, San Salvador

In the early hours of 16 November 1989, six Jesuits from the Central American University – UCA - in San Salvador, along with their housekeeper and her daughter, were brutally murdered by an elite brigade of the Salvadorean armed forces.

Each year the University celebrates the witness of the martyrs with commemorative events throughout the month of November and this year - the 25th anniversary of their murders – will be a particularly significant moment.

Five of the six Jesuits were born in Spain and the international outcry at their sacrifice made their deaths a turning point in the civil war and a crucial moment in the path towards peace.

Ignacio Ellacuría, known affectionately as “Ellacu”, was the Vice-Chancellor of the University at the time of his death, a leading philosopher and theologian born in the Basque Country of Spain. With many prestigious international awards for his work, he was one of the best-known and respected public figures in El Salvador and used his position to condemn injustice and promote a negotiated peace settlement to the civil war that took the lives of 75,000 Salvadorans.

Ignacio Martin-Baró, “Nacho”, was the Deputy President of the University and a clinical psychologist internationally renowned for his studies of the effects of war and repression on the civilian population. At weekends he took care of a poor parish in the rural village of Jayaque. His central concern for the poor was evident in all his academic and pastoral work.

Segundo Montes was the Director of the University’s Human Rights Institute. Both his research and pastoral work was devoted to the refugees who had fled the repression and horrors of the civil war into camps in Honduras. At the conclusion of the war, a group of returning refugees founded a village and named it Ciudad Segundo Montes. He told the truth about the plight and suffering of the refugees.

Amando López taught theology and philosophy at the University and was a counsellor and adviser to many students and graduates. He worked in a poor shanty town parish in Soyapango on the

outskirts of the city, witnessing to the poor and working for justice in a quiet and unassuming way.

Juan Ramon Moreno, “Pardito”, was the librarian at the Romero Pastoral Centre of the University and had just finished computerising the library’s catalogue at the time of his death. He set up the Jesuit seminary in San Salvador and was an expert on Ignatian spirituality, leading retreats for students and religious communities.

Joaquín López y López, “Lolo”, was born in San Salvador, and at the age of 75 was semi-retired. As the founder in El Salvador of the “Fe y Alegría” Faith and Joy educational movement, he had dedicated his life to a national programme providing literacy, primary and secondary schools and skills training to the very poorest sectors of the population, benefiting more than 40,000 people each year through its programmes.



Memorial plaque to Elba and Celina, at the UCA

Julia Elba Ramos worked for the Jesuit university community along with her husband Obdulio, she as a cook and he as the gardener and handyman. Obdulio had begged the Jesuit community to allow Elba and their daughter Celina to stay in their house overnight so as to be kept safe from the fighting of the war which was raging.

Celina Ramos was sixteen years old and doing very well in high school and had plans for further studies. She and her boyfriend were beginning to talk about getting married. Celina was murdered in the arms of her mother because they could have told the world the truth about who had murdered the Jesuits.

When the Saints Come Marching in to St Albans

David Skidmore reports on the plans for a Romero statue at St Albans Cathedral.

The title of Rowan Williams's Romero Lecture 'A saint for the whole people of God: Romero and the ecumenical future' resonates strongly in St Albans Abbey. As Bishop of St Albans, Robert Runcie intervened in the House of Lords to help block the sale of British armoured cars to the repressive regime in El Salvador. When he moved from St Albans to Canterbury in 1980 he was enthroned on the day after Archbishop Romero's murder on 24 March – the day the Anglican Calendar of Saints commemorates Oscar Romero each year.

Commenting on the enthronement ceremony the BBC's Tom Fleming reminded viewers of the cost of being a champion of truth and justice – in Canterbury in 1170 and in San Salvador the previous day. In 1982 when Pope St John Paul II came to Canterbury Cathedral he visited the Chapel of the Saints and Martyrs of Our Own Time and Robert Runcie lit a candle for Oscar Romero.

In 1998 a statue of Romero was among the ten Martyrs of the Twentieth Century on the West Front of Westminster Abbey. Now St Albans, another

great Benedictine Abbey (which at the Dissolution of the Monasteries was bought by our townspeople to be used as their Parish Church), awaits the arrival of its statue of Archbishop Romero. The Archbishop will be one of the seven martyrs who will fill the niches in the Nave Altar Screen which have been empty since the destruction of the Reformation era.



West View of St Alban's Cathedral

The statues are expected to arrive in January. They are being carved by Rory Young and the St Albans commission brings together a number of his interests: the enhancement of historic buildings, sculpture, stone carving, portraiture, hagiography and church history. For St Albans Abbey that history inspires our ecumenical commitment. Ever since Dean Peter Moore's time, when Robert Runcie was our Bishop, the Abbey – which is both a Parish Church and a Cathedral – has had a Roman Catholic Chaplain and we now also have Orthodox, Lutheran and Free Church Chaplains. Roman Catholic Mass is celebrated in the Lady Chapel every Friday.

Whereas the Westminster statues were designed to represent what Dr Andrew Chandler terms 'the Christian experience of the twentieth century and the costs of that experience', the martyrs chosen for St Albans have a more specific relevance – either because they are 'local' or because they inspire us to commit ourselves ecumenically to work for justice and peace.

The four local martyrs are Alban himself, Britain's first Christian martyr, who gave his life to shelter a fugitive priest, Amphibalus who shared his faith with Alban and was protected by him before following him to martyrdom, George Tankerfield, a Protestant, burnt near our Abbey in Queen Mary's reign, and Alban Roe a Benedictine priest who was imprisoned near the Abbey before being executed at Tyburn. In honouring a Protestant and a Catholic who gave their lives for their Christian beliefs we ask for the grace of reconciliation between all faiths and denominations in our own time.

Our three modern martyrs are Elizabeth of Russia, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and Oscar Romero - Orthodox, Lutheran and Catholic. We pray that, inspired by them, we will follow their example of Christian witness and courage in our own lives.

Rory Young told me that as he carved our statues he had a strong sense that all of these martyrs had received the gift of faith and were united in having died for it. He loved the fact that each of them had lived out their vocation in their particular time and place. To make this clear, when the statues are painted – as the originals would have been – all the palms carried by the martyrs (apart from Alban in the centre who wears a crown) will be painted the same green but the shape of each palm will be subtly different.



Creating the St Albans's Cathedral Martyrs

Our present Dean, Jeffery John, has said that at the Eucharist more than anywhere else or any other time, the Communion of Saints is realised. That is why these statues are so much more than historical reminders or examples. The saints are living brothers and sisters. Those who visited Rory Young's studio with Gaspar Romero last year and saw him looking at the statue of his brother could sense that. For Rory Young the St Albans martyrs 'represent the Company of Heaven present at worship and joining us in our prayers'. As our Dean says 'These are our friends who literally stand with us around the altar, and who constantly care for us and pray for us, as we follow our own Christian pilgrimage of faith and witness'.

This year's El Salvador Elections

An incredibly close result

Clare Dixon analyses the incredibly close election result in March and what it means for El Salvador.

The early months of 2014 in El Salvador were dominated by the Presidential elections. The two round process brought into contention two former opponents in the civil war: the FMLN candidate, Salvador Sánchez Cerén, a teacher turned guerrilla leader versus businessman Norman Quijano, one of the founders of the far-right ARENA party and Mayor of San Salvador.

Due to a split in the ARENA party, a third candidate, former President Antonio Saca, stood on a ticket of a newly formed coalition known as Unity. In the first round the two lead candidates stood for quite different policies: the FMLN on expanding the social programmes implemented by President Funes, particularly the educational packages which provided free school uniforms, school meals and materials for all children in the State school sector, the “Women’s City” (Ciudad Mujer) programme which provided multiple services for low income women: education, scholarships, small business opportunities, training, refuge, legal defence and policies on social integration.

For their part ARENA concentrated on a crackdown on social violence, rejection of the fiscal and taxation reforms of the FMLN and a reduction of the social welfare programmes of the government – until they realised that this latter policy was highly popular and so changed their discourse into one of

providing better social services than those of the FMLN.

Both parties had to deal with potential electoral disadvantage: the mild and rather shy Sánchez was branded as a warmongering guerrilla with blood on his hands by the ARENA camp whilst Quijano’s campaign manager – former President Francisco Flores – was caught trying to flee the country after a warrant for his arrest was issued because of his alleged misappropriation of a US\$ 20 million grant from the government of Taiwan for post-earthquake reconstruction in 2001.



An FMLN supporter casting his vote

Before the first round on 2 February all opinion polls, including the UCA Jesuit University, gave a clear advantage of as much as 16% to the FMLN: in the event the results gave the FMLN just over 49% of the vote, with ARENA on 39% and Unity with 11%. Lack of an overall majority meant that the run-off between the two leading candidates had to go to a second round on March 9th. In this interim the ARENA ran a virulently negative campaign, using the social unrest in Venezuela as a scaremongering tactic that social violence would be the inevitable result of an FMLN victory, harking back to the civil war which had ended more than two decades previously.

Whilst the pollsters continued to predict an advantage of at least ten percent to the FMLN, the

second round result was a cliff hanger, with FMLN winning by the narrowest of margins despite a higher turnout in their support than in the first round. Even before the final count ARENA called on the army to intervene to “impose democracy” and a period of tension and wrangling over recounts and counter-claim ensued.

In the end when the dust eventually settled after the incredibly tense second round of voting, Salvador Sánchez Cerén was elected to be formally sworn in as President on 1st June, for the 2nd FMLN term in the Presidency.

As for future prospects, without a clear majority in Parliament there will no doubt be a period of getting used to the new dispensation on all sides. Arena reluctantly accepted the election result - FMLN 50.11% - ARENA 49.89%. According to the law 50% + one vote is enough and actually it was just over 6,000 votes in a turnout of over 3 million. For the future it is clear that the social programmes started under Mauricio Funes will continue. Yet with little fiscal resources, it will be difficult for the government to expand them significantly.

The FMLN does not have a majority in the National Assembly, and it will be difficult for them to advance any ambitious legislative agenda. US policy towards El Salvador will remain unchanged through 2016 but if a conservative Republican administration comes into office in 2017, expect to see a chill in relations on the US side for ideological reasons.

We can expect to see erratic policy on domestic security issues. No one in El Salvador has a consistent vision for how to confront the gangs, crime and violence which plague the country. The

incoming president has not articulated one apart from a recent announcement to establish community policing. The first decision is what to do with the crumbling truce with the gangs.

Capital may flee the country. During the presidency of Mauricio Funes, internal capital investment greatly declined. Salvadorean business did not reinvest domestically. They did not move their money out of the country, but simply sat on it. With the prospect of a movement farther to the left, the rich may start moving their dollars to Miami and elsewhere.

At the end of April, President-elect Sánchez travelled to Rome for the ceremony of canonisation of Popes John XXIII and John Paul II. He met with Pope Francis whom he congratulated on unblocking the beatification process of Archbishop Romero and invited him to visit El Salvador.



President Sánchez and his wife Margarita during a private audience at the Vatican April 25, 2014

Rutilio Grande SJ

As the cause for Rutilio Grande's canonisation is opened, Michael Campbell-Johnston SJ reviews the life and martyrdom of this courageous priest and great friend of Romero.



Rutilio Grande (right) with Archbishop Romero in San Salvador cathedral

In the last Sunday sermon he preached Rutilio Grande claimed that Jesus Christ would not be allowed to enter El Salvador, and that, if he did manage to cross the border, he would be arrested and crucified anew. A week later Rutilio himself was shot dead on his way to offer Mass in a rural chapel in his parish of Aguilares.. On this year's anniversary of his martyrdom it was announced that the cause for his beatification is being opened in El Salvador by Archbishop José Luis Escobar, and is being led by Msgr Rafael Urrutia who was vice-postulator for Romero's cause.

On 12 March 1977, the Jesuit Rutilio Grande was assassinated by a death squad together with an old man, Manuel Solórzano and Nelson Lemus, a 15-year-old boy, as they were on their way to

celebrate Mass in the village of El Paisnal where Rutilio had been born. Living among and working for the landless peasants of the region, a week before he had preached a sermon protesting against the expulsion from the country of Fr Mario Bernal, the diocesan parish priest of Apopa. In it he said: "It is dangerous to be truly Catholic. It is almost illegal to be an authentic Christian in our society, in our country. The world around us is based on an institutionalised disorder before which the very proclamation of the Gospel is subversive... I fear that if Jesus were to cross the border.. they would crucify him again, because they prefer a Christ of mere buriers and undertakers. A mute Christ, without a mouth, who can be carried in procession through the streets. A Christ with his mouth muzzled... This is not the Christ of the Gospel, the young Christ, 33 years old, who died for the most noble of causes".



These words not only explain why Rutilio was killed but also the cause to which he devoted his life. Both reasons were the same for the 6 Jesuits killed on the campus of the Jesuit University of El Salvador (UCA) and for Archbishop Romero

himself. They were all dedicated to trying to build a more just society for the landless peasants abandoned and ignored by the regime. And such work cannot but be considered subversive by those holding power.

His fellow-Jesuit Jon Sobrino explains how Rutilio's martyrdom gave birth to a new church, a new understanding of what it means to be a Christian. Archbishop Romero describes it as a church "which preaches from the poor. And we should never be ashamed of speaking about the church of the poor since it was among the poor that Jesus preached his message of redemption". At the same time this also means that it must become a church of martyrs, as Rutilio's death so clearly shows. To preach and work for justice is to invite persecution from those who have a vested interest in maintaining the status quo. May we have the courage not only to understand the meaning of Rutilio's death, but also, if need be, to follow his example.



The author, Michael Campbell-Johnston SJ, worked for many years in El Salvador and returned from there to become Provincial of the British Jesuits from 1987 to 1993

Madre Luz – A Guardian Angel for Romero

Julian Filochowski remembers the life of a remarkable Carmelite nun.

On 5 May 2014, María Luz Isabel Cueva, the Mexican-born Carmelite Missionary Sister of St Theresa, known affectionately as 'Madre Luz', died in the Divine Providence Hospital (the *hospitalito*) in San Salvador at the age of 91. This was where Archbishop Romero had lived as a special 'tenant' of the Carmelite Sisters for the three years up to his assassination in March 1980.

Madre Luz was the co-founder of the *hospitalito* which had opened in January 1966. She ran it for more than a decade as the head of the community of Carmelite Sisters there. She had tirelessly and quite shamelessly raised the crucial funds from a group of wealthy benefactors to construct its eight wards and the necessary facilities to accommodate desperately poor cancer patients. But she could not have dreamt that its most famous resident was to be an archbishop, who would be martyred in the hospital chapel.

When Oscar Romero was appointed archbishop he had nowhere to live. There had been no 'Archbishop's House' since the 1965 earthquake. But he was immediately offered the gift of a grand residence in an exclusive area of the city. He declined. So when Madre Luz and the sisters offered him a home with them at the *hospitalito* he jumped at the idea and acted as the Hospital Chaplain. For six months he lived in a tiny room opposite the hospital chapel's sacristy with a bed, a side table, two chairs and a toilet/shower. Then on

his 60th birthday they handed him the keys to a very simple three-room house, the size of a garage, which they had had built for him near the gates of the hospital grounds. He was truly filled with joy. This simple residence became his retreat, his spiritual cell, a refuge where he could prepare his homilies in peace and in prayer.

He was made very happy there, praying Lauds, saying morning Mass and eating with the eight sisters in a family setting. He tried not to bring his terrible worries to their gatherings but they could discern from his silences and his moods the burdens and fears he was carrying. They enfolded him in love; conflictive issues were off limits but they cheered him up with a daily ration of amusing stories and jokes which the far-from-sombre Romero loved. They protected him too, they looked after the visitors that sought him out there, and in the most difficult times they took the insulting and death-threatening phone calls. His office was in the seminary; but he described the *hospitalito*, to the delight of the Sisters as his 'Bethany'. They were with him and they supported him and they were the witnesses to his martyrdom in their chapel.



Sr María Luz Isabel Cueva, 'Madre Luz'

Madre Luz was at the very heart of it; she beamed with joy and hope, she exuded tenderness and determination in equal measure. She described herself as a little bit '*terca*' or stubborn – but for the Kingdom of God! Madre Luz was the very last of that wonderful community, greatly blessed to have lived alongside Archbishop Romero. I remember vividly her surreptitiously allowing me into Romero's rooms, immediately after the funeral in March 1980, so that I could see for myself how he had left his home so very tidy that he seemed to have known he would be away for a good long time. It is a Romero snapshot I shall never forget.

After Romero's death Madre Luz went on to found, in Santa Tecla, a home for children who were orphans of cancer parents; and ten years later a Spirituality Centre in Candelaria. All this was done with her particular brand of fundraising – she would never accept defeat and she relied on Divine Providence, knowing without a shadow of doubt that she was about God's business. She was not one of El Salvador's martyrs but surely has her place in the gallery of Salvadoran Saints; one of Romero's Guardian Angels.

Extraordinary lives Salvadorean farmer Fidel Ramos

Clare Dixon introduces...

Fidel Ramos lives in the hamlet of Puentecitos, a poor rural community in the west of El Salvador, close to the border with Guatemala. Fidel and his wife Julia, along with their six children, are movers and shakers in their village community, always doing what they can to encourage their neighbours

to get involved, to help each other improve their living conditions and build the community's ability to withstand times of crisis, the droughts and floods which regularly hit them. In what little spare time he has, Fidel looks after the village chapel named in honour of Our Lady of Carmel. Julia runs the choir and Fidel assists with the running of community activities as a catechist.



Fidel, Julia and their children meeting CAFOD youth leaders from Britain in January 2014

Although their lives are hard and without the home comforts that we take for granted, the family is happy and content and, like parents across the world, Fidel and Julia have great hopes for their children's future. Sarita, their eldest daughter, has gained a scholarship to a good agricultural training school and their next child, Marisol, dreams of becoming a nun. In the front yard of their ramshackle house the whole family takes care of a large sow which provides the family with some security against hard times: a real live "piggy bank" producing piglets for sale to provide cash income for the family. At first sight, life in Puentecitos seems idyllic, but appearances can be deceptive.

When Fidel was 15, an army truck arrived in the village. The civil war was raging in much of the country but things were relatively peaceful in

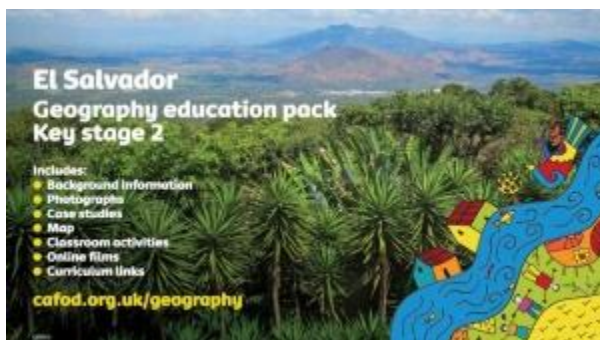
Puentecitos. The soldiers chased and captured Fidel and his cousin - who was also his best friend. This put an end to their carefree school days and their childhood. After a brief period of brutal drilling and military training, Fidel was posted to a garrison far away in Chalatenango in the north of the country; a foot-soldier, forcibly drafted into a cruel war against a peasant army of guerrillas. Fidel would say later how he felt so bad, torn away from everything and everyone he knew, being told to kill, being scared out of his wits in a senseless conflict pitting poor farm-boys like him against poor farm-boys on the opposing side: both sides alike suffering from the cold nights and meagre rations in their mountain encampments.

Some months after the boys were press-ganged into the army, a group of soldiers carrying a coffin arrived in Puentecitos, asking for the Ramos family. In the coffin was Fidel's young cousin. On seeing the soldiers and hearing them shout her family's name Fidel's mother thought the worst; that her son had been killed. The shock was so great that she suffered a heart attack and fell down dead. Fidel was given some days of leave to go home for his mother's funeral: only then did he discover the cause of her death, and the shock that his cousin had been killed. When the war ended, Fidel and Julia were married. With no land and no money Fidel, like so many thousands of his fellow Salvadoreans, was forced to migrate to find work to keep his family. Leaving Julia and daughter Sarita behind he travelled up to Belize, (formerly British Honduras) and found work on a fish-farm producing king prawns for export to Britain and Europe. After two years of hard toil he got word that his father was near death and was calling for him so he returned to El Salvador. Near miraculously, his father recovered and with his savings Fidel was

able to rent a plot of land some distance from the hamlet where they still grow food to eat: beans and maize as well as fruit and vegetables.

Nowadays, every Thursday afternoon in the chapel, Fidel leads the community in prayer. “We always remember our friends in England who we have met through CAFOD. We can’t believe that people like you think that people like us are important, that we matter. You make us feel like real people.” Surely what CAFOD is about is to work so that everyone, no matter how poor, no matter how humble they might be, can feel they are someone special...just like Fidel Ramos.

**Discover El Salvador
with CAFOD’s new Geography resource**



To coincide with the release of the new Geography National Curriculum, the aid and development agency CAFOD has launched a free resource pack designed to support children’s locational and place knowledge, along with their understanding of key aspects of human and physical geography.

The primary Geography education pack, designed for Key Stage 2, will support teachers to deliver the new September 2014 Geography curriculum. With a focus on El Salvador, it provides photographs,

online films and classroom activities to help inspire a curiosity about the world and its people.

TV and Radio Presenter Adrian Chiles, who travelled to El Salvador last year with CAFOD, said: “Photos, films and real life stories are the best way to bring subjects like Geography to life. When I visited El Salvador with CAFOD it was meeting people and hearing their stories that brought CAFOD’s work to life for me. I took lots of videos for my own daughters while I was there to help them get a feel for this far-off and wildly different place, and practice their Spanish. It’s great this has been done on a larger scale to benefit children all over the country.”

The resource, which is amongst the first to support the curriculum, enables teachers to meet the core requirement for pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding beyond the local area to include North, Central and South America, and to add a global dimension to other subjects across the curriculum.

CAFOD’s Primary Schools Writer, Gemma Salter, said: “The materials and classroom activities will encourage children to ask questions and find out more. With links to local geography, children will also be able to explore the similarities and differences between their lives and the lives of children growing up in El Salvador.”

CAFOD has been working in El Salvador since 1970 to help Salvadoreans build a better future through agriculture, disaster risk reduction, HIV and AIDS, and peace programmes.

To view and download the resource visit: <http://www.cafod.org.uk/Education>

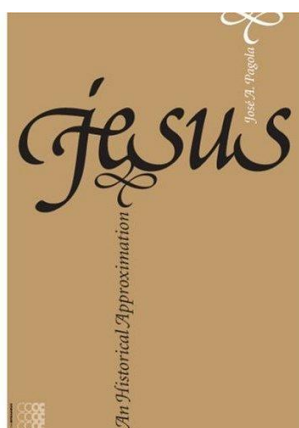
Annual Subscriptions Warmly Welcome

There are now more than 500 *Friends of Romero* who belong to our solidarity network. If you can afford to do so, please send us a cheque for £10 to help cover our costs.

Even better, please sign the Standing Order and Gift Aid forms which are printed at the end of this newsletter and return them to us at PO Box 70227, London E9 8BR.

Bargain Book Offers

Jesus, an Historical Approximation



£23 (incl p & p)

A lively and passionate narrative of Jesus, which addresses basic questions about who he was, the originality of his message and how the vision of the Kingdom of God centred his life.

"At my age, I no longer read many books, but I read Pagola's in one sitting. It has helped me grow in age, wisdom and grace. I recommend it to many people, Christians and non-believers. Monseñor Romero would have quoted from it in his Sunday homilies." Jon Sobrino SJ

Copies are available at £23 including postage and packing from the Trust. It is also available in bookshops at £34 per copy.

Oscar Romero and the Communion of the Saints

OSCAR ROMERO
and
The Communion of Saints



SCOTT WRIGHT

One of the special joys of this biography is its inclusion of many rarely-seen photos, taken by Octavio Durán, a Franciscan friar, who served as Romero's personal photographer.
(£10 incl p & p)

Oscar Romero: Memories in Mosaic



The story of Archbishop Romero, told by those who worked with him, lived with him and prayed with him. One of the best books on Romero.

£13 (incl. p & p)

The books may be ordered from the Archbishop Romero Trust, PO Box 70227, London E9 8BR or by email: romerotrust@btinternet.com

Trustees: Julian Filochowski, Clare Dixon, Bishop John Rawsthorne, Rev Richard Carter, Frank Turner SJ, Tony Lester OCarm, David Skidmore, Jan Graffius.

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Standing Order Mandate

You may use this form to set up a standing order in favour of Archbishop Romero Trust. Take it to your bank or write to your bank, or use internet or telephone banking.

Your name	
and address	

I would like to set up a **standing order** in favour of **Archbishop Romero Trust** (registered charity no 1110069), **PO Box 70227, London E9 8BR.**

Bank Account No 65149773; Sort code 08-92-99.

Your bank details:

Bank Name:			
Bank Address:			
Account Name:			
Account Number:			
Sort Code:			
Amount in words			
Amount in figures			
Date of first payment	/	/	
And thereafter:	Monthly or	Annually	Delete appropriate as

Signed:	
Date:	

ARCHBISHOP ROMERO TRUST
PO Box 70227,
London E9 8BR

Gift Aid Declaration

Name

.....

Address

.....

.....

.....

I am a UK taxpayer and would like the Archbishop Romero Trust (registered charity no 1110069) to claim the tax on *(please tick as appropriate)*:

- () current and future donations
() past donations for the last 6 years and current and future donations

This Gift Aid declaration can be withdrawn at any time by notifying the Archbishop Romero Trust.

Signed.....

Date.....

If you pay tax, all contributions to this charity qualify for Gift Aid, and The Archbishop Romero Trust can recover related tax. As a taxpayer, you must pay income tax and/or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax that is reclaimed on your gifts in a tax year.

Please inform us if you change name or home address.