“It is not God’s will for some to have everything and others to have nothing.”
**Oscar Romero, a CAFOD partner**

A CAFOD partner is an organisation in a developing country that works with the local community, supported by donations from CAFOD supporters in England and Wales.

As Romero did, CAFOD partners know the needs of their communities because they live and work alongside them.

CAFOD has partners in many countries around the world. Together we bring hope and compassion to poor communities, standing side by side with them to end poverty and injustice.

CAFOD’s work in El Salvador stretches back to the early 1970s. The Legal Aid Office of Romero was one of CAFOD’s principal partners there.

At the time, the country was ruled by a military-dominated government that used violence to crush demands for social justice. Romero’s Legal Aid Office helped the families of people who were arrested, tortured and killed by the army and police.

Romero stood alongside his people facing terror and violence, as they spoke out against injustice. He is remembered for his courage, his faith and, above all, his great love for the poor people of El Salvador.

This passion and dedication to those in need means CAFOD continues to support partners like El Salvador, working to overcome poverty and injustice.

**How you can help CAFOD partners**

- Raise awareness about the causes of poverty and injustice using CAFOD’s educational materials cafod.org.uk/education
- Fundraise to help poor communities around the world to change their lives cafod.org.uk/fundraise
- Campaign, with CAFOD to change the policies and practices that keep people poor cafod.org.uk/campaign
- Pray... with CAFOD and our global neighbours for a just and fair world cafod.org.uk/pray
- Volunteer... get involved with CAFOD and help to bring hope to an end of poverty cafod.org.uk/volunteer

**CAFOD partners in El Salvador today**

Our partners focus on four key areas of development:

- Helping farmers to improve their crops and find new markets
- Reducing the risk of disasters
- Providing critical assistance to vulnerable people first.
- Increasing peace

**Visit cafod.org.uk/virtualcandle**

(Or you could use your virtual candle:

- Prayer focus:
  - Romero cross liturgy
  - Prayer: Lord, hear us
  - Pray… for as you work the land, I hope that you will have both a future and a better quality of life.

**The Jesuit Development Service**

**CAFOD partner**

**CAFD in supporting the JDS, who work with some of the poorest communities in El Salvador, to the west of the country.**

People here grow food to survive, but the steep, rocky land makes growing crops difficult. The JDS helps train farmers, so people can share skills, develop new ways to earn money and create a better life for their community.

**Fidel:** “The JDS has helped us to farm our land and shown us how to breed pigs. Looking ahead, I feel that my children will learn how to farm the land. I hope that they will have a better future and a better quality of life.”

**Watch a video about the JDS’s work in El Salvador**

*The ARCHIVOS Roma Trust website has all the full text of Romero’s homilies, an archive of important information on events and a wealth of other information.*

romerotrust.org.uk

---

**Romero cross liturgy**

We invite you to use this liturgy to pray with us and with the people of El Salvador with whom CAFOD works.

**Prefer focus:**

- Map of the world, highlighting El Salvador
- Large candle, eg. CAFOD candle (for you could use our virtual candle: cafod.org.uk/virtualcandle)
- Romero cross
- Romero poster
- Large sheet of paper cut into wide cross, with a figure of Jesus drawn onto it.

**Introduction:**

*In the name of the Father...*

**Leader:** Today we celebrate with the people of El Salvador.

(Tell the story of Romero in your own words, using information from the timeline, or use the primary or secondary Romero PowerPoints or the short film on our website. You may also include a section from one of Romero’s sermons.)

**Symbolic action:**

(If possible, beforehand give people time to draw or point figures and symbols to add to the cross that represent people in our global community who live in poverty.)

**Leader:** We are using the shape of Christ alone on the cross. But in El Salvador there is a tradition of painting the local community and landscape on the cross with Jesus. It is a sign that shows his joys and pains with him as he dies and rises again.

Today we are inspired by Romero’s words: “It is not God’s will for some to have everything and others to have nothing.” We bring to Jesus those in our global family who do not have what they need.

During the music, you are invited to think carefully about the words of Romero. Come up to the cross and write or draw on it one thing you can do to help people have the basic things they need to be able to live as God wants.

**Oscar Romero, 10 September 1978**

Romero was a priest who was born in 1917. He was 14 years old. Oscar was presented to his father to deliver telegrams. Oscar seemed to be a carpenter, making tables, chairs and doors.

When he was 15 years old, his father was killed in a street fight at a young mass meeting. When his mother was 18, she and her brother died of a disease.

Romero went to Rome to study and stayed there during World War II. His father and brother died while he was in Rome.

Romero was ordained a priest and returned to El Salvador. He was famous for his teaching. He also did a lot of parish work like visiting parishes, organising catechism classes and working with others in the Church to provide help and food for the poor.

Romero became Archbishop of San Salvador. Romero was famous for his people. He was happy because they thought he would stop priests from helping the poor to stand up for their basic rights. But a few weeks later, his friend Fr. Rubén González, who was shot and killed, along with two compañeros.

The next day, Romero announced in the news that his government would be inspired by Romero and the “poor of the world” (choosing to put the most vulnerable people first).

Pope Francis announced that Oscar Romero was a martyr. Romero was beatified on 23 May 2015 and became a saint.

In silence, we make our own prayers. (Pause)

Let us pray to Jesus, the people of El Salvador and all the people of God that – like Romero – we may be a voice for the voiceless, speaking out against injustice so that all God’s children be happy.

We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen. In the name of the Father...