

Prophet (*noun*)

A person regarded as an inspired teacher or proclaimer of the will of God.

Saint Oscar Romero

Learning objectives:

- To know the life, beliefs and actions of Oscar Romero
- To understand why and how he died for his beliefs and actions
- To be able to explain in what ways Romero could be described as a prophet.

How to use this resource

- 1 Read the timeline below to find out about Romero.
- 2 Watch the video at cafod.org.uk/secondary/romero. As you watch it, see how many of the timeline 'moments' you can spot.
- 3 Fill in the notes table opposite, or answer the questions in your notebook or on a sheet of paper.
- 4 If *you* want to speak truth to power, find out how at cafod.org.uk/Education/For-young-people/Campaigning-for-young-people

What did Romero do that showed his beliefs about God?	
Which event/s shaped his views about how he should help oppressed people?	
How did he help them?	
How did CAFOD support Romero?	
Why was Romero shot and killed?	
In what ways could Romero be described as a prophet?	

(Continue on a separate piece of paper)

EXTENSION ACTIVITY: Either explain your views on the statement: “It is not a priest’s job to comment on political issues – he should just focus on God.” Or describe two or more people whom you consider to be today’s prophetic voices and justify your views.

1917

Oscar Arnulfo Romero was born into a family of ten on 15 August in Ciudad Barrios, El Salvador. His father was in charge of the local telegraph office. Sometimes the young Romero helped his father to deliver telegrams. Oscar learned to be a carpenter, making tables, chairs and doors.



1937

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



1942

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



1974

Violence increased in El Salvador by the mid 1970s, as the government and army began killing poor people who stood up for their rights. When the army killed three people in the village of Tres Calles in Romero's diocese, he comforted the families and wrote to the President to protest about the murders.



1977

Romero became Archbishop of San Salvador. Some rich people were 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 Rutilio Grande was shot and killed, along with two companions. The following Sunday, Romero allowed only one Mass in the whole diocese – at the Cathedral – where he spoke out against the murders.



1977 80

As the violence in El Salvador continued, Romero continued to speak out. Every Sunday his sermon was broadcast by radio. The whole country listened. Romero's life was often threatened. CAFOD supported Romero's work and when his radio station was bombed, CAFOD rebuilt it.



1980

The next day, a shot killed Romero as he said Mass. A UN report later found that Major Roberto D'Aubuisson, had ordered Romero's death. Thousands came to the funeral. The army fired into the crowd. 30 people died and hundreds were injured. There was civil war in El Salvador until 1992.



2009

On 15 March, the new president of El Salvador announced that his government would be inspired by Romero and the "option for the poor" (choosing to put the most vulnerable people first).



2015

Pope Francis confirmed Oscar Romero was a martyr, killed out of hatred of the faith. He was beatified on 23 May.



2018

Pope Francis approved a miracle which was attributed to Oscar Romero. This meant he could now be canonised. The canonisation date was 14 October. **Saint Oscar Romero, pray for us.**

