



Church of St. Dominic
A Eucharistic Family Living the Mission of Christ

Chiltiupán Connection

El Salvador Mission Program Newsletter

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Adopt-A-School



The El Salvador Education Committee recently launched its “Adopt-a-School” Program. There are 16 schools in the municipality of Chiltiupán. Some remote “canton” schools do not have basic school supplies. To meet this need, we are seeking families, groups, or organizations that would like to adopt one of the forgotten schools.

Minimum commitment is \$1,000 annually. In addition to providing financial support, you can also build a relationship with the students and teachers of the school.

Currently, 8 of the 16 schools have been sponsored. If you would like to assist the least among us via the gift of education, please contact us.

Oscar Romero: The People’s Saint

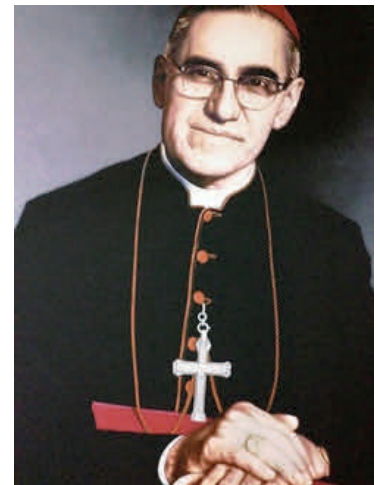
When Pope Paul VI appointed Oscar Romero as Archbishop of San Salvador in 1977, the Salvadoran people expected little from him. He was soft-spoken and seen as someone who would maintain the status quo for the privileged few in a country plagued by social and economic injustices.

Shortly after his appointment, his best friend, Fr. Rutilio Grande, S.J. was murdered by a right-wing militia for supporting peasant rights. Fr. Grande’s death was an epiphany for Romero. It was an invitation from Jesus for Romero to walk among the crucified peoples of El Salvador. Romero became a voice for the voiceless. His

prophetic calls for peace and justice in a country filled with turmoil ultimately led to his own death. On March 24, 1980, Archbishop Oscar Romero was assassinated while celebrating Mass. Romero became the first Catholic bishop killed in a church since Thomas Becket in 1170.

For decades, the Church and government of El Salvador tried to erase Romero from its national narrative. After his death, Romero was buried in a small crypt in the corner of the basement of the Cathedral of San Salvador. Out of sight, out of mind. Yet the people of El Salvador considered him their patron saint.

For 35 years, Romero’s



official cause for sainthood was bogged down by the powers inside the Vatican and El Salvador. Soon after Francis was elected Pope, he expedited the canonization process for Romero, and the Vatican officially declared him a martyr - something the Salvadoran *(continued)*

God’s Calling (By Parishioner Dr. Laura Milgram)



“I am so nervous to go on this trip. I’m not sure what I have to offer these people. How will I communicate with them? Will anything that I do there actually be helpful, meaningful? Can I make a difference?” These questions, and many more, were swirling in my head as I set out to participate in a medical mission trip to El Salvador in 2013.

“I speak no Spanish. I have never been to any South or Central American country. I have no idea even what ‘mission’ really means. I’m not sure what made me sign up in the first place.” More questions and more doubts.

As with many other times in my life, I pushed forward, largely driven by a curiosity to *(continued)*

How Can You Help?

Upcoming Trips:

- April 18-25, 2015
Medical Trip
- June 15-19, 2015
Youth Trip
- October 17-24, 2015
Medical Trip II
- November 11-15, 2015
Relational Trip
- February 17-21, 2016
Relational Trip

Join an El Salvador Initiative/Committee:

- **ESSOC University Scholarship Program**
- **ESSEM Farm Program Education Committee**
- **Clinic Committee**
- **Santa Rosa Stitches Mission Stoves**
- **Nelson's Carvings Baño Project**
- **Water Project with Rotary International**
- **Lantern Project**
- **Wedding Jewelry**

For more information about the St. Dominic partnership with Santo Domingo Parish in Chiltiupán, El Salvador:

- Visit the parish website: www.stdominicchurch.net
- Contact Jodie Bowers, Pastoral Associate, at bowers.jodie@gmail.com or 216-991-1444

Oscar Romero (continued)

people knew 35 years ago.

On May 23, 2015, Archbishop Oscar Romero was beatified in a grand ceremony in San Salvador. As “Blessed” Oscar Romero, he is now one step away from his rightful recognition as a saint. While his beatification is seen by some as a vindication of his defense of the poor, the people of El Salvador have long known him as their Santo Romero.



Fr. Martin blesses a bust of Romero to commemorate his beatification.

Sr. Irma, principal of Santo Domingo School in Chiltiupán, says “Monseñor Romero lived all of his life in true holiness. His love for God, the Church, and especially the poor led him to lay down his own life as a martyr for others.”

Herbert Herrera, our translator and ESSOC college student, adds that he experienced one of many miracles of Romero when he was visiting Romero’s tomb. Herbert says, “We were having 15 days of drought during the middle of the rainy season. I knew that meant that food was going to be very expensive that year and people would not be able to afford to eat. I knew it meant that the farmers would have no crops to sell. It was very bad. So I asked Monseñor Romero to intercede for rain. That afternoon when I returned to Chiltiupan, it was raining hard and everyone was happy. I knew that Romero interceded for his poor people.”

God’s Calling (continued)

experience something different, without much expectation for exactly how the week would unfold.

Unfold it did: a group of 12 people, with varied areas of expertise, from nursing to dentistry to pharmacy to medicine, spend three-and-a-half days seeing 845 patients in and around a remote mountaintop community. The doubts melt away, the language barrier lifts, and I welcome the familiar feeling of connecting with a patient, providing a truly listening ear, a meaningful touch, a healing heart. Even with limited pills to prescribe, I am able to treat the patients with medicine in its purest form, that of human interaction. So, at the end of an exhausting but exhilarating week, I feel almost guilty that I have gotten so much out of this experience. These people have welcomed my touch, have embraced the therapy I have to offer, and in doing so, they have renewed my true passion for medicine, a passion that is often lost in my practice of medicine at home.



Dr. Milgram examines a young girl

The doubts I had were relieved by the knowledge that God gave me exactly those talents according to my ability. In this way, then, my involvement in the mission trip is really driven not by my own curiosity, but rather by God’s calling.

If God is calling you, consider joining me October 17th-24th, as St. Dominic leads another medical delegation to El Salvador.