



March 24

Commemoration: Oscar Arnulfo Romero, Bishop of El Salvador, martyr, 1980

Óscar Arnulfo Romero y Galdámez (15 August 1917 – 24 March 1980) was a bishop of the Catholic Church in El Salvador. He became the fourth Archbishop of San Salvador, succeeding Luis Chávez. He was assassinated on 24 March 1980.

After his assassination, Romero was succeeded by Monsignor Arturo Rivera. In 1997, a cause for beatification and canonization into sainthood was opened for Romero, and Pope John Paul II bestowed upon him the title of Servant of God. The canonization process continues. He is considered by some the unofficial patron saint of the Americas and El Salvador and is often referred to as "*San Romero*" by Catholics in El Salvador. Outside of Catholicism, Romero is honored by other religious denominations of Christendom, including the Church of England through the Calendar in Common Worship. He is one of the ten 20th century martyrs who are depicted in statues above the Great West Door of Westminster Abbey in London, a testament to his wide respect even beyond the Catholic Church. In 2008, he was chosen as one of the 15 Champions of World Democracy by the Europe-based magazine *A Different View*.

Photo: Slain Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar Romero is pictured in an undated file photo. Oscar Arnulfo Romero was born in Ciudad Barrios, El Salvador, in 1917. He was assassinated March 24, 1980, while celebrating Mass in the chapel of San Salvador's Hospital of Divine Providence. He was a vig-

orous defender of the powerless and the poor and a critic of unjust military and government actions during a time of civil unrest in his country.