

# PROJECT SALVADOR

Spring 2018

U P D A T E

## Archbishop Oscar Romero to be Canonized

by Mary Alice Bramming

On March 24, 1980 a single bullet fired with the precision of a professional assassin silenced the voice of the voiceless for the Salvadoran people. In three years as archbishop of San Salvador Oscar Romero had become the vocal champion of the oppressed of El Salvador.

When Oscar Romero was appointed archbishop with the urging of the wealthy and powerful of El Salvador he was seen as peaceable, spiritually oriented, and morally conservative—not one to question the political actions of the oligarchy which ruled the country.

However in a short few months he was challenged with the assassination of Rutilio Grande, S.J. along with a young boy and an old man. Fr. Grande had been a personal friend of Archbishop Romero's and his death was the beginning of his conversion as an outspoken advocate of the oppressed. Fr. Grande's death was not just the death of one priest but the beginning of the attack on the Church, its priests, sisters, and lay leaders.

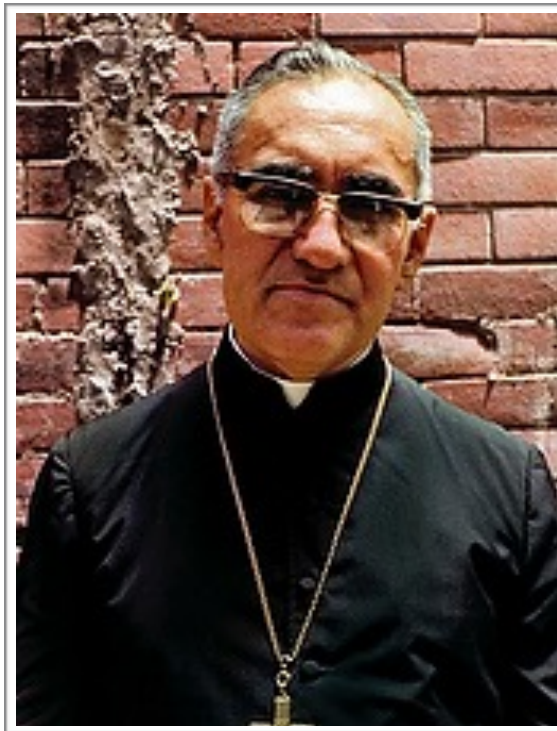
Fr. Jim Barnett, O.P., co-founder of Project Salvador, visited El Salvador in the early 1980's. When he returned to St. Dominic Church he preached a homily on using Jesus' meeting of the Woman at the Well to introduce Archbishop Romero's support of the oppressed. Fr. Barnett said that when Archbishop Romero began to meet the humble people in the village squares and heard their stories, he experienced a conversion from a churchman to a pastor, one who is with his people.

From then on, he used all the resources available to him to challenge the government, the oligarchy, the United States to stop the killing, stop the oppression. He used the Archdiocesan radio station to broadcast his homilies to the whole countryside. But the killing went on and with it armed opposition and Archbishop Romero became more and more adamant that the killing must stop. He appealed to the individual soldiers: stop killing your brothers.

When the Archbishop was assassinated, his flock in El Salvador and all who had come to know his work and words had no doubt that he had been martyred and was a saint. But the official

Catholic Church was slow to declare him a saint which meant nothing to the poor of El Salvador who all have his picture in their homes. Pope Francis opened the way for his official canonization.

Early in March the Vatican announced that Archbishop Romero would be made a saint of the Catholic Church some time in the coming year. Pope Francis decreed in 2015 that Archbishop Romero was killed as a martyr out of hatred for the faith. Archbishop Paglia who spearheaded the cause of his sainthood said that "the decree had confirmed the acceptance of a new understanding that martyrs can be killed, even by churchgoing Catholics, out of hatred for their gospel-inspired work in favor of the poor and disenfranchised."



Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar Romero in a 1979 photo in San Salvador. (CNS photo/Octavio Duran)

The official conferring of sainthood on Oscar Romero will only confirm what the poor of El Salvador have always known.

The Mission of Project Salvador is to support the people of El Salvador in implementing their own vision of justice. We express our solidarity and deepen our relationship with El Salvador by creating awareness in the United States of the plight of the marginalized in Central America and by supporting grassroots community development through funding of projects in El Salvador.

Visit us at [www.projectsalsalvador.org](http://www.projectsalsalvador.org)! Follow us on Facebook [Project Salvador](#)

# 200,000 Salvadorans Face Uncertain Future With Termination of TPS Set For 2019

by Erin Kelly

In 2001, Temporary Protected Status (TPS) was issued for El Salvador after a pair of earthquakes devastated the country and caused billions of dollars in damage. Now over a decade later, this status is being revoked for approximately 200,000 Salvadorans living in the U.S. The Trump administration has deemed it appropriate to end the status, citing that El Salvador has rebuilt from the earthquakes. TPS was originally issued for only 18 months, but both the George W. Bush and Obama administrations repeatedly extended the protections over the past 15 years amidst the growing gang violence paired with drought and widespread poverty in El Salvador.



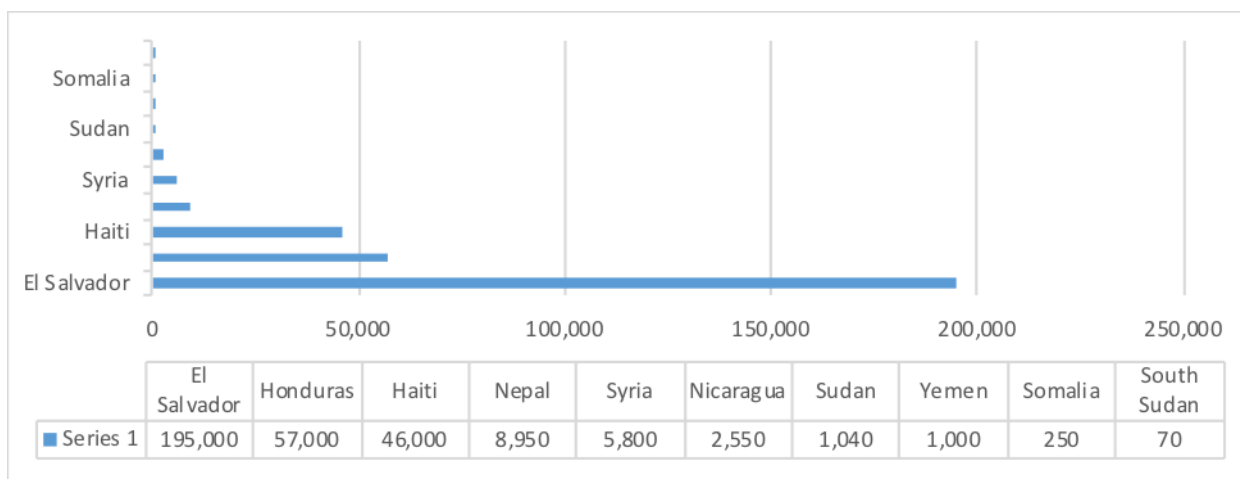
Source: Bryan R. Smith/AFP/Getty Images

TPS was enacted by Congress in 1990 as a solution to give temporary immigration status to foreign nationals of countries experiencing an ongoing armed conflict, environmental disaster or other extraordinary and temporary conditions. It provides a work permit and stay of deportation to foreign nationals who are in the U.S. at the time the Department of Homeland Security makes the designation. A country's TPS designation can last for as long as 18 months, and there is no limit to the number of times it can be extended.

According to the Center for Migration Studies, Salvadorans living here under TPS have 192,700 U.S.-born children, 88% participate in the labor force and nearly 25% have a mortgage.

These individuals are well-established, contributing members of society who will have until September 2019 to live and work in the U.S. legally with TPS. According to Manuel Orozco, a political scientist with the D.C. think tank InterAmerican Dialogue, an estimated 150,000 Salvadorans with TPS send remittances home. On average, each immigrant sends back \$4,300 a year for a total of more than \$600 million annually, which amounts to approximately two percent of El Salvador's GDP. As the date approaches, these individuals face a very difficult decision - remain in the U.S. without status and face deportation, or return to a country that is plagued by gang violence, has food, water and housing shortages, and has the slowest growing economy of Central America in recent years.

## Where Do People With Temporary Protected Status Come From?



Source: Congressional Research Service Credit: Katie Park/NPR

# Scholarship Highlight: Adriana's Story

By Tony Gasbarro



Adriana: University Scholarship Student

Adriana desires to earn a university degree in communications. She lives with her family in Nahuizalco a small community in Southwest El Salvador. I

Adriana was born in 1993. She was the second among 5 sisters and a brother. Her father, a subsistence farmer, died 14 years ago. After his death the whole family had to work to survive. It was very tough for Adriana to get through high school but she made it.

Her favorite activities are reading and drawing. She says that she will only read books that are sure to give her the opportunity to learn new things. She seeks out opportunities to meet and get to know new people. When I visited her this past January in El Salvador she told me that being able to speak to people was very important to her and that she would never take a job that didn't involve communicating frequently with people.

Adriana will be the first in her family to study beyond the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. She is studying at the University of Sonsonate that is about an hour's bus ride from her home. Aside from tuition and books, she will need funds for bus fare, which would cost \$3.00 per day. But that will be taken care of thanks to the generosity of a couple from Anchorage, Alaska who have agreed to finance her entire education!

## Radio Victoria and the Feminist Collective

Except from Radio Victoria's Jan-Feb 2018 newsletter

Radio Victoria's strategy is to deepen relationships with institutions and organizations who share our principals and objectives. On January 30th Radio Victoria, the Feminist Collective and the Radio de Todas signed an mutual agreement. This historic cooperation agreement strengthens interchanges and coordinations between these groups in order to have more incidence on themes of mutual interest like sustainability, advocacy, educational processes and strategic work.

Oscar Beltrán from Radio Victoria relates how the signing of this mutual agreement is part of the strategies we have put forth in this year's work plan as a community radio and which orients our work in communications for the next 10 years focusing on gender equity and women's participation in strategic positions.

Mercedes Esther Mulato, the Radio de Todas's director, affirms that the agreement is very important and our united efforts can generate an impact that responds to their mission of challenging social inequalities to create a society where feminine oppression, or other oppressions such as marginalization and discrimination, no longer exist.

The agreement includes workshops on communication with a gender focus, women's leadership and participation in decision-making, de-penalizing abortion, Human Rights defenders as well as raising awareness through interchanges of informative content and educational productions.



Signing of Agreement



**Project Salvador Board & Staff :**

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**Has your address changed?**

Contact Bill Anthony [anthony\\_bill@svvsd.org](mailto:anthony_bill@svvsd.org) to update or mailing list

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- \* Make a one-time donation to cover mailing costs of this newsletter. (\$10 suggested).
- \* Make a one-time or monthly donation to Project Salvador, or to a specific project:
- \* Microlending, Scholarships, Center for Arts for Peace, COFOA community organizing, Radio Victoria, or the La Laguna Clinic
- \* Donate new or used laptops for university scholarship recipients.
- \* Host a fundraiser.
- \* Include Project Salvador in your will.

**Checks can be made payable to Project Salvador and mailed to**

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***HOST A SPEAKER:***

- \* Project Salvador is happy to speak to your group about our projects, life in El Salvador, and related topics.

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