

Oscar Romero

1917-1980

A special person



Oscar Romero was born on 15 August 1917 in El Salvador, Central America.

When he left school he became a carpenter, but soon decided he wanted to become a priest.

El Salvador at the time

A few families were very rich and owned lots of land. Most people were poor and earned very little.

People became very angry at this unfairness.

But the rich were very powerful. If anybody complained they were put in prison or even killed.

A quiet man

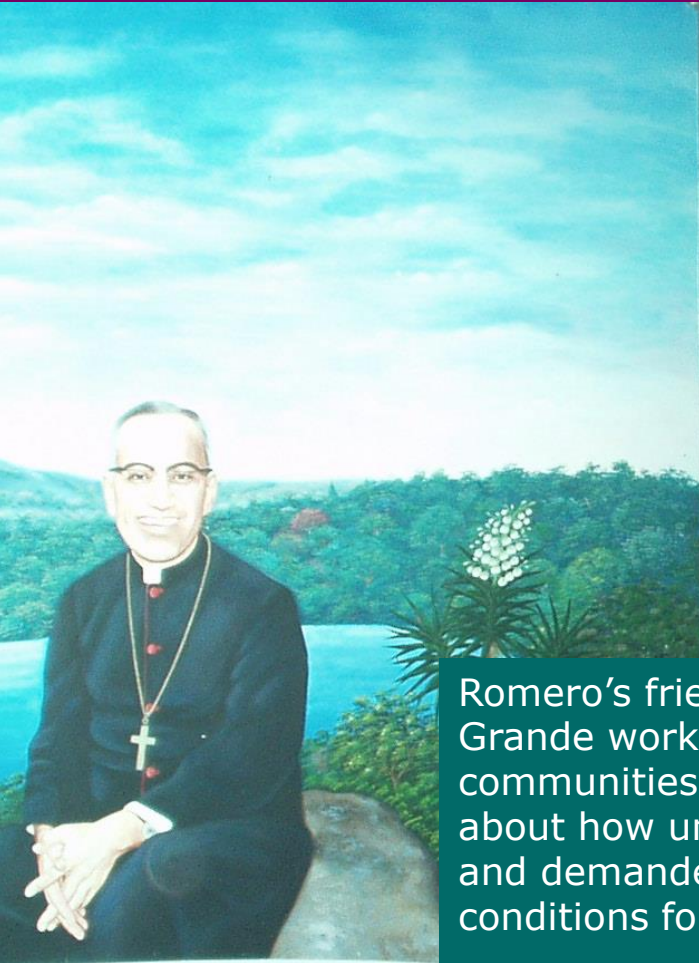


In 1977 Oscar Romero became the Archbishop of San Salvador, the capital.

He was a quiet, shy man and nobody thought he would speak out about how poor people were being treated.

They thought he would be too afraid.

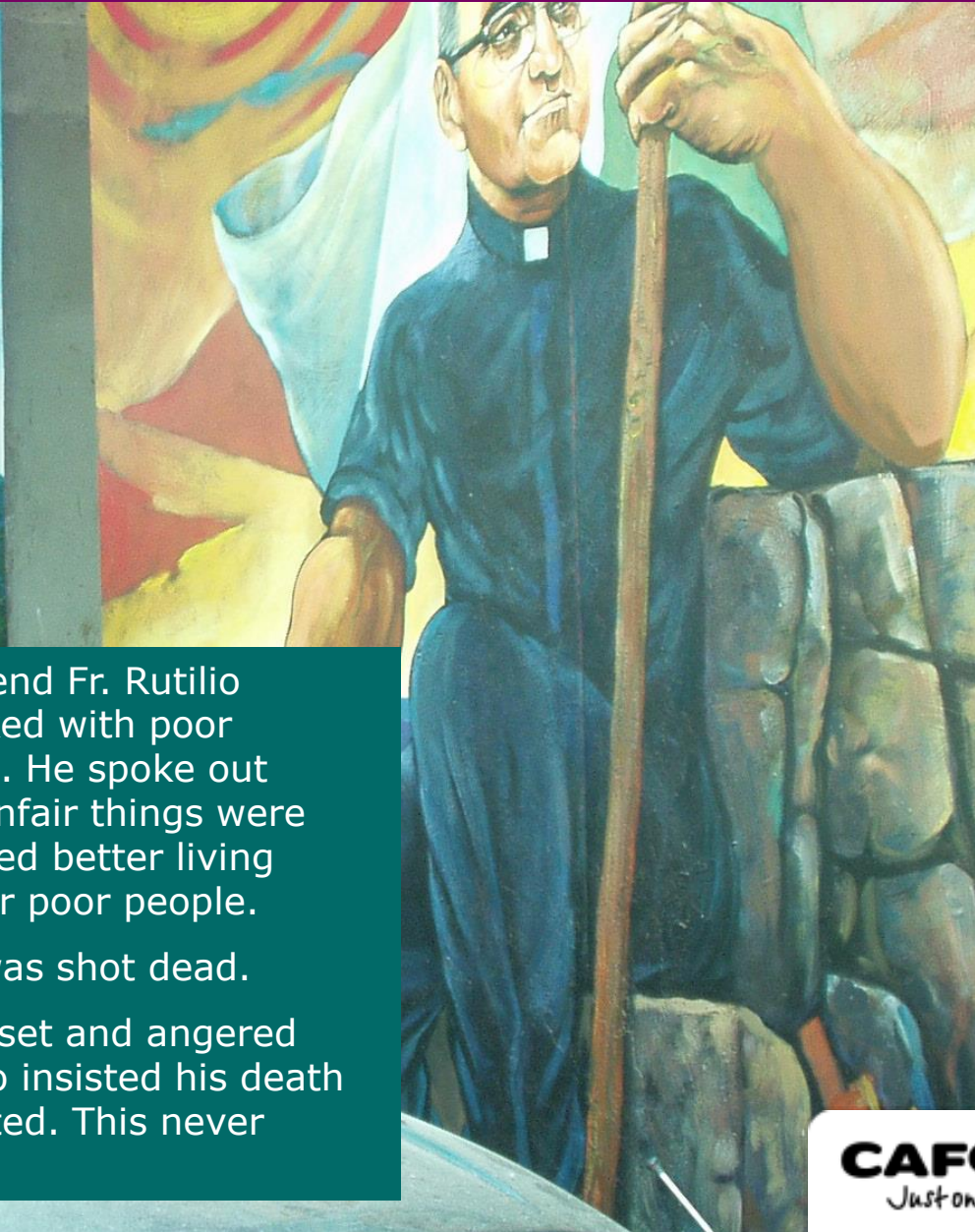
A friend's influence



Romero's friend Fr. Rutilio Grande worked with poor communities. He spoke out about how unfair things were and demanded better living conditions for poor people.

For this he was shot dead.

His death upset and angered Romero, who insisted his death be investigated. This never happened.



A voice for the voiceless

From that point Oscar Romero stopped being a quiet man and spoke out. He told the truth about what was happening to poor people in his country.

Every week in his sermons on the radio, he spoke out against the violence.

"Many would like the poor to keep on saying it is God's will for them to live that way. But it is not God's will for some to have everything and others to have nothing. That cannot be of God."

A brave man

Even though he was afraid that he would be killed, his strong faith in God helped him carry on.

“if they kill me I will rise again in the salvadorian people”



On 24 March 1980, Oscar Romero was celebrating mass. A car drew up and a shot was fired through the open church door.

Oscar Romero was killed.

He is known as a **martyr**.

A guiding light



Through his life and through his death Oscar Romero remains a powerful example and inspiration for all who believe in working for justice.

From the first letter of John
(based on 1 John 3:1-3)

Just think about what great love God the Father has for us – God calls us his children. And that is what we are! My dear friends, we are already God’s children. And we know that when we see God, we will be like God. We will see God as God really is. Because we know this, we try to be loving and kind, as God is. Because we are close to God, we keep away from all that is wrong.

John is telling us what it means to be a Christian, and it’s quite simple really – to have faith in Jesus, the Son of God, and to show this by the way we love all our sisters and brothers. In other words, love God and love your neighbour. This is how we live as ‘saints’.

Dear Friends,

We all have been given lovely gifts.

When you give, give with a loving heart.

If you have a job to do, do it really well.

If you are helping someone, do it happily.

Be real in your love for each other.

Do not just pretend to be good.

**Love and care for each other as good
brothers and sisters.**

**Be whole-hearted and enthusiastic in all
you do.**

Be joyful.

When things get hard, keep on going.

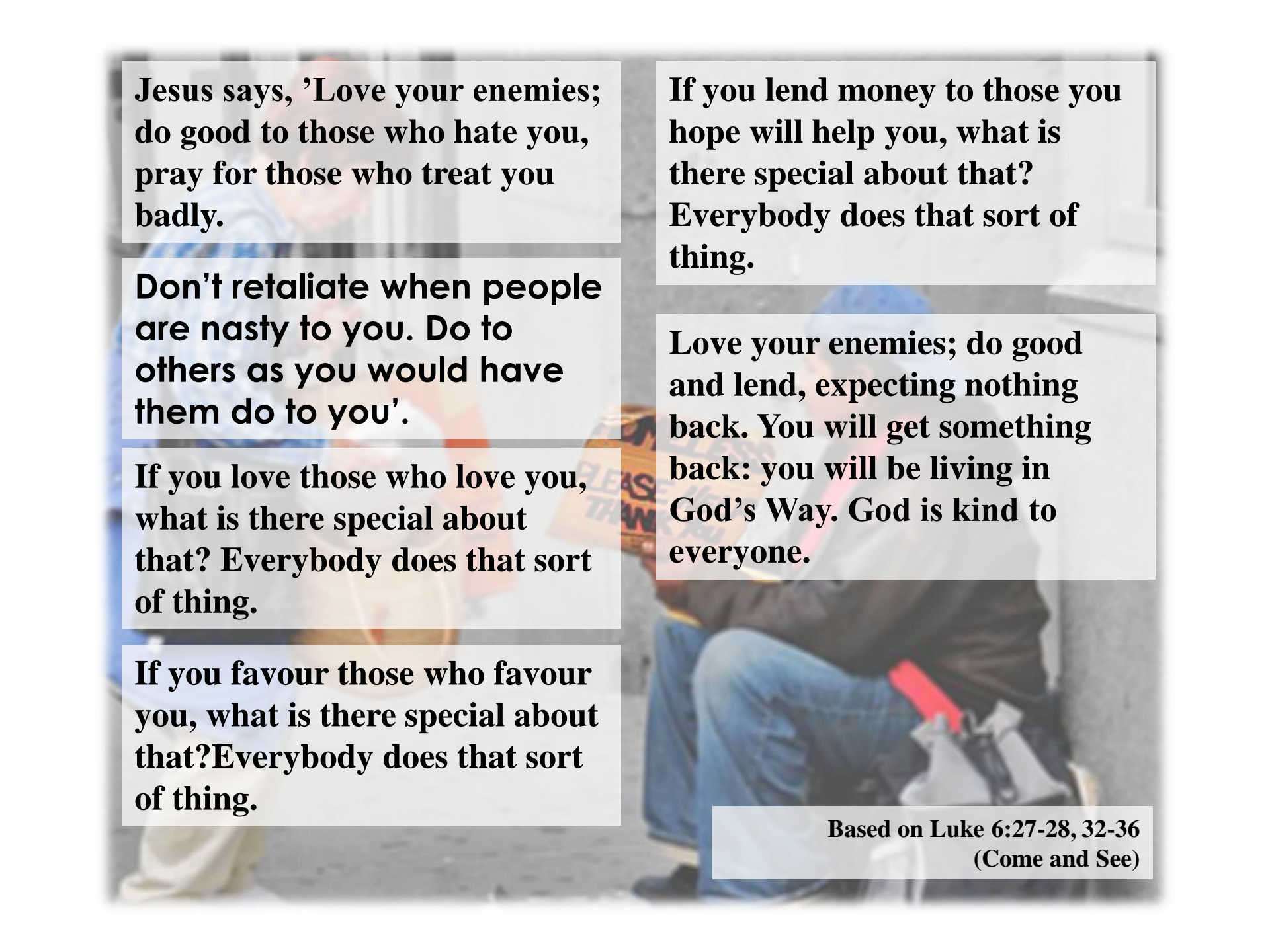
Pray regularly.

Share what you have with people in need.

Always make people feel welcome.



**Based on Romans 12: 8-11
God's Story 3**



Jesus says, 'Love your enemies; do good to those who hate you, pray for those who treat you badly.

Don't retaliate when people are nasty to you. Do to others as you would have them do to you'.

If you love those who love you, what is there special about that? Everybody does that sort of thing.

If you favour those who favour you, what is there special about that?Everybody does that sort of thing.

If you lend money to those you hope will help you, what is there special about that? Everybody does that sort of thing.

Love your enemies; do good and lend, expecting nothing back: you will be living in God's Way. God is kind to everyone.

**Based on Luke 6:27-28, 32-36
(Come and See)**