



## **Heartland International Mission**

### *Sites and Educational Opportunities in El Salvador*

#### **San Salvador:**

##### **Divina Providencia**

This is a cancer hospital for terminal patients. This is the place that Monsignor Romero chose to live when he was Archbishop. This is also the place where he was martyred while serving mass in the on-site chapel.

##### **The UCA**

The University of Central America was opened in an effort to provide a more non-biased education for all with a focus on spirituality and issues of social justice. This is the site where 6 Jesuit priests and their housekeeper and her daughter were brutally massacred. There is a memorial rose garden and a small museum for the martyrs.

##### **Parque Cuscatlán – The Civilian War Memorial Mural and Wall**

This is a beautifully kept park. Bordering one side is a very large mural with a pictorial relief of the history of El Salvador – from Mayan times to the present. Also on this wall are the names of the 75,000 civilians who were murdered or 'disappeared' during the 12 year Civil War. Only about a third of the names are represented as they need to be confirmed and registered... this wall 'grows' every year.

##### **Museo de la Palabra y los Imágenes**

This is a well done museum that changes its focus and displays on a regular basis. One visit might have a display of the indigenous people, their lives, community, customs and demise. Another time might share images of local artists and activists from El Salvador. There is also a permanent room which has a display of relics from the Radio Venceramos – the clandestine radio used by the FMLN during the war.

##### **Maria Madre de los Pobres**

This small community developed with assistance from nuns. There is a school, a free and public library for the students.

##### **Co-Madres**

This Group was formed early in the Civil War and Oscar Romero himself suggested they organize. They formed as a group of mothers to search for their lost children – those that were killed or incarcerated and taken away. They seek the truth (they are still an active working group) about those that have disappeared. They work politically as well being instrumental in child protection laws. Theirs is a VERY difficult story to hear – not for the faint-hearted.

##### **The National Cathedral**

In the center of San Salvador – this is where the tomb of Oscar Romero is kept. It used to be a very humble box – but for the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his martyrdom, an ornate carcaphagous was created and remains in the basement chapel.

##### **Tiendas Artesanías**

A place for a relaxing and 'gringo friendly' lunch as well as a chance to buy Salvadoran crafts: typical pottery from Ilobasco as well as the famous "La Palma" style painting that has become so recognized and woven goods.

##### **Puerto del Diablo (Door of the Devil)**

This is a beautiful site in the mountains above San Salvador. Once a place of Mayan sacrificial rites, and later during the civil war, a place where political prisoners were marched and shoved off the cliffs... it is now a lovely picnic area with an opportunity to hike UP to the top of the rock outcroppings for a spectacular view of the ocean on one side, and on a clear day (they say) you can see Honduras...

##### **C.I.S.**

The Center for International Solidarity is a place that works on social justice causes. They lobby for political causes, organize election observers, have a language school and much more. This is a good place to hear an overview of the realities of life in El Salvador: politically and socially.



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#### **Outside of San Salvador:**

##### **La Cinquera**

A small town about an hour and a half from San Salvador (or Berlín). Here we can listen to Don Pablo speak of his experiences during the Civil War and the realities of the situation before, during and after the conflict. His story can be told in 2 ½ hours, but if you can give him 4, you will walk away a changed person. His story can be quite graphic at times – he has a manner of speaking that is simple and sincere.

##### **La Quesera**

75 minute drive from Berlín – A massacre site memorial – large metal dove above a patio area with the remains of the community massacre victims (all that could be found anyway). There are a few people who can tell the story of the conflict in this area which is very closely tied to the Berlín community

##### **El Mozote y Perquín**

This is the town that is most famous in that it was the largest amount of people brutally massacred in one pueblo in just two days. One woman survived and was able to get the story in print. A must read prior to visiting: The Massacre at El Mozote by Mark Danner

##### **Talpetates**

45 minute drive from Berlín - There is a group of ex-combatants that will tell the story of the conflict as it relates to them and their community – which is a part of Berlín

##### **Suchitoto**

This is a lovely town with a beautiful town square and church dating back to the time of the Spaniards. It is a model town – clean and successful and caters to tourists. A view of Lago Suchitán (lake) can be enjoyed from a local restaurant/hotelito.

##### **Ilobasco**

A humble tourist town famous for its pottery. This is usually a stop made either to or from La Cinquera.

##### **La Palma**

This little town is in the opposite direction of Berlín about 2 hours north of San Salvador. This is the town that made famous the colorful and very distinctive style of painting so recognizable as being “from El Salvador.” The whole town – walls of buildings, telephone poles, etc, are painted in this manner. And there are shops and shops to make purchases.