

UCRES and El Paisnal Parish Celebrate the Life of Rutilio Grande



March 12th marked the 31st Anniversary of the death of Father Rutilio Grande and the two men who accompanied him, Manuel Solorzano y Nelson Rutilio Lemus. A procession, Mass and cultural event were organized by the parish of El Paisnal, lead by Father Daniel Sanchez, formerly of the Maria Madre de los Pobres in San Salvador, (assigned to the parish at the beginning of this year) and UCRES and was funded in part through your generous support for the UCRES women's project.

On the morning of March 12th, hundreds of people gathered in the central park in Aguilares and walked more than 4 kilometers to El Paisnal, the route that Rutilio was traveling when he and his two companions were gunned down. The procession stopped at the monument that marks the spot where the three were killed for an ecumenical prayer service and then continued on to the central square of El Paisnal where Mass was held outside in the town square. More than 20 priests from different parishes around El Salvador co-celebrated. The homily was given by Jose Maria Tojeira, SJ, rector of the UCA.



Procession in front of monument marking the spot where Rutilio and his companions were killed



One of Rutilio's parishioners gives her testimony during Mass

The communities gave offerings symbolizing the life and work of the poor, and a women's dance group from the Maria Madre de los Pobres parish in San Salvador dedicated a dance to Padre Rutilio during the Mass. People who knew Rutilio gave testimonies and the well-known musical group Exceso de Equipaje, lead by Guillermo Cuellar (author of la Misa Salvadoreña) played during the Mass.

The event was a huge success, Roberto Ramirez, President of UCRES, estimates that this year there were more people than at last year's 30th Anniversary celebration. After Mass, Exceso de Equipaje gave a concert and youth theater groups from Chalatenango performed.