



IN THE SPIRIT OF OSCAR ROMERO!
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A SHORT GUIDE TO THE SPIRIT OF ROMERO GALLERY

at St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School, Bracknell UK

www.spiritofromero.org/gallery

The unique and colourful Spirit of Romero Gallery was a collaboration created specially for the hall at St Margaret Clitherow School in 2013.

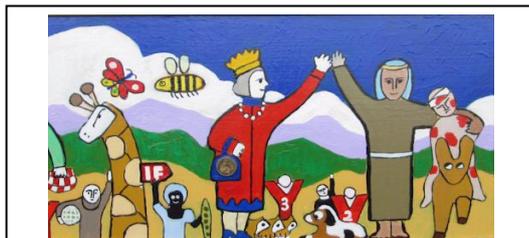
But it's an idea that might well appeal to other schools and communities watching to capture - and have on permanent display for years ahead - something of their own spirit at a particular point in time.

The initial aim was simply to replace the wire crucifix on the panel in the school hall. But the Gallery turned into a visual treasure; a thank-you to the school for its many years of support for the aid agency CAFOD and other social justice action; and an extra, long-lasting and on-all-the-time resource for teachers to use in PSHE, RE and Citizenship Studies.



The Gallery was created by non-artist Hugh Gibbons, a former parent, and CAFOD Education Volunteer. In mind was this set of statues of Martyrs of the 20th Century above the West Door of Westminster Abbey – in which Archbishop Oscar Romero is featured carrying a baby.

The panel is on a single softwood piece – 2400mm x 32mm x 18mm. There's a wooden natural wood frame around, with several attachment points for banners, bunting and notices. The paint used was acrylic, using brushes 2-5mm. Total cost? Around £50.



Queen Elizabeth II (plus corgis) high-fives with the Good Samaritan. What do they have in common? If you could meet one, what might you ask? Nearby St Francis of Assisi plus giraffe, bee and butterfly. Emily Mbithuka is a reminder of the nationwide Enough Food For Everyone IF Campaign aimed at leaders of the G8 meeting in June 2013. The deep blue sky and distant volcanoes are a reference to El Salvador, the home of Oscar Romero and proper artists!

The centrepiece of the Gallery is a 30mm wooden Romero Cross bought from CAFOD, painted by a family in El Salvador. The Cross was put in place by the youngest child in the school. It's flanked by 10 big

figures of people, specified by the school, and over 20 smaller ones of people, animals and objects that occurred to Hugh as he went along. The Card with Romero's saying rests on pins and can be changed.

The figures are there as representatives - voices, maybe - of all sorts of people whose lives and enrich and support others. So the Gallery is a way of paying tribute to them. All the figures have a hand up in greeting, and many carry a significant object.

The Gallery also aimed to raise awareness of the life and legacy of Oscar Romero, and of his homeland El Salvador - encouraging people to aspire not to have more but to be more. It's reasonable to think he might well have encouraged and enjoyed the Gallery.

Hugh specified St Margaret and Romero as his choice. Pupils in each Year were then asked to nominate someone to be a big figure. Their choices?

- Reception: Our Lady, the Virgin Mary
- Year1: Florence Nightingale
- Year2: The Good Samaritan
- Year3: Queen Elizabeth II, with 1926 halfpenny
- Year4: Sir Isaac Newton, as prism
- Year5: David Beckham with UNICEF
- Year6: Malala Yousafzai with dove
- Staff: Anne Gibbons (school governor)



Children practised waving back and Good Samaritan cuddles, and sang happy birthday in advance of Malala Day. The Gallery's hooks got used for bunting at a leaving party (above). Hugh later sent out good news letters to several of the Figures for a surprise smile...

If you're thinking of something on these lines for a school, church hall or other setting, Hugh's suggestions are:

- Identify a place that's seen by lots of people and has visually uncluttered space
- Identify an artist – maybe among parents in the PTA
- Get the community to specify the main figures – in a school, each Year Class
- Have an assembly to show everyone
- Tell your local papers – and some of the figures!
- Think of having a reminder ceremony each year



A SHORT GUIDE TO THE FIGURES ON THE SPIRIT OF ROMERO GALLERY

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NB The small Y figures indicate the Years' choices. The five flat-topped hills are an allusion to the volcanoes on the arms of El Salvador - as is the deep blue of the sky. The Gallery is on a wooden panel 2400mm x 360mm - using acrylic paint mostly applied with 5 and 2 mm brushes. Hooks allow bunting and notices to be attached. There is a proposal to add a matching wing on each side - of their faces drawn each year by all the pupils and staff.

- **Archbishop Oscar Romero** holding a loudspeaker - as worldwide "voice for the voiceless" - shown carrying his famous saying *Aspire Not To Have More But To Be More*.
- **Carmelite nuns** at the [Hospitalito Divina Providencia in San Salvador](#) where Romero made his home as Archbishop. They represent the compassion and care of nuns and nurses worldwide.
- **The Gallery artist Hugh** wearing a Phrygian cap - a well-known symbol of liberty - in solidarity with the Salvadoran people. It appears on the coat of arms of many nations in Latin America.
- **A pupil at St Francis of Assisi Primary School in South Ascot UK**, carrying a candle for social justice. In March 2013, their choirs gave the first performance of the [Carrying a Candle for the Spirit of Romero Song](#).
- **Pope Francis I**, taking off his zucchetto to the world, and saying Good Evening - his first public words.
- **The Unknown Voiceless Family** representing the disadvantaged of the world that campaigns aim to change.
- **Year5 Choice: David Beckham**, with socks rolled down, holding the hand symbol of [UNICEF's](#) Rights Respecting Schools initiative. He also represents Good Sports of All Sorts - certainly as someone who has aspired to be more.
- **Maria in Colombia** featured in a 2011 CAFOD campaign, who inspired the Count On Us Song.
- **Lynda Mussell and Laura Bigoni of CAFOD Portsmouth office**. Note the careful attention to their hair-styling!
- **Beaky the Blackbird** showing October 17, the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty
- **Year1 Choice: Florence Nightingale**, holding a lamp and a bloodied cloth - representing the nurses and healthcare workers of the world.
- **Year4 Choice: Sir Isaac Newton** as human prism, holding a weight, with apple in a question mark.
- **Reception Class Choice: Our Lady, the Virgin Mary**. She is shown holding an empty pushchair - to represent mothers letting children go.
- **Lazaro Rodriguez** whose family in El Salvador paint many Romero Crosses daily. Note quiver of brushes.
- **Centrepiece: Wooden Romero Cross** - 30cm high - painted by Lazaro's family and bought from CAFOD.
- **The Fairtrade Symbol**, as a reminder of the support given by schools and others NB The caring arm!
- **St Margaret Clitherow**, holding a key to represent all who protect people from people from persecution, for whatever reason - such as faith, politics, nationality, gender and ethnicity.
- **Year 6 Choice: Malala Yousafzai** in the uniform of Edgbaston High School in Birmingham; holding a dove as a sign of peace. The date of her birthday is now the UN's annual Malala Day to mark the right of all children to education.
- **Two pupils at St Margaret Clitherow** carrying the school's national Sing Up Silver Award.
- **RE Co-ordinator Christine Duerden and Head Teacher David Masters** - carrying a tick mark to represent all people who encourage others to aspire to be more - as with the Gallery.
- **Maureen Anscomb**, a teaching assistant retiring in July 2013 after 20 years' service at the school. In the Gallery she represents not only classroom assistants but all other staff - such admin, catering, and maintenance.
- **Spitfire AB910!** Of the [Battle of Britain Memorial Flight!](#) Occasionally seen and heard over the school. Pictured too is WAAF Margaret Horton, clinging to its tail when it took off March 1945! FO Neil Fox, the pilot, wasn't aware, and was later reprimanded for carrying an unauthorised passenger.
- **Staff Choice: Anne Gibbons**, representing all members of governing bodies in schools. Governors give great - and often unsung - voluntary commitment to schools. Anne is also holding a piece of cloth with which she made the model for the girls' uniform for daughter Maggie - the day before the school opened in February 1976.
- **St Francis of Assisi** with globe - as patron saint of the environment; propping up a giraffe, bee and butterfly.
- **Emily Mbithuka** of the Kitui region of Kenya, holding a reminder of the Enough Food For All IF Campaign aimed at G8 leaders aimed at the leaders of the G8 summit meeting at Lough Erne in Northern Ireland 17-18 June 2013.
- **Year3 Choice: Queen Elizabeth II**, with crown and handbag. She is the only human figure in profile - the way she is seen on coins. As she never carries money, she has been given a real halfpenny minted in 1926, the year of her birth. At her feet are three corgis, a bit fazed by...
- **Fred, the springer spaniel** belonging to Fr John Keenan, the parish priest who oversaw the building of the school. Fred sat beside him at Mass and during school visits, and represents all animals who bring companionship.
- **Fr John Keenan** representing all parish clergy on the governing bodies of schools.
- **Year2 Choice: The Good Samaritan**, seen high-fiving with the Queen. He is steadying and comforting the casualty. The donkey (Sammy?) has his foreleg raised to show he is keen to get going - caring is about action. The Good Samaritan here is also a reminder of the fine work done every day by the many volunteers in [The Samaritans](#).

More details at www.spiritofromero.org/gallery



