

PATRON SAINTS OF THE MEXICAN DRUG UNDERWORLD



WHEN: December 6, 2017 (Wed)

TIME: 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM

WHERE: Oregon Sheriffs' Association Conference

COURSE SYNOPSIS: **PLEASE NOTE: THIS COURSE CONTAINS EXTREMELY GRAPHIC MATERIAL**

Drug and human traffickers, gang members and others involve the spiritual world in their trade for protection from law enforcement. This intensive course will include information on various legitimate and illegitimate saints and icons used by criminals.

Embedded in the traditions and culture of the Hispanic community are legitimate Catholic saints that the faithful pray to for protection and/or assistance such as St. Jude (patron saint of impossible causes) and San Ramon (patron saint of silence). Some of the legitimately recognized Catholic saints are also used by drug traffickers for “protection” from law enforcement. There are still other unrecognized saints or spirits that drug traffickers and others have adopted and use to protect them from law enforcement in their illegal activities. They include Jesus Malverde (patron saint of drug traffickers); San Simon (patron saint of the underworld and Santa Muerte. Santa Muerte’s popularity in the United States has become increasingly alarming and has been associated with violent crimes.

Instructor Robert Almonte has spent years conducting extensive research on the Mexican drug trade, visiting several shrines in Mexico and the United States and will display photos and video as well as paraphernalia that drug traffickers may have had in their possession. Although these items are not probable cause for search or arrest, this course serves to educate and alert law enforcement officials to their significance, thereby enhancing officer safety.

After 25 years of dedicated service, Mr. Almonte retired as Deputy Chief with the El Paso Police Department spending most of his career on the frontline of the drug war. Robert was appointed by President Barack Obama as the United States Marshal for the Western District of Texas and served from 2010 to 2016.

This unique course is extremely beneficial to law enforcement officers in all parts of the country who may encounter images, icons, statutes, and other items during or pursuant to an investigation. Several significant arrests, including the clearing of a cold case murder investigation, as well as drug and money seizures throughout the country have been attributed to this course and are discussed during the presentation.