



People carry the coffin of Catholic priest Marcelo Perez, who was killed in San Cristobal de las Casas, Chiapas state, Mexico, Sunday, Oct. 20, 2024. (AP/Isabel Mateos)

by Associated Press

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TAPACHULA, Mexico — October 21, 2024

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Catholic priest Marcelo Pérez, an activist for Indigenous peoples and farm laborers in southern Mexico, was killed on Sunday.

The prosecutors' office in the city of San Cristóbal de las Casas, in the state of Chiapas, said the religious leader was shot dead by two gunmen when he was in his van.

Pérez was a member of the Tzotzil Indigenous people and had just finished serving a Mass when he was attacked. He served the community for two decades and was known as a negotiator in conflicts in a mountainous region of Chiapas where crime, violence and land disputes are rife.

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Pérez also led several marches against violence, which has brought him several death threats.

Chiapas Gov. Rutilio Escandón posted on X that he condemned "the cowardly assassination of father Marcelo Pérez.

"We will collaborate with all the authorities so his death doesn't go unpunished and those guilty face the courts," Escandón said.