

*MASS FOR THE FORTY-FIRST ANNIVERSARY
OF THE MARTYRDOM OF
SAINT OSCAR ARNULFO ROMERO
ARCHBISHOP OF EL SALVADOR
'SAINT OF THE AMERICAS'
1980 24th March 2021*



ENTRANCE HYMN

LA Music

PENITENTIAL RITE

introduced with 'Through the Year' p101 (no 211)

LITURGY OF THE WORD

1st Reading

Isaiah 43 vv1-7

'Responsorial

said

2nd Reading

Words of Romero one

Gospel

John 15: vv12-21 'no greater love'

Homily

SUMMONING THE MARTYRS

Oscar and other names of El Salvadoran
martyrs are called, all respond 'Presente!'

Not long before his death, Oscar Romero said:

'My Life has been threatened many times. I have to confess that, as a Christian, I don't believe in death without resurrection. If they kill me, I will rise again in the People of El Salvador. If they carry out their threats, I want you to know that I now offer my blood to God for justice and the resurrection of El Salvador. Martyrdom is a grace of God I do not feel worthy of. But if God accepts the sacrifice of my life, my hope is that my blood will be like a seed of liberty and a sign that our hopes will soon be a reality.'

It is our firm belief as Christians that those who have died in Christ are now fully alive in the Risen Lord, and that they are present with us in the 'great cloud of witnesses' that spurs us on to serve the Kingdom even at the cost of our own lives. Let us now, in a manner traditional in Latin America, recognise the living and life-giving presence of the martyrs for Justice in El Salvador and elsewhere in Latin America.

St Oscar Romero Archbishop of San Salvador, Saint of the Americas	PRESENTE
Bishop Juan Gerardi of Guatemala, killed for telling the truth	PRESENTE
Dom Helder Camara of Brazil, who lived for the Poor	PRESENTE
Fr Rutilio Grande, whose death challenged Oscar with reality	PRESENTE
Sr Maura Clarke and Sr Ita Ford, Maryknoll Missionaries in El Salvador	PRESENTE
Jean Donovan and Sr Dorothy Kazel, who loved the Roses in December	PRESENTE
Fr Alfonso Navarro, Fr Rafael Palacios, Fr Alirio Macias and Fr Manuel Reyes, who were buried by Oscar Romero and the prepared the way for him	PRESENTE
The Jesuit Martyrs of the University of Central America, who died because they unmasked the lies:	
Fr Ignatio Ellacuria and Fr Segundo Montes	PRESENTE
Fr Ignatio Martin-Baro and Fr Amando Lopez	PRESENTE
Fr Juan Ramon Moreno and Fr Joaquin Lopez y Lopez	PRESENTE
Their co-workers Elba and Celina Ramos, beloved daughters of God	PRESENTE
And the 80,000 other men, women and children killed by the politics of terror and the servants of death	PRESENTE

ACT OF COMMITMENT

Pledge of our Commitment

On this 41st Anniversary of the martyrdom of St Oscar Arnulfo Romero, we stand alongside the people of El Salvador in their rejoicing and their sorrow; we stand alongside the oppressed and impoverished people through Latin America; we stand alongside everyone scattered over the face of our beautiful but unjust world who are dehumanised by injustice, oppression, violence and discrimination; we stand alongside our refugee and sanctuary-seeking sisters and brothers; and we stand alongside Pope Francis as he calls us to be 'a Church of the Poor, a Church for the Poor', a 'field hospital' for the oppressed.

And as we stand alongside them in this sacred moment of remembering, of solidarity and communion, we wish to renew our commitment to the Gospel as Good News to the Poor, and to humanity clothed in divine dignity.

**ALL: We believe in a God who has created all the world and its resources
to be shared by all the world's people...**

**Therefore we commit ourselves to a life-style that seeks to share more than possess
and to struggle for a more just distribution of the world's resources and wealth.**

**We believe in a God who has made every human person
in the divine image and likeness, worthy of an infinite dignity and reverence...**

**Therefore we commit ourselves to working for justice and challenging everything
that dehumanises and brutalises our brothers and sisters.**

**We believe that human beings are capable of living together in peace
and sharing together with equality and justice...**

**Therefore we commit ourselves to challenging the violence and naming the evil
that is war and the arms trade, to live in peace with all people and our creation,
and to seek peaceful ways of resolving every conflict.**

**Inspired by St Oscar Romero and the multitude of unnamed prophets for Justice who
have given their lives in the struggle, we commit ourselves to walk the same path of the
Kingdom, to live out our lives in solidarity with the poor, in communion with our
planet and to build always the 'civilisation of love' for all the world's children.**

OFFERTORY HYMN

'I am sure I shall see ...' (Taizé No 5)

AT THIS POINT OSCAR ROMERO WAS SHOT DEAD - we pause as the gifts of bread and wine are raised up for a minute silence. It is followed by words he spoke four weeks before his assassination:
Words of Romero Sheet two

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

COMMUNION

'Cantarei ao Senhor' (Taizé No 2)

MEDITATION BY ROMERO

Words of Romero - three

LITURGY OF BLESSING AND MISSION

LA Music

Words of Romero one:

'To try to preach without referring to the history one preaches in is not to preach the gospel. Many would like a preaching so spiritualised that it leaves sinners unbothered and does not term idolaters those who kneel before money and power. A preaching that says nothing about the sinful environment in which the gospel is reflected upon is not the gospel.'

'This is why the church has great conflicts: it accuses of sin. It says to the rich: Do not sin by misusing your money. It says to the powerful: Do not misuse your political influence ... your weaponry. It says to sinful torturers: Do not torture ... You are establishing the reign of hell on earth.'

'It is very easy to be servants of the word without disturbing the world: a very spiritualised word, a word without any commitment to history, a word that can sound in any part of the world because it belongs to no part of the world. A word like that creates no problems, starts no conflicts. What starts conflicts and persecutions, what marks the genuine church, is the word that, burning like the word of the prophets, proclaims and accuses ... This is the hard service of the word.' [VL pp 17-18]

Words of Romero two:

'My life has been threatened many times, I have to confess that, as a Christian, I don't believe in death without resurrection. If they kill me, I will rise again in the Salvadoran people.'

As a shepherd, I am obliged by divine law to give my life for those I love, for the entire Salvadoran people, including those Salvadorans who threaten to assassinate me. If they should go as far as to carry out their threats, I want you to know that I now offer my blood to God for justice and the resurrection of El Salvador.

Martyrdom is a grace of God that I do not feel worthy of. But if God accepts the sacrifice of my life, my hope is that my blood will be like a seed of liberty and a sign that our hopes will become a reality.

My death will be for the liberation of my people and a testimony of hope for the future. A bishop will die, but the church of God, which is the people, will never perish.' [MS p75-76]



Words of Romero three:

'The poor have shown the church the true way to go. A church that does not join the poor, in order to speak out from the side of the poor against the injustices committed against them, is not the true church of Jesus Christ ... That world of the poor is the key to understand the Christian faith, the church's activity, and the political dimension of the faith. The poor are the ones who tell us what the world is and what service the church must offer to the world ... We want a church that is really side by side with the poor. And as we draw near to the poor, we find we are gradually uncovering the genuine face of the Suffering Servant of Yahweh. We are getting to know the mystery of Christ who becomes human and becomes poor for us ... The Church [in El Salvador] proclaims the good news to the poor ... defends the poor ... suffers the fate of the poor, which is persecution.'