

Archdiocese of Liverpool

Romero Mass 2021



“The best microphone of God
is Christ,
and
the best microphone of Christ
is the Church,
and the Church is all of you!

Each one of you,
from your own position
and your own vocation,
should
live the faith intensely
whether you are married,
a religious, a bishop, a priest,
a student, an undergraduate,
a labourer, a worker,
a market vendor.

In your own particular
situation
you should feel that
you are a true microphone
of God our Lord. ”

Saint Oscar Romero Parish, Seaforth and Waterloo

Our Lady Star of the Sea church

Saint Oscar Romero

Oscar Romero was born to a family of modest means in the small town of Ciudad Barrios in El Salvador. He went to the seminary at thirteen, studied for the priesthood in Rome, and was ordained in 1942. At work in San Miguel he was a zealous pastor with a simple lifestyle, shy and bookish. He was close to and much loved by the communities he served.

In 1970 he was made a bishop; and in 1977, to the shock of many, he was appointed Archbishop of San Salvador. There followed three tumultuous years of ministry at the head of the archdiocese, in his strife-torn country, before his assassination.

El Salvador is a small country in Central America named after Christ the Saviour. In 1977, it had a population of about four million. The country was deeply divided between a tiny land-owning elite and the mass of landless poor. There was economic exploitation, social deprivation, and malnutrition in the countryside, on the coffee estates and sugar plantations. The whole system was kept in place through electoral fraud and wholesale repression. Killings, torture, disappearances, and political imprisonment were the routines of the military regime. The Church put itself alongside the poor in their struggle for basic rights and human dignity and suffered persecution too. Civil war was imminent.

Archbishop Romero had a deep and prayerful spiritual life and he loved the poor. He preached a message of social justice, non-violent, change, peace, and reconciliation. Week by week, from the pulpit Romero confronted the human rights violations, the political violence, the corrupt system of justice, the iniquitous land tenure system, and the suffering of El Salvador's poor. He became known as the voice of the voiceless. His sermons were legendary. He sought to make the Word of God come alive in the lives of the poor. He teased out all the meaning from the Gospel and applied it to contemporary El Salvador.

He pleaded to the right and the left for an end to the violence and killings. He urged dialogue. He demanded human rights for all. Bumper stickers appeared: 'Be a Patriot—Kill a Priest'. Six priests were killed before Romero. And on 24th March 1980 he was shot dead as he celebrated Mass in the hospital chapel where he lived. His funeral took place in his Cathedral on Palm Sunday, thirty-seven years ago. But the Requiem Mass was never finished. Smoke bombs were thrown into the massed crowds of mourners and some forty people were killed in the ensuing stampede and shooting.

Outside of El Salvador, only Liverpool has held a Mass to mark the anniversary of the martyrdom of St Oscar Romero every year since his assassination.

A twentieth-century martyr for the poor, Romero's ministry exemplified a faith that does justice, courageously and consistently. He evokes affection and admiration across the globe, within and beyond the Church. He stands now as a credible witness to the resurrection of Jesus Christ for the twenty-first century. An ecumenical icon, Oscar Romero is an inspiration to lay Christians and clergy alike, who embrace the cause of the poor as their own—and through prayer and action, join in the quest for peace and justice today.

Archbishop Romero was officially recognised as a saint by Pope Francis on 14 October 2018.



Introductory Rites

Opening Hymn

*As Father enters and we gather in prayer we listen and reflect on our opening hymn
"God, you raise up true disciples" by C J Olding.*

1. God, you raise up true disciples,
teachers, martyrs deep in faith.
Like Romero, holy people,
giving witness to your grace.
Let us listen to their voices,
speaking of new ways to live.
By their words and by their actions,
we may know the love you give.
2. Yours the Gospel that disturbs us,
words that must demand a choice;
speaking to a broken people,
hope for those who have no voice.
Stir in us your call to action,
rouse us from our apathy.
In the places lost to darkness,
we will shine for all to see.
3. Still our brothers, sisters suffer,
helpless and afraid to speak,
victims of oppressors using
power to dominate the weak.
When we see injustice near us,
we will cry out: 'This must cease!'
And by our example, turn this
world from violence back to peace.
4. In the gift of your creation,
you provide for every need.
Yet we squander earth's resources
just to satisfy our greed.
Turn our eyes to see the anguish
on the faces of the poor.
Open wide our hearts and hands to
help the needy at our door.
5. On the ground a seed has fallen,
crushed and buried in the earth.
There it lies till time appointed,
then a harvest brings to birth.
In our struggling and our suffering,
help us daily bear our pain,
as we give our lives for others
so they come to know your name.
6. Brought together by your Spirit,
one in you, our risen Lord,
now you send us as your chosen,
hearts emboldened, hope restored.
Like Romero, we will serve you
and whatever may befall,
we'll devote ourselves to justice
and the common good of all.

Sign of the Cross

✠ In the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit

✠ **Amen**

Greeting

✠ The Lord be with you.

✠ **And with your spirit.**

Penitential Rite

We call to mind the mercy and love of God in Salvation History and our lives. We gather in thanksgiving for God's mercy and in remembrance of the example of Saint Oscar Romero in following Jesus' way of healing and love for the poor.

✠ Lord Jesus, you show us how to be your Church in the world today:
Lord, Have mercy.

✠ **Lord, have mercy.**

✠ You speak to us through the lives of those around us:
Christ, have mercy.

✠ **Christ, have mercy.**

✠ You walk with us as we journey together to the Father:
Lord, have mercy.

✠ **Lord, have mercy.**

✠ May almighty God have mercy on us,
forgive us our sins,
and bring us to everlasting life.

✠ **Amen.**

Gloria: Please join in proclaiming our Gloria.

R *Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.*

*We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.*

*Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us
For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.*

The Collect

V Almighty and merciful God,
who were pleased to adorn the Bishop and Martyr, Saint Oscar
with the grace of laying down his life
and of confessing his love for you while celebrating the Eucharist,
graciously grant, we pray,
that, as he imitated the Lord's Passion through his death,
so we may follow in his footsteps,
and be worthy to attain eternal joys.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
(one) God, for ever and ever.

R **Amen**

Liturgy of the Word

First Reading

A reading from the Second Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians

2 Corinthians 4:7-15

...

✠ The word of the Lord.

✠ **Thanks be to God**

Responsorial Psalm

Our Responsorial Psalm will be sung.

Psalm 125(126):1-6

✠ *Those who are sowing in tears will sing when they reap.*

Gospel Acclamation

✠ *Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal glory!*

Gospel

✠ The Lord be with you.

✠ **And with your Spirit**

✠ A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John

✠ **Glory to you, O Lord.**

John 12:23-26

...

✠ The Gospel of the Lord.

✠ **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

Homily

The commitment to working for Justice

(Used in Westminster Abbey to mark 100yr anniversary of Romero's birth and in thanksgiving for his canonisation)

Please join in the words in **bold**:

Inspired by Saint Oscar Romero

who in holiness and with apostolic courage

followed in the way of Christ,

let us commit ourselves to living faithfully and justly.

Mindful of the needs of all our brothers and sisters

we will give voice to the voiceless.

Discerning the signs of our times

we will stand up for the oppressed.

Working together as God's beloved children

we will work for the good of all creation.

On this National Day of Reflection for COVID-19 having committed ourselves to work for justice let us have a minute silence, reflect and pray:

We reflect in sorrow on all those who have died, whether family members, friends or those unknown to us personally. We pray for them, asking our Father to welcome them into their heavenly home, the destiny for which God first gave us the gift of life.

We reflect with compassion on all those who have suffered during this last year, whether through illness, stress, financial disaster or family tensions. We pray for their ongoing resilience, courage and capacity to forgive.

We reflect with thanksgiving for the generosity, inventiveness, self-sacrifice and determination shown by so many in this most difficult of times. We pray for them, thanking God for their gifts and dedication, whether they are scientists, politicians, health workers, public servants of every kind, community leaders or steadfast family members and friends who continue to show such love and compassion.

We reflect in hope that, as the pandemic is controlled and we open up our lives again, we will gather in the lessons we have learned and build our society into a better shape, more compassionate, less marked by inequalities, more responsive to needs and deprivation. We ask for the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to guide and strengthen us in this endeavour, whether we are focussing on overcoming family breakdowns, economic recovery, or building political consensus.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist

Offertory Hymn

After committing ourselves to justice, the altar will be prepared for the Eucharist as we listen and reflect on our offertory hymn 'Who will speak' by Marty Haugen:

Who will speak if we don't, who will speak if we don't?

Who will speak so their voice will be heard?

Oh who will speak if we don't?

Who will speak for the poor and the broken?

Who will speak for the peoples oppressed?

Who will speak so their voice will be heard?

Who will speak if we don't? **refrain**

Who will speak for the ones who are voiceless?

Speak the truth in the places of power?

Who will speak so their voice will be heard?

Who will speak if we don't? **refrain**

Who will speak for the children of violence?

Who will speak for the women abused?

Who will speak so their voice will be heard?

Who will speak if we don't? **refrain**

Who will work for the thousands of homeless?

Who will work in the ghettos and streets?

Who will work so their voice will be heard?

Who will work if you don't? **refrain**

Who will work if you don't, who will work if you don't?

Who will work so their voice will be heard?

Oh who will work if you don't?

Who will care for the weak and the aged?

Who will care for the ones with no hope?

Who will work so their voice will be heard?

Who will work if we don't? **refrain**

Who will care for the plants and the creatures

Who will care for the land and the sea

Who will work so their voice will be heard?

Who will work if you don't? **refrain**

The presider standing at the middle of the altar, facing the people, extends and then joins his hands, as he says:

✠ Pray, brethren (brothers and sisters),
that my sacrifice and yours
may be acceptable to God,
the almighty Father.

✠ **May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands
for the praise and glory of his name,
for our good and the good of all his holy Church.**

Then the Presider, with hands extended, says the Prayer over the Offerings:

Prayer over the Offerings

✠ Make holy with your blessing, O Lord,
these offerings which we make,
and give us the grace to live
burning with the fire of your love
which gave the bishop and martyr, Saint Oscar,
the strength to endure sufferings.
Through Christ our Lord.

✠ **Amen**

The Eucharistic Prayer

Preface dialogue

✠ The Lord be with you.

✠ **And with your Spirit**

✠ Lift up your hearts.

✠ **We lift them up to the Lord**

✠ Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

✠ **It is right and just**

Preface

At the end of the Preface the Presider joins his hands and concludes the Preface with all the people acclaiming:

Sanctus

℟ Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

The people kneel as the Eucharistic Prayer continues.

The mystery of faith.

And the people continue, acclaiming:

℟ Save us, Saviour of the world,
for by your Cross and Resurrection
you have set us free.

At the end of the Eucharistic Prayer the presiding celebrant takes up the chalice and the paten with the host and, raising both, he says:

℣ Through him and with him, and in him,
O God, almighty Father
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honour is yours,
for ever and ever.

The people acclaim:

℟ Amen

The Communion Rite

After the chalice and paten have been set down, the Presider, says:

∇ At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

He extends his hands and, together with the people, continues:

℟ **Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

With hands extended, the Presider alone continues, saying:

∇ Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil, graciously grant peace in our days, that, by the help of your mercy, we may be always free from sin and safe from all distress, as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

He joins his hands and the people conclude the prayer, acclaiming:

℟ **For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and
for ever**

Peace Prayer

Then the Presider, with hands extended says aloud:

✠ Lord Jesus Christ,
who said to your Apostles:
Peace I leave you, my peace I give you,
look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church,
and graciously grant her peace and unity
in accordance with your will
who live and reign for ever and ever.

The people reply:

✠ **Amen.**

Breaking of the Bread

The Presider then takes the host, breaks it over the paten, and places a small piece in the chalice, saying quietly:

✠ May this mingling of the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ bring eternal life to us who receive it.

Meanwhile the following is proclaimed:

✠ **Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
grant us peace.**

Presider's Communion

The Presider genuflects, takes the host and, holding it slightly raised above the paten or above the chalice, while facing the people says aloud:

✠ Behold the Lamb of God,
behold him who takes away the sins of the world
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

And together with the people he adds once:

✠ **Lord, I am not worthy
that you should enter under my roof,
but only say the word
and my soul shall be healed.**

Prayer after Communion

Once the Presider has received communion he faces the people with hands joined says:

✠ Let us pray.

✠ Lord, may the sacrament we have received
give us the strength
with which the bishop and martyr, St. Oscar Romero,
always showed himself faithful
to your service and overcame suffering.
Through Christ our Lord.

The people reply:

✠ **Amen**

The Concluding Rites

Blessing

The Presider then blesses the people, saying:

✠ The Lord be with you

✠ **And with your Spirit**

✠ May almighty God bless you,
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit.

✠ **Amen**

Dismissal

The presider with hands joined and facing the people, says:

✠ Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.

The people reply:

✠ **Thanks be to God.**

Recessional/People's Communion Hymn

As we receive communion and leave this church building we listen to 'Unless a grain of Wheat'



*Romero Crosses by children from Saint Oscar Romero Parish primary schools
(‘Our Lady Star of the Sea’ & ‘St Edmund and St Thomas’)*

National Day of Reflection for COVID-19

Tuesday 23rd March 2021

“We ask you all to make this not only a Day of Reflection but also a Day of Prayer. In reflection we ponder on all that has taken place; in prayer we bring this to our Heavenly Father. For all who live by faith in God, reflection and prayer always go hand in hand. Prayer completes reflection. Reflection informs prayer. Prayer opens our life to its true horizon. Without prayer we live in a foreshortened world and are more easily swamped by its clamour and tragedy. Throughout this difficult year, so many have been inspired by prayer, so much effort sustained in prayer, in everyplace. So let us make the 23rd March truly a day of prayer.”



Archdiocese of Liverpool
Justice & Peace Commission



<https://jp.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk/>

CAFOD

Catholic Agency for
Overseas Development

<https://cafod.org.uk/Volunteer/CAFOD-in-your-area/Liverpool>

The Archbishop
Romero Trust

<http://www.romerotrust.org.uk/>