

Romero - A prophet of peace for our time

*An ecumenical celebration to mark the 33rd anniversary of the martyrdom of
Oscar Romero, Archbishop of San Salvador*

***Church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields
London***

Saturday, 23 March 2013

While recorded music from the **Misa Popular Salvadoreña** is played, and the congregation gathers, each person is invited to light a candle at the front of the church, to be a light of peace, justice, and human rights, for all people, for our world

Welcome - The Revd. Richard Carter *So, let us rise up to proclaim in song the holiness of justice and peace :*

Gathering song : Rise up, O People

Bernadette Farrell

REFRAIN

Rise up, O peo - ple! Ev - 'ry-one to - geth - er.

Stand up for jus - tice! Make to - mor - row bet - ter.

1. Speak out, speak out with courage.
 Speak out, speak without fear.
 Speak out, speak out together.
 Speak out loud and clear. **Refrain**
2. Speak out, speak out you women.
 Speak out, speak out you men.
 Speak out, speak so the people's
 Voice is heard again. **Refrain**
3. Speak out, people of vision.
 Speak out, people of faith.
 Speak out, people of wisdom.
 Keep our hope awake.
4. Stand up, stand for your values.
 Stand up, stand for your rights.
 Stand up, stand for your children.
 Make their futures bright. **Refrain**
5. Stand firm, stand firm, O people.
 Stand firm, stand firm today.
 Stand firm, stand so your hope and
 courage lead the way. **Refrain**

Penitential rite :

Officiant : As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of Pope John XXIII's Encyclical Letter, Peace on Earth, and this 33rd anniversary of the martyrdom of Oscar Romero, let us understand that peace and justice always challenge us to become ever-more human, to be all that God intends us to be, to be advocates of human rights for all people. Let us now acknowledge our failure to be peacemakers, creators of justice, celebrants of equality :

Reader : The very order of things therefore, demands that during this sacred season we pray earnestly to Him who by His bitter passion and death washed away our sins, which are the fountainhead of discord, misery and inequality; to Him who shed His blood to reconcile the human race to the heavenly Father, and bestowed the gifts of peace. "For He is our peace, who has made both one . . . And coming, He preached peace to you that were afar off; and peace to them that were close." (*'Peace on Earth', 169.*)

Señor, ten piedad; Señor ten piedad; de tu pueblo, Señor; Señor ten piedad.
(*Misa Popular Salvadoreña*)

Reader : Let us, then, pray with all fervour for this peace which our divine Redeemer came to bring us. May He banish from our souls whatever might endanger peace. May He transform all people into witnesses of truth, justice and love for each other. May He illumine with His light the minds of rulers, so that, besides caring for the proper material welfare of their peoples, they may also guarantee them the fairest gift of peace. (*'Peace on Earth', 171*)

Cristo, ten piedad; Cristo, ten piedad; de tu pueblo, Cristo; Cristo, ten piedad.

Reader : Finally, may Christ inflame the desires of all people to break through the barriers which divide them, to strengthen the bonds of mutual love, to learn to understand one another, and to pardon those who have done them wrong. Through His power and inspiration may all peoples welcome each other to their hearts as sisters and brothers, and may the peace they long for ever flower and ever reign among them. (*'Peace on Earth', 171*)

Señor, ten piedad; Señor ten piedad; de tu pueblo, Señor; Señor ten piedad.

Officiant : *May almighty God, whose Beloved came into the world to bring forth a reign of peace and justice, forgive our sins and the sins of the world, fill us with grace and love, and equip us for the work of reconciliation, now and in the days to come.*

Amen

Prayer

Loving God, you called your servant Oscar Romero to be a voice for the voiceless poor, and to give his life as a seed of freedom and a sign of hope: Grant that, inspired by his sacrifice and the example of the martyrs of El Salvador, we may without fear or favour witness to your Word who abides, your Word who is Life, even Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be praise and glory now and for ever.

Amen

Reflections from [The Violence of Love](#) by Archbishop Oscar Romero

We have never preached violence, except the violence of love, which left Christ nailed to a cross, the violence that we must each do to ourselves to overcome our selfishness and such cruel inequalities among us. The violence we preach is not the violence of the sword, the violence of hatred. It is the violence of love, of solidarity, the violence that wills to beat weapons into sickles for work.

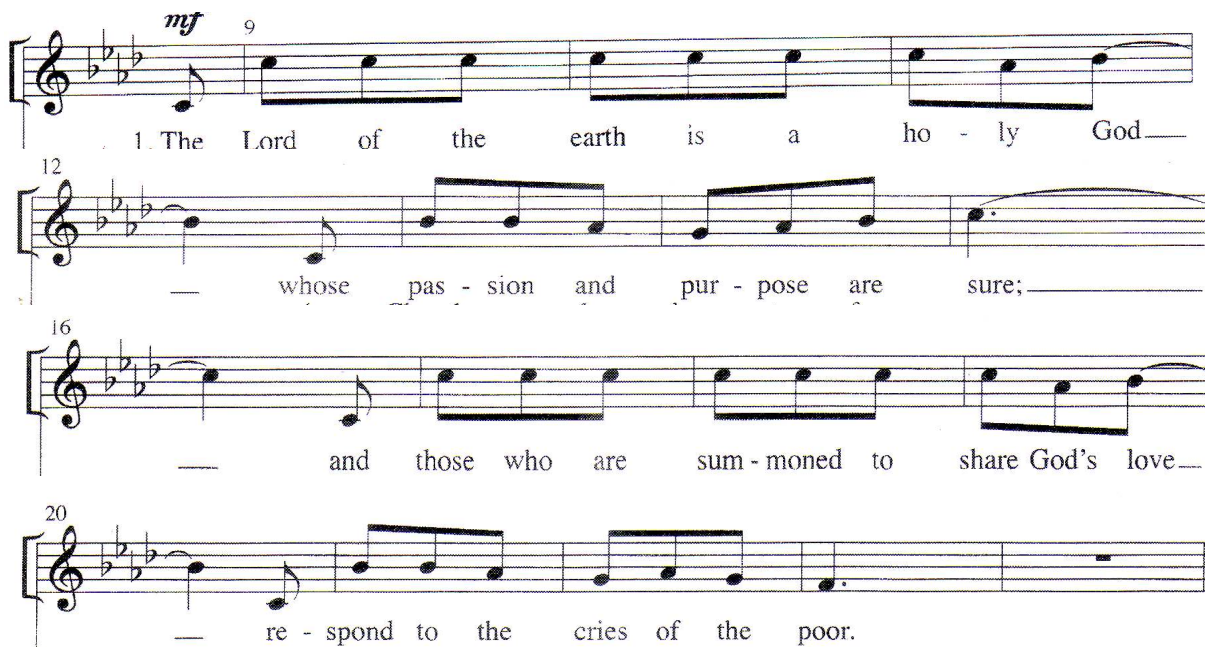
When we struggle for human rights, for freedom, for dignity, when we feel that it is a ministry of the Church to concern itself for those who are hungry, for those who have no schools, for those who are deprived, we are not departing from God's promise. He comes to free us from sin, and the Church knows that sin's consequences are all such injustices and abuses. The Church knows it is saving the world when it undertakes to speak also of such things.

For the Church, the many abuses of human life, liberty, and dignity are a heartfelt suffering. The Church, entrusted with the earth's glory, believes that in each person is the Creator's image and that everyone who tramples it offends God. As holy defender of God's rights and of his images, the Church must cry out. It takes as spittle in its face, as lashes on its back, as the cross in its passion, all that human beings suffer, even though they be unbelievers. They suffer as God's images. There is no dichotomy between humanity and God's image. Whoever tortures a human being, whoever abuses a human being, whoever outrages a human being abuses God's image, and the Church takes as its own that cross, that martyrdom.

Peace is not the product of terror or fear. Peace is not the silence of cemeteries. Peace is not the silent result of violent repression. Peace is the generous, tranquil contribution of all to the good of all. Peace is dynamism. Peace is generosity. It is a right and it is a duty.

Song : The Lord of the earth, *John Bell*

mf 9



1. The Lord of the earth is a ho - ly God —
 — whose pas - sion and pur - pose are sure; —
 — and those who are sum - moned to share God's love —
 — re - spond to the cries of the poor.

Refrain :

Blessed be God! Blessed be God!

25 *S. A.* *f*



God's ho-ly purpose is sure.

29



Blessed be God! Blessed be God! The

33



Lord hears the cry of the poor.

37



- The words of the prophets whom God inspired cannot just be silently read. Their summons to action must be obeyed; our lives should reveal what they said.

Refrain : Blessed be God! Blessed be God! Prophets cannot just be read.
 Blessed be God! Blessed be God! Lives should reveal what they said.

- In Jesus, our Saviour, we clearly see, the Church must be keen to forgo its comfort and priv'lege, and self-esteem, till Christ's is the lifestyle we show.

Refrain : Blessed be God! Blessed be God! Priv'lege is what we forgo.
 Blessed be God! Blessed be God! Christ's is the lifestyle we show.

4. With all of creation we join to sing in praise of the Lord of the earth who teaches that some things must change or die, and new life be brought to its birth.

Final Refrain :

Blessed be God! Blessed be God!

Sing to the Lord of the earth!

Blessed be God! Blessed be God! New

life must be brought, new life must be brought, new

life must be brought to its birth.

A reading from the Gospel according to Luke (4: 16-21)

He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour." Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. He began by saying to them, " Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

Sermon : Marie Dennis, *Co-President - Pax Christi International*

Intercessions :

Celebrating the memory of Archbishop Oscar Romero, we are conscious of the many challenges which face our world, our Church, our local communities. As we recall these in prayer, let us not be overwhelmed but strengthened to act with love and compassion to create that peace which the world cannot give:

For peace in the places of war, poverty and injustice: that leaders of government will be inspired by the vision of humanity which drove Oscar Romero. God, in your mercy: **Hear our prayer.**

For the peoples of Central America, and especially El Salvador: that they may rise above violence, inequalities, poverty and injustice, and empowered in their commitment to the common and global good. God, in your mercy: **Hear our prayer.**

For all people of faith, belief, and heartfelt conscience: that we may respond to situations of injustice, conflict, inequality, poverty and disease in the light of our belief, and so recognise the presence of the divine calling us to action for justice and radical compassion. God, in your mercy: **Hear our prayer.**

For the Church, that its pastors, theologians, and pastoral ministers may always reflect God's call to a preferential option for the poor, remembering Pope Francis, now installed as Bishop of Rome, and Justin Welby, now enthroned as Archbishop of Canterbury. God, in your mercy: **Hear our prayer.**

For progress in the beatification cause of Archbishop Oscar Romero: that this heroic witness to the vision of the 2nd Vatican Council will, in this Year of Faith, continue to inspire a lively commitment to work for the unity of all people of faith, growth in personal belief and values, solidarity with the poor, and work for justice and peace. God, in your mercy: **Hear our prayer**

And does the Spirit inspire us to pray for more ? ... ***spontaneous prayer may be added here ...***

Loving Creator, hear your people's prayer, for we are human and often overwhelmed by the many difficulties we face in our world, in our Church, in our lives. We call upon the memory of Monsenor Romero who, in the face of so many challenges, never ceased to act with love. Help us to become instruments of peace in our world, to confront violence and its causes, the toxic roots of injustice, and the vicious hatred that disfigures the human person made in your image. This we ask through the transfigured Christ, for ever and ever. **Amen**

A Word of Thanks His Excellency, Werner Romero - *Ambassador of El Salvador to the Court of St. James.*

Dismissal & Blessing :

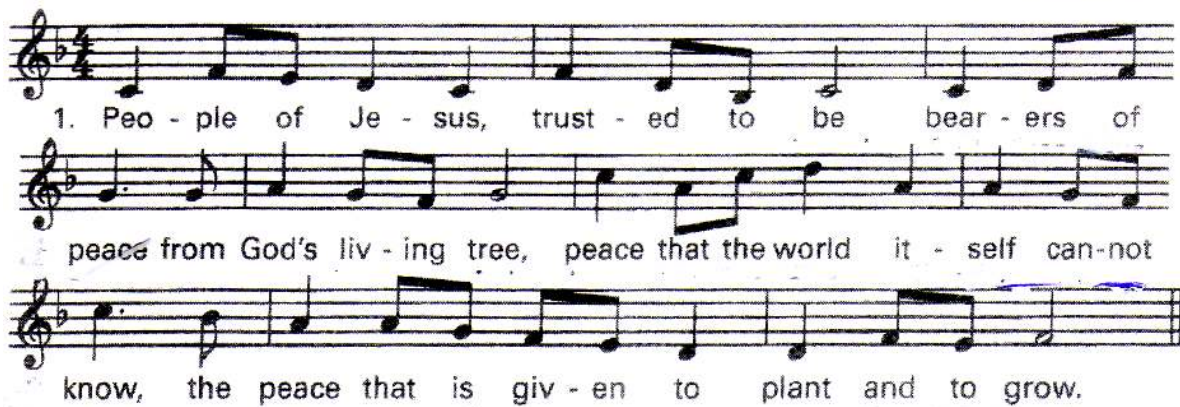
Let us go out and be light! May our words burn like the word of the prophets. May our defence of the poor and suffering, the victims of in justice and oppression, be a transforming power for our world. May our voice, our feet, our hands become those of Christ, building up the reign of God in human history. May we be bearers of peace in our hearts, our homes, our communities, and our world.

The blessing is said by all:

May the blessing of the God of Sarah and Abraham, the blessing of the Redeemer, born of Mary, the blessing of the Spirit, brooding over us as a mother over her children, be with us all, now and for ever. *Amen*

Recessional : Bearers of Peace

Bernadette Farrell



1. Peo - ple of Je - sus, trust - ed to be bear - ers of
peace from God's liv - ing tree, peace that the world it - self can-not
know, the peace that is giv - en to plant and to grow.

2. Feel for the ones who have more bread,
feel for the ones with children unfed.
Longing for food, they find in our hands
a mountain of weapons more sacred than land.
3. Feel for the ones whose homes are destroyed,
feel for the lives now shattered and void.
Waiting for loved ones nobody saw:
the innocent people who suffer in war.
4. Stand with the ones who see a new way:
people of faith who struggle and pray,
given the call to shape and rebuild
our actions, our consciences, our broken world.

5. Pray for the day our children will see war, strange and distant as slavery. Work for a world where new ways abound to meet and to dialogue till peace is found.
6. Why spend your tears on what cannot heal? Why spend your rage on what you conceal? God's living Word cries out to reveal a love that will satisfy, hope that is real.
7. Children of peace go forth through the earth, healing our world and bringing to birth vision to build and fashion a way: the fullness of life for God's people today.

There will be a retiring collection for the work of the Archbishop Romero Trust.

The Archbishop Romero Trust is grateful to St. Martin-in-the-Fields Church for hosting today's Service, and to the Officiant - the Revd. Richard Carter; to Marie Dennis, our preacher, Co-President of Pax Christi International; to clergy representing Methodist and Roman Catholic churches, to CAFOD, Christian Aid, Pax Christi UK, Progressio, the Dioceses of London & Westminster, and The Tablet for its generous support.

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