

Archbishop Romero Trust

PO Box 70227, London E9 9BR

romerotrust@btinternet.com

Eleventh Trustees' Annual Report - Year Ending April 2015

The Archbishop Romero Trust - also known as the Romero Trust - is a registered charity (number 1110069). It is governed by a Trust Deed executed on 6th September 2004 amended by a deed of variation dated 9th June 2005. The purposes of the Trust are: a) to advance the education of the public in the life and works of Oscar Romero, the martyred Archbishop of San Salvador, and his principles of human rights, social justice and the relief of poverty; b) to advance religion by promoting liturgical celebrations including commemorations of the life of Oscar Romero and prayer for the cause of his beatification and canonisation; and c) the relief of poverty and the promotion of human rights and social justice (as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and subsequent United Nations Conventions and Declarations and in "Gaudium et Spes", the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World of the Second Vatican Council) in Latin America in memory of Oscar Romero.

The trustees are Dr Julian Filochowski CMG, OBE (Chair), Ms Clare Dixon OBE (Secretary), Rev. Frank Turner SJ, Rev. Tony Lester O.Carm., Rev Richard Carter, Mr Stephen Davies (from October 2014), Mrs Jan Graffius, Mr David Skidmore OBE and Rt. Rev. John Rawsthorne. Mr Stephen Lloyd is the Trust's Honorary Treasurer, Ms Madge Rondo is the Trust's Honorary Membership Secretary and Ms Sarah Smith-Pearse, together with Ms Tania Dalton, is the editor of 'Romero News', the Trust's twice-yearly newsletter. The mandates of the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer run until September 2016.

The Trust is honoured to have Sister Maria Julia Garcia, Sister Pamela Hussey SHCJ, Archbishop Diarmuid Martin, Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Archbishop John Sentamu, Mgr Ricardo Urioste and Lord Rowan Williams as its Patrons. The Trust has no offices of its own; but the registered address is PO Box 70227, London E9 9BR (formerly, 8 Deans Mews W1G 9EE).

The trustees met on 15th April, 26th June, & 3rd October 2014 and 22nd January & 17th March 2015 to approve budgets and project grants and to

oversee the Trust's annual programme of activities. CAFOD generously provided hospitality for these Trust meetings. In making decisions and exercising their powers the trustees have had due regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance.

During the course of the year, Mrs Jan Graffius made two further visits on behalf of the Trust, to assist the Carmelite Missionary Sisters of St Teresa who care for Archbishop Romero's little house in the grounds of the cancer hospital. It is now a small museum containing the vestments and clothing which Archbishop Romero was wearing when he was murdered and which are stained with his blood. The chalice which was on the altar when Archbishop Romero was assassinated, and thought to be lost, was rediscovered during one of these visits and is now displayed alongside the martyrial vestments. The museum attracts thousands of visitors every year and proper legal registration of all the relics and the contents of both the house and the nearby hospital chapel is an important priority. The Trust has continued to support the registration process in order to protect the relics in case of future dispute over their ownership. This became an urgent concern once it was announced that Archbishop Romero would be beatified at a ceremony in San Salvador during 2015.

With the assistance of the Carmelite Friars in Britain and donations from 'Friends of Romero', the Trust once again made grants, totalling £3,911, to assist the Divine Providence cancer hospital where Archbishop Romero had lived and to whose work he was utterly dedicated. With earmarked donations received from supporters, the Trust also made a small grant of £982 to the Fe y Alegría School in La Chacra, one of the poorest sectors of San Salvador. Similarly, £1000 was sent to the human rights project (APDH) working on El Mozote, the massacre site in Morazán province. The Trust once more made a grant of £652 (US\$1000) to the Canonisation Office of the Archdiocese of San Salvador to enable it to continue to operate and maintain the website with its important record of Archbishop Romero's life and martyrdom. All these contributed directly to the public good.

Once the declaration of Romero's martyrdom 'in hatred of the faith' was published in Rome in February 2015, and the date of the beatification in San Salvador set for May 2015, the Trust's promotional activities and publicity around 'Romero Week' (20-27 March 2015) took on a new significance as the Christian community and their media in Britain discussed, more widely than ever before, the life and death of the soon-to-be Blessed Oscar Romero as a model Christian and a bishop for the

21st century Church. The theme chosen by the Trust for the National Ecumenical Service at St Martin-in-the-Fields in London on Saturday March 21st was 'Romero's Martyrdom: A Faith that does Justice'. It seemed especially fitting that the Trust's Patron, Cardinal Vincent Nichols, should have accepted the invitation to preach at the Service in this auspicious year in the run-up to the beatification scheduled for the Eve of Pentecost, two months later. He spoke to a large and lively congregation, displaying excitement at the prospect of the imminent recognition of Romero's sanctity.

As in previous years, local, diocesan and ecumenical events took place in Scotland, Wales and England. The Trust provided speakers, liturgy outlines, and literature for many of the events. The US Dominican priest, Brian Pierce, was the special guest of the Trust for Romero Week. With the title 'He Heard their Voice: Archbishop Romero - Mystic and Prophet', he spoke at public meetings in Edinburgh, Glasgow, York, Oxford and Norwich and led a study day in London, arranged in conjunction with CAFOD and the Conference of Religious. These events were directly in furtherance of the Trust's charitable objectives and generated substantial media coverage.

The Trust has continued to work with Convivium Press in the preparation of the publication in English of the complete six volumes of the 193 homilies Archbishop Romero gave as archbishop. Joe Owens has completed the translation of the first three volumes; Tom and Doris Strieter in Chicago have completed the copy-editing and Laura Keynes in London has done the indexing checks. The printing is being done in Colombia and Volume 1 was already on sale before the beatification in May; the other five volumes are now scheduled to follow before the end of 2015. The Trust anticipates this will be an important resource for pastoral work and educational studies. A grant has been secured from CAFOD to enable a six-volume set to be provided for every diocese and all the seminaries in England and Wales.

The 2014 Archbishop Romero Memorial Lecture was given by our Patron, Lord Rowan Williams, the former Archbishop of Canterbury. The lecture, entitled 'A saint for the whole people of God: Oscar Romero and the ecumenical future', was delivered in St Chad's Cathedral, Birmingham on Friday evening December 12th. It was received with great acclaim.

The Trust has no salaried staff members and relied on the voluntary work of its Trustees and other benefactors. The bankers for the Trust are

the Cooperative Bank plc. For the year ending April 2015 total income came to £22,224.61. Leaving aside restricted income earmarked for the Homilies Project and other specific programmes, the unrestricted income of the Trust totalled £10,408.74. This was matched by expenditure of £10,565.54 giving a deficit for the year in unrestricted funds of £156.80 to be carried forward to 2015/16. The balance sheet shows an apparently healthy figure for total funds held of £24,052.51 but a good deal of this is restricted and designated for the Homilies Project and for the Divine Providence cancer hospital. At the present time the Trust has no written reserves policy and has established no specific reserve funds from general funds besides those comprised of restricted monies received. The relevant financial information was lodged with the Charity Commission.

Julian Filochowski
Chair, Archbishop Romero Trust

September 2015