

# Archbishop Romero Trust

8 Dean's Mews, London W1G 9EE

[romerotrust@btinternet.com](mailto:romerotrust@btinternet.com)

## Eighth Annual Report - Year Ending April 2012

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 6<sup>th</sup> September 2004 amended by a deed of variation dated 9<sup>th</sup> 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 Mr Julian Filochowski (Chair), Ms Clare Dixon (Secretary), Rt. Rev. Michael Evans, Bishop of East Anglia (deceased July 2011), Rev. Frank Turner SJ, Rev. Tony Lester O.Carm., Rev Richard Carter, Ms Judith Rees (appointed July 2011), Ms Jan Graffius (appointed July 2011), Rt. Rev. John Rawsthorne (appointed September 2011). Mr Stephen Lloyd is the Trust's Honorary Treasurer, Madge Rondo is the Trust's Honorary Membership Secretary and Sarah Smith-Pearse is the editor of 'Romero News', the Trust's newsletter. The Trust has no offices of its own but the registered address is 8 Dean's Mews, London W1G 9EE.

The trustees met on 4<sup>th</sup> July, 19<sup>th</sup> September, 13<sup>th</sup> December 2011 and 12<sup>th</sup> March 2012 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 July 2011 the Trust shared in the great outpouring of sadness and grief on the death of Bishop Michael Evans of East Anglia after a prolonged battle against cancer. Bishop Michael was an enthusiastic founding trustee of the Archbishop Romero Trust. He saw Archbishop Romero as a model of a bishop and a model of a Christian for our times. In 2005 he visited El Salvador and celebrated Mass on the spot where Archbishop Romero was assassinated. He prayed and pressed constantly for Romero's beatification. In his last months he had been overjoyed to learn that, in partnership with the Trust, there would be a Romero space created in St George's Cathedral, Southwark to contain a first class relic and he gave a major donation towards the cross and reliquary being commissioned in El Salvador. May He Rest in Peace.

In August 2011 a mock-up of the Salvadoran cross was erected in the proposed space in the Cathedral and inspected by members of the various authorising committees. In November the Cathedral architect, Jonathan Louth, together with the Chair of the Trust, made a visit to San Salvador to discuss the design of the Cross and the broader commission with the artist, Fernando Llort. The target dates for receipt of the artist's drawings slipped very considerably in the wake of the still unexplained destruction of the tiled frontage of San Salvador's metropolitan cathedral which took place over Christmas 2011 without reference to Llort. It was his most important artistic work and indeed was considered to be part of the national patrimony. The upset caused has, not surprisingly, disrupted his life and work. Additionally the Trust purchased, and donated to St George's Cathedral, a copy of the bust of Archbishop Romero, by Lado Goudjabidze, which graces the outside wall of the little house where he lived in the cancer hospital grounds in San Salvador. It will be placed, together with the relics, in the Romero space.

During the course of the year the original audio recordings of Archbishop Romero's homilies were uploaded onto the Trust's website at [www.romerotruster.org.uk](http://www.romerotruster.org.uk). It was a mammoth task especially as many homilies because of their length are in two, and occasionally three, recording segments. A small number of the audio homilies are missing either because those homilies were not recorded when delivered in San Salvador or because the Trust has been unable to locate copies of the recordings. It is now possible to listen on-line to Archbishop Romero delivering his homily in Spanish and simultaneously to read an excellent English translation on the screen.

With the assistance of the Carmelite Friars in Britain, the Trust once again made a grant (US\$6000) to assist the Divine Providence cancer hospital where Archbishop Romero had lived and to whose work he was utterly dedicated. Additionally the Trust made a small grant of £1000 to ACES (Aid for the Children of El Salvador) to support its street children project in San Salvador and US\$1000 was sent once more 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. A number of earmarked donations for the Fé y Alegría school in the poorest sector of San Salvador were paid out as small grant payments.

In the aftermath of the November 2010 pilgrimage to El Salvador significant fundraising has taken place through the efforts of Jutta Davis and other returned pilgrims. Gift Aid is already being systematically claimed by the Trust. Donations to the general work of the Trust have been made easier by the inauguration of an on-line donation mechanism using 'BmyCharity' which provides a dedicated webpage to the Trust and enables people to make credit card donations from a link on the Trust's own website without difficulty or delay.

As the year progressed, the Trust's promotional activities and publicity increasingly emphasised 'Romero Week' (17-25 March 2012) as the umbrella under which the different local, national, diocesan and ecumenical events could be seen as a single celebration of Archbishop Romero's life and martyrdom. This year there was a record number of special liturgies, masses, talks, film showings, workshops and cultural events held in Scotland, Wales and England. The national ecumenical service is becoming a tradition at St Martin-in-the-Fields in Trafalgar Square, London. This year the Service took place on the anniversary day itself, Saturday March 24<sup>th</sup>, when Peter Price, Bishop of Bath and Wells, preached a powerful sermon entitled 'Oscar Romero: Witness to Radical Compassion'. Happily it received wide publicity. Planning for 2013 was already underway even before 2012 Romero Week had closed.

January 2012 marked the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of El Salvador's Peace Accords. The Trust organised a special Mass at St George's Cathedral, Southwark on 16<sup>th</sup> January, in conjunction with the Embassy of El Salvador, in order to celebrate the anniversary. Fr Michael Campbell Johnston preached and Werner Romero, the Salvadoran Ambassador,

gave a short address at the close of the liturgy which was followed by a reception.

The Trust has negotiated with Convivium Press, a US based publisher of theological and spiritual texts, for them to produce and publish in English over the next four years the complete six volumes of the UCA critical edition of Romero's homilies. This would be in the first instance for libraries, seminaries, university faculties and other reference points although many general readers across the English-speaking world could be expected to consider purchase especially if the beatification process were to move forward. The project had been warmly encouraged by Fr Dean Brackley SJ who gave the Trust's annual lecture in 2008. Unfortunately he too succumbed to serious and inoperable cancer during 2011. R.I.P. The publication will require financial subsidy as it is not commercially viable and the Trust has agreed to designate any surplus funds from the book-selling operation for this 'homilies project'.

2011 marked the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of El Salvador's independence from Spain. In the context of the bicentennial celebrations the Archbishop Romero Trust was officially awarded the designation 'Friend of El Salvador'. A special commemorative medal and diploma were presented by El Salvador's Foreign Minister, Hugo Martinez to Clare Dixon and Julian Filochowski, representing the Trust, at a ceremony at the Embassy in London.

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 2012 total income came to £21,529.71. Leaving aside restricted income earmarked for the Southwark space and other specific projects, the unrestricted income of the Trust totalled £6,147.60. This was matched by expenditure of £9,121.62 leaving a deficit for the year in unrestricted funds of £2,974.02 to be carried forward to 2012/13. The balance sheet shows an apparently healthy figure for total funds held of £ 27,289.07 but much of this is restricted and designated for the Southwark Cathedral project and for the Divine Providence cancer hospital. The Trust has no reserves policy and has established no reserve funds. The relevant financial information was lodged with the Charity Commission.

Julian Filochowski  
Chair, Archbishop Romero Trust

June 2012