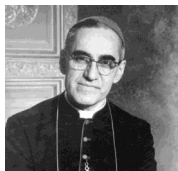


Oscar Romero - assassinated 24 March 1980



Oscar Arnulfo Romero was born in 1917 into a family of ten in Ciudad Barrios, El Salvador.

When he was 14 years old, Oscar wanted to be a priest so he went to study at junior seminary. When his mother was ill and they needed money for medicine, Oscar left the seminary for three months and worked in the gold mine in Potosí. He earned about 4p a day.

In 1937 Oscar went to Rome to study and stayed there during World War II. His father and brother died while he was in Rome.

Romero was ordained a priest in 1942 and returned to El Salvador. He became famous for his sermons. He also visited prisons, organised catechism classes and worked to provide help and food for the poor.

He was made a bishop on 21 June 1970.

Violence increased in El Salvador by the mid 1970s, as the government and army began killing the poor who stood up for their rights. When the army killed three people in the village of Tres Calles in Romero's diocese, he wrote to the President to protest about the murders.

He became Archbishop of San Salvador, the capital of El Salvador. Some rich people thought he would stop priests from helping the poor to stand up for their basic rights. But a

few weeks later, his friend Fr Rutilio Grande was shot and killed, along with two companions. The following Sunday, Romero allowed only one Mass in the whole diocese - at the Cathedral - where he spoke out against the murders.

As the violence in El Salvador continued, Romero continued to speak out. Every Sunday his sermon was broadcast by radio. The whole country listened. Romero's life was often threatened and his radio station was bombed.

In his sermon on 23 March, Romero ordered the army to stop killing people: "In the name of God, and in the name of this suffering people whose cries rise to heaven more loudly each day, I beg you, I implore you, I order you, in the name of God, stop the repression!" The next day, a shot killed Romero as he said Mass. A UN report later found that Major Roberto D'Aubuisson, had ordered Romero's death. Thousands came to the funeral and 30 were killed and many injured by the army. The civil war in El Salvador continued until 1992.

On 15 March, the new president of El Salvador announced that his government would be inspired by Romero and the "option for the poor" (choosing to put the most vulnerable people first).

In 2015 Pope Francis announced that Oscar Romero was a martyr, and he was beatified in El Salvador on 23 May.

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St Cross Newsletter March 2023

40
days
of
Lent

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The Vicar writes...

Someone said to me recently, 'Where has February gone?' Well, the month is a bit shorter, but it has really passed by like a blink of the eye! The visit by Bishop Mark to confirm Victoria and Hannah was a true celebration for everyone. They had both been diligent in their preparation for this stage of their Christian lives and there was a significant amount of planning beforehand to ensure that all went smoothly on the day. Thank you to all concerned.

Towards the end of February I attended an evening service at St Catherine's, Birtles, Over Alderley in order to licence new ministers to that parish which has joined with St Philip's and St James at Alderley Edge. It was extraordinary for me, considering I have been here almost seven years, to visit a church in the Knutsford Deanery that I had never seen before. A tiny country church in Cheshire where the vestry is so small I robed at a parishioner's home nearby and walked down. At least afterwards, with my white surplice and torch I was very visible to the occasional motorist passing by. The Bishop of Stockport, Sam Corley, joked at the start that the vestry door was so small he could have easily preached on the text from Luke, 'Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able.'

One of the challenges of Lent for me has always been to get the most out of Lent. A time of intended retreat and increased times of reading and prayer are often pressured by the day to day stuff that still happens as well as one eye always looking ahead to Easter and trying to make sure that all is in place for what is a very special week. Which leads me

nicely to my next point. A couple of weeks ago I received an email out of the blue from the aforementioned Bishop of Stockport asking if he could visit us on Good Friday. I was delighted to accept another episcopal visit within a matter of weeks, though the tone of Good Friday will be very different to when Bishop Mark came. I am thrilled that Bishop Sam has kindly agreed to do some reflections on Jesus' path to the cross from lunchtime before we finish with the Stations of the Cross around 2pm. I am not sure yet on exact timings, but I am hoping to structure the afternoon in a way that people can come and go as they please or stay for the duration.

Good Friday, and the whole of Holy Week beginning on Palm Sunday, does not have the same attraction for many as Easter Day, but honestly, the joy of Easter Day is truly accentuated for me by the experience of travelling with Christ through the sadness and contemplating his agony through which we once again come to an even deeper realisation of the depths of his love for us, through the combined event of his death and resurrection. I feel honoured that the Bishop of Stockport had chosen to come to share his Good Friday with us. I hope you feel the same way too.

Yours, in Christ
Paul



Bishop Mark Tanner, at the conclusion of the confirmation service.



Bishop Sam Corley, on his first visit to St Cross. Pictured here at Sharston House

Occasional Offices

Baptism
February 5 Sophie Rose Mollitor

Funerals
February 21 Ralph Drinkwater
February 23 Alan Worrall



Readings for Services - Sundays and Wednesdays		
	Morning Services	Evening Service
1 March Wednesday St David	Jonah 3 Psalm 51.1-5,17-18 Luke 11.29-32	
Sunday 5 March 2nd Sunday of Lent	Genesis 12.1-4a Romans 4.1-5,13-17 John 3.1-17	4.30pm Psalm 135.1-14 Numbers 21.4-9 Luke 14.27-33
8 March Wednesday Edward, Bishop of Lincoln	Jeremiah 18.18-20 Psalm 31.4-5,13-17 Matthew 20.17-28	
Sunday 12 March 3rd Sunday of Lent	Exodus 17.1-7 Romans 5.1-11 John 4.5-42	
15 March Wednesday	Deuteronomy 4.1,5-9 Psalm 147.13-end Matthew 5.17-19	
Sunday 19 March Mothering Sunday 4th Sunday of Lent	Exodus 2.1-10 Colossians 3.12-17 John 19.25b-27	
22 March Wednesday	Isaiah 49.8-15 Psalm 145.8-18 John 5.17-30	
Sunday 26 March Passiontide begins 5th Sunday of Lent	Ezekiel 37.1-14 Romans 8.6-11 John 11.1-45	
29 March Wednesday	Daniel 3.14-20,24-25,28 John 8.31-42	

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