

Peace and Justice - Messages from Oscar Romero

Recently within the Catholic Church, Pope Francis officially declared Archbishop Oscar Romero a martyr. This has pushed his name further up the list towards sainthood, and fully acknowledges the work and sacrifices he made in order to stand for the poor and oppressed of El Salvador in a time of government upheaval and violence.

The season of Lent in Christian denominations is a time of reflection and penance. As this season begins, I want to take a moment to reflect on some of Archbishop Romero's words and messages about peace and justice. It is the duty of all people to stand for those who cannot stand for themselves, to speak for those who are forced into silence, and to demand justice for those too scared and beaten down to demand it for themselves.

"What good are beautiful highways and airports, beautiful buildings full of spacious apartments, if they are only put together with the blood of the poor, who are not going to enjoy them?"

"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 right and it is duty."

"I will not tire of declaring that if we really want an effective end to violence we must remove the violence that lies at the root of all violence: structural violence, social injustice, exclusion of citizens from the management of the country, repression. All this is what constitutes the primal cause, from which the rest flows naturally."

- Oscar Romero

As we continue with our own work, and within our various communities, let us never forget those who have worked tirelessly to bring justice to those in greatest need of it, even if it meant making the ultimate sacrifice for their fellow human.

Inspiration provided by Erin Broich
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