



# OPUS CHRISTI SALVATORIS MUNDI

Newsletter  
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MISSIONARY SERVANTS OF THE POOR OF THE THIRD WORLD

## Papal Missionary Intention for May:

That Mary's intercession may help Christians in secularised cultures be ready to proclaim Jesus.

Intention entrusted to us by the Holy Father at the Apostolate of Prayer

## *A Word from the Magisterium*

*We continue with our presentation of a few passages of the Papal Exhortation EVANGELII GAUDIUM, on the topics most related to our charism and the work of our Missionary Servants of the Poor TW, like poverty and mission.*

### REASONS FOR A RENEWED MISSIONARY IMPULSE

268 (...) When we stand before Jesus crucified, we see the depth of his love which exalts and sustains us, but at the same time, unless we are blind, we begin to realize that Jesus' gaze, burning with love, expands to embrace all his people. We realize once more that he wants to make use of us to draw closer to his beloved people. He takes us from the midst of his people and he sends us to his people; without this sense of belonging we cannot understand our deepest identity.

269. Jesus himself is the model of this method of evangelization which brings us to the very heart of his people. How good it is for us to contemplate the closeness which he shows to everyone! If he speaks to someone, he looks into their eyes with deep love and concern: "Jesus, looking upon him, loved him"

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(Mk 10:21). We see how accessible he is, as he draws near the blind man (cf. Mk10:46-52) and eats and drinks with sinners (cf. Mk 2:16) without worrying about being thought a glutton and a drunkard himself (cf. Mt 11:19). We see his sensitivity in allowing a sinful woman to anoint his feet (cf. Lk 7:36-50) and in receiving Nicodemus by night (cf. Jn 3:1-15). Jesus' sacrifice on the cross is nothing else than the culmination of the way he lived his entire life. Moved by his example, we want to enter fully into the fabric of society, sharing the lives of all, listening to their concerns, helping them materially and spiritually in their needs, rejoicing with those who rejoice, weeping with those who weep; arm in arm with others, we are committed to building a new world. But we do so not from a sense of obligation, not as a burdensome duty, but as the result of a personal decision which brings us joy and gives meaning to our lives.

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## *News from the Church*

### Beatification of Oscar Romero

On 23<sup>rd</sup> May, Oscar Romero, who was bishop of San Salvador from 1977 – 1980, will be beatified. The celebration will be presided over by Cardinal Angelo Amato, Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, in San Salvador (El Salvador).

Oscar Arnulfo Romero was born in Ciudad Barrios, on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1917, on the day of the Assumption of Our Lady. Born to a humble and modest family, he entered San Miguel's Minor Seminary, belonging to the Cistercians. Afterwards, he continued with the Jesuit Fathers in the San Jose de la Montaña Seminary until 1937. He was then sent to Rome where he was ordained as a priest on 4<sup>th</sup> April 1942, at 25 years of age. He returned to his country in 1943, and after years of generous commitment as a priest, for the salvation of souls, he was named Auxiliary Bishop of San Salvador in 1970. After being named Bishop of the diocese of Santa Maria and occupying this position for two years, on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1977, Pope Paul VI made him Archbishop of San Salvador. As the Archbishop of the capital of El Salvador, he converted his Sunday sermons into a passionate defence for the poor and for human rights, above all for the country people and for the labourers. In a homily of his from 11<sup>th</sup> November 1977, he emphasised that "the mission of the Church is to identify with the poor: this is how the Church finds her salvation".

Because he denounced the dictatorship of General Carlos Humberto Romero, and the violence committed by the armed forces, the police, and even the paramilitary (the so-called "squadrons of death", in charge of repressing any opposition to the regime, he received many death threats.

Eventually, Romero was assassinated on 24<sup>th</sup> March 1980, during a Eucharistic celebration in the Divine Providence Hospital chapel, where cancer patients are treated. He was 62 years old.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> February, Pope Francis authorised the promulgation of the decree that recognises the martyrdom of Oscar Romero, as well as the three priests, Michele Tomaszek and Zbigniew Strzalkowski (Polish) and Alessandro Dordi (Italian), who were assassinated in Peru in 1991 by the Shining Path terrorists. The three of them, like Romero, were martyred *in odium fidei* (in hate of the faith). The Holy Father, having been the Archbishop of Buenos Aires, knew Oscar Romero very well, and last August on his flight home after his trip to Korea, he expressed his opinion very clearly, saying: "In my opinion, Romero is a man of God".

As the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth, which will be celebrated on 15<sup>th</sup> August 2017, grows closer, the Bishops of El Salvador invite all the faithful – many of whom know Oscar Romero by only a few phrases of his – to get to know his persona and his priestly and episcopal ministry... to know him more and to love him more. In order to do this, they have selected three themes; one for each of three years:

- During the first year, we will reflect on "*Romero, man of God*";
- The second year will be dedicated to the theme "*Mons. Romero, Bishop and man of the Church*".
- Finally, the Salvadorian Church proposes "*Mons. Romero, server of the poor*".

Mons. Oscar Romero, the first Salvadorian saint, is a saint and model of the Universal Church, just as the "preferential option for the poor" (the expression consecrated by the Latin American Episcopal Conference of Puebla in 1979) is an option for the whole Church and for every believer. Every one of us is called to overcome what Pope Francis has defined as "globalisation of indifference", the great temptation about which the Pontiff spoke to us in his Lenten message for 2015. And so we can take Oscar Romero as a model, with his courage, his love for the poor, his fidelity to the Church, and his simply being a "man of God".

## *The Light of our Charism*

*In this issue, we continue with our presentation of a document by Fr. Giovanni Salerno from 30th March 1996 about our Marian spirituality.*

### **Why we invoke Holy Mary as Mother of the Poor of the Third World**

(...) Juan Diego walked towards the Bishop's house, and after his second failure he returned to where the Virgin was, and told her that the Bishop had asked for a sign so that he could believe that these really were the desires of Our Lady. And the Holy Virgin said to him "that's fine, my child. You will return here tomorrow so that you can take to the Bishop, the sign that he has requested. With this he will believe you, and he will not doubt you or suspect you anymore. Know that I will pay you your interest and work and tiredness that you have had for Me. Now go, tomorrow I will await you here".

Juan Diego, the day that he had to go to the Virgin for the sign, was not able to do it because he dedicated his time to caring for his uncle Juan Bernardino, who was very sick. He knew that he had to go for the sign, but he felt the strength of obligation to remain at the side of his sick uncle. Only in the future would he realise that Virgin – being Mother – would always be with him, and would care for and heal his uncle, overcoming even the longest distances.

The next day, 12th December 1531, Juan Diego ran from Cuautitlan to México, to bring a priest to administer the Sacraments to his uncle Juan Bernardino, who was nearing his death. He had to pass through Tepeyac. He thought that the Lady would see him there and would distract him, and so because he would not be able to go quickly, running, to find a priest, his uncle would die without having received the sacraments. So he decided to go through the lower part of the mountain, thinking that this way, the Lady who sees everywhere would not see him.. Exactly what he didn't want to happen, happened: Our Lady appeared. He was surprised, and tried to explain himself, telling her that he had to go to Mexico very quickly to take a priest to his very sick

uncle. After having done this, he would return to take the sign to the Bishop and carry out the will of Our Lady.

Juan Diego did not realise that he was speaking with She who has such a powerful intercession with Our Lord, that it would have been enough to ask her to heal his uncle for her to do this, and he didn't ask.

However, this was the Virgin's response: "Listen and understand, my little child, that what upsets you and saddens you is nothing; do not let your heart be troubled; do not fear this sickness, nor any other sickness or anguish. AM I NOT HERE WHO AM YOUR MOTHER? Are you not under my protection? Am I not your health? Are you not in my bosom? What more do you need? Let nothing distress you or worry you; Do not be afflicted by the sickness of your uncle, who will not die of this disease; you can be sure that he is already healed".

Now that his worries had disappeared, Juan Diego was able to do what his Mother had asked of him: go to where he saw Her for the first time, and there, surrounded by a great variety of Castilian roses, cut all that he could and take them to her presence.

"My little child" – she then said to him – "this diversity of roses is the proof and sign that you will take to the Bishop. You will tell him, in my name, that he see in that my will and that he must carry it out. You are my ambassador who is very worthy of trust".

Note that in Mexico, in December, it is winter (which is different to what happens, for example, on the coast of Peru, where in December, spring is coming to an end and summer is beginning) and that at this time of year, the mountains in Tepeyac are completely arid and barren. And so, the simple fact that Juan Diego took so many different roses to the Bishop, that were so fresh, still studded with drops of morning dew, was in itself, a sign from Heaven.

The Virgin had given Juan Diego the strict order that he would empty his tilma, filled with roses, only in front of the reverend Bishop. However, when he arrived at the residence of the prelate, Juan Diego had a few problems in getting to see him...

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## *News from our Homes*

### *Budapest Centre*

Our brothers from the Missionary Servants of the Poor Centre that we have in Budapest, recently held their annual retreat for girls – it took place from 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> March. 13 girls took part. The retreat took place in Érd, a city 21km to the South West of the centre of the Capital of Hungary, in the Cistercian Sisters' monastery. It was three days of meeting with the Lord, of desert, and of recollection, far from the noise of daily life that makes it difficult to be alone with God. Fr. José Carlos Caetano Eugenio (Portuguese) preached the meditations, and Fr. Agustín Delouvroy (Belgian) celebrated the Masses and guided Adoration and other liturgies. The next retreat, for boys is planned to take place in November.

In March, from Friday 13<sup>th</sup> –Sunday 15<sup>th</sup>, we held the Spring Camp for the boys from the Centre, which took place in Pilis. This is a mountainous region with a beautiful landscape, well known as a holiday destination in Hungary. Throughout the camp, the boys benefitted from the presence of Fr. Agustín. As with every year, the camp had a spiritual theme, which, this time, was “The mountain where God awaits me”, - that is to say, the theme of prayer. As well as enjoying those days by going on beautiful trips out and playing games, everybody was able to discover more deeply, through different stories in the Sacred Scriptures, what prayer is, and what the most important elements are in order to enter into contact with God and persevere along the way of spiritual life.

Since last Autumn, the mothers of the families from our Hungarian community have been organising regular meetings with the mothers and sisters of the boys who come to our Centre.

The aim is for them to get a bit involved so that they can understand the path that their sons or brothers are taking, in the Movement. These meetings are about addressing important issues of faith and of our Christian life, of the governing of the house, and of the preparation of their little ones for receiving the sacraments. Actually, these meetings are an essential part of preparation for the sacraments, since every path of faith is a path that is taken, primarily, in the family, the “domestic church”. It is clear that the teachings that the boys receive in the Centre would not be effective if, in their homes, they met with situations and values contrary to the faith that we transmit to them. From time to time, the families of the community invite one or two of the families of the boys from the Centre to eat with them, and to converse with them in a more informal manner.

Finally, again in March, we received a notice that made the whole Movement happy. One of our students from the Centre, Saniy, who comes from a very difficult family situation, and who had significant learning difficulties, passed his scholarship exams and has been admitted into one of the best schools in the country. We thank God, because this is the result of his efforts and of the work done in the Centre.

### **Missionary Pledge of the Month:**

During this Marian month, I will request, from the Missionary Servants of the Poor, some prints of the image of Holy Mary Mother of the Poor, and I will give them out as a way of Marian Apostolate.