Oscar Romero: The Voice of the Voiceless

On March 24th, 1980, Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador was assassinated for defending the human rights of the poor of his country. In recognition of his extraordinary life, the Catholic Church recently began a process that will likely lead to his canonization as a saint in the not too distant future. Yet, among the poor of Latin America today he is already called San Romero de las Américas, the voice of the voiceless.

Oscar Romero was appointed archbishop of El Salvador in February 1977 with the blessings of that country's powerful oligarchy and against the wishes of those who worked among the poor in the aftermath of the Second Vatican Council. However, shortly after his appointment, Romero experienced a radical transformation. He began to speak out against the poverty and injustice experienced by the vast majority of the Salvadoran people at the hands of its powerful and repressive minority. Three years later his voice was silenced by a government-hired assassin as he presided at Mass.

Oscar Romero once said in response to the many threats against his life, “If I am killed, I will arise again among the Salvadoran people.” And for many, his spirit continues to be present among the poor of that country as they continue their struggle to realize the human dignity for which Romero gave his life on their behalf.

One might ask how his transformation into one of the 20th century’s great prophetic voices can be explained. Some who knew him well argue that it can only be explained by God’s grace. But they are quick to add that he had several qualities that allowed that grace to be realized in his life. First, he was undeniably a capable man, and not somebody who had been manipulated by others. Second, he was a man of deep prayer and profound relationship with God. Third, he was both open to God’s will working in him, and he had the courage to act upon what he knew to be true. Nevertheless, these qualities were not self-evident before he was named archbishop. In fact, prior to his appointment Romero described himself as a man of books and ideas, lacking in experience of the day-to-day life of the Salvadoran people. But as archbishop this changed. He had become responsible for the welfare of so many people for whom the basic necessities of life were only a dream. And it was this exposure, coupled with the assassination of Rutilio Grande, a friend and Jesuit priest, that transformed him.

Grande worked among the poor and shortly after Romero’s appointment as archbishop he criticized Romero’s aloofness from their plight. Grande was killed one week later by Salvadoran death squads. In many respects, the relationship between Rutilio Grande and Oscar Romero parallels that of John the Baptist and Jesus. Grande was the one who cried out in the wilderness of El Salvador for the repentance of those who had caused so much human suffering. After his death, Romero began a public ministry that, like Jesus’ ministry, lasted only three years before he was killed by the powerful interests of his day.

Ultimately, Oscar Romero offers us a model of authentic discipleship with Jesus. That is, he incarnated in our time who Jesus is and how Jesus lived His life. And, in doing so, he lived out the values of God’s kingdom – values of love, compassion, and justice – on behalf of the suffering people of this world. His own words sum up the importance and meaning of that discipleship:
Announced Masses for the Week

**Monday, March 23rd**
8:30 MEM Robin Foxx
12:10 MEM Mrs. Kaplan
5:30 MEM Mary Sirois

**Tuesday, March 24th**
8:30 MEM Anna Genova
12:10 MEM John B., John A. and Elizabeth A. Rooney
5:30 MEM Ana Quiñones

**Wednesday, March 25th**
8:30 MEM Ella Speth
12:10 MEM Alfred Ziccardi
5:30 MEM Michael Gallacher

**Thursday, March 26th**
8:30 MEM Ray Carmichael
12:10 MEM Dominic Smith
5:30 MEM Dr. Emil Wittek

**Friday, March 27th**
8:30 MEM Olga Corbera
12:10 MEM Katherine Barry
5:30 ANN Helen Regan

**Saturday, March 28th**
8:30 MEM Jose Corbera

Scripture Readings for the Week

**Monday, March 23rd** (Monday, Fourth Week of Lent)
Isaiah 65:17-21; Psalm 30; John 4:43-54

**Tuesday, March 24th** (Tuesday, Fourth Week of Lent)
Ezekiel 47:1-9, 12; Psalm 46; John 5:1-16

**Wednesday, March 25th** (Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord)
Isaiah 7:10-14, 8:10; Psalm 40; Hebrews 10:4-10; Luke 1:26-38

**Thursday, March 26th** (Thursday, Fourth Week of Lent)
Exodus 32:7-14; Psalm 106; John 5:31-47

**Friday, March 27th** (Friday, Fourth Week of Lent)
Wisdom: 2:1a, 12-22; Psalm 34; John 7:1-2, 10, 25-30

**Saturday, March 28th** (Saturday, Fourth Week of Lent)
Jeremiah 11:18-20; Psalm 7; John 7:40-53

**Sunday, March 29th** (Fifth Sunday of Lent)
Jeremiah 31:31-34; Psalm 51; Hebrews 5:7-9; John 12:20-33

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**Easter Memorial**

Wednesday, April 29th at 7:00 PM

Our annual liturgy to remember parishioners and family members who died in 2008. You are invited to submit the names of deceased loved ones to Sr. Kathryn King no later than Friday, March 27th: 212-288-3588 or kingk@stignatiusloyola.org

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**Raise your Voice against Extreme Abortion Measures**

At both the state and federal levels, action is needed to defeat two proposals that promote an extreme approach to abortion laws: the “Freedom of Choice Act” (FOCA) in Congress, and the New York State bill called “Reproductive Health Act” (formerly known as RHAPP).

- **RHAPP and FOCA go far beyond Roe v. Wade** and would declare a “fundamental right” to abortion. They would elevate that right to a level equal to such rights as free speech and the right to vote, and permit absolutely no interference with that right.

- **RHAPP and FOCA would prohibit a broad range of common-sense regulations**, including parental notification, clinic regulations, waiting periods, bans on partial-birth abortion and later-term abortions.

- **RHAPP and FOCA would threaten freedom of conscience** of doctors, nurses and health care workers whose personal convictions do not permit them to cooperate in abortion.

- **RHAPP and FOCA would threaten Catholic healthcare institutions, social service agencies and schools.** Government regulatory agencies could deny licenses, funding, or other benefits to hospitals that choose not to promote abortion.

The Bishops of the United States, at their meeting in November, committed the Church to an advocacy campaign to defeat such measures, and Cardinal Egan has authorized an Archdiocesan postcard campaign in all parishes during the weekend of March 28-29. Postcards will be available next weekend for you to raise your voice against such extreme measures.

For more resources on FOCA, go to www.nchla.org
For more resources on RHAPP, go to www.nycatholic.org

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**Rev. Peter W. Gyves, SJ**
Sunday, March 22 – JustFaith fair trade coffee, tea and chocolate sale in Wallace Hall following the 11 AM Masses.

Sunday, March 22, 4:00 PM – Organ Recital: Renée Anne Louprette. Please see details below.

Sunday, March 22, 6:00-7:15 PM – “At Jesus’ Side: A Lenten Series for Ignatian Young Adults.” Using the Scripture readings from the week, we will explore the Lenten themes they raise and how they relate to our own lives. This week’s topic: Vision.

Sunday, March 22, 8:30 PM, Wallace Hall – Sunday Social hosted by the Ignatian Young Adults (follows the 7:30 PM Mass). All are welcome!

Monday, March 23, 7:00 PM – Talk by Immaculée Ilibagiza. Please see details at right.

Tuesday, March 24, 7:00 PM - Ignatian Social Justice Meeting. All are welcome!

Wednesday, March 25, 7:00 PM – Parish Reconciliation Service

Thursday, March 26, 7:00 PM, Parish House Lounge
Lenten Reflection by Fr. Robert O’Brien, S.J. This week: In Jerusalem: Jesus with the Gentiles

Thursday, March 26, 7:00 PM, Church – “Catholicism,” a presentation by Fr. Robert Barron and Mike Leonard. Please see details at bottom of this page.

Sacred Music in a Sacred Space
Sunday, March 22nd at 4:00 PM

Organist Renée Anne Louprette performs Couperin’s Messe pour les Convents with tenor soloist Steven Fox and women’s choir. Tickets: $20 or $15 for students/seniors. Tickets are available in the Parish House, by calling 212-288-2520 or online at www.smssconcerts.org

Tickets to Immaculée’s lecture are on sale after all Masses this weekend

An Evening with Immaculée Ilibagiza
author of Left to Tell, Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust

Monday, March 23rd at 7:00 PM
Church of St. Ignatius Loyola

From the country she loved, to the horrors of genocide, hers is a remarkable and touching journey of understanding and forgiveness.

A book signing and reception in Wallace Hall will follow Immaculée’s talk

TICKETS ARE NOW ON SALE: $20 advance sale $25 at the door

Tickets can be purchased at either the Parish House or the Grammar School

Proceeds to benefit Immaculée’s “Left to Tell” Charitable Fund

Word on Fire cordially invites you to attend:

CATHOLICISM: A Landmark Documentary Series
Explaining and Promoting the Catholic Faith to the World

Thursday, March 26, 2009 7:00 PM
Church of St. Ignatius Loyola

Presented by theologian and author Fr. Robert Barron and NBC Today Show correspondent, filmmaker and author Mike Leonard. For further information: email Nancy Ross at nross@WordOnFire.org

Parish Celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation
Wednesday Evening
March 25th at 7:00 PM
Church of St. Ignatius Loyola

Includes the opportunity for individual confession

Pastoral Visits Available for Homebound and Ill Parishioners

Parishioners have been trained for the ministry of pastoral visiting to the homebound and chronically ill in our Parish. If you are interested in having a visit arranged for yourself or another person, please contact Sr. Kathryn King. She can be reached at 212.288.3588 or kingk@stignatiusloyola.org.
UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, March 28 at 1:30 PM
The Parish Community is cordially invited to the Grammar School production of “The King and I.” Best available seats are for the March 28th 1:30 PM matinee. Tickets: $15.00. For further information or to reserve tickets, please contact Sharon Abruzzo, Director of Development, at the Grammar School (212-861-3820).

Wednesday, April 1 at 8:00 PM
Bach’s magnificent Saint Matthew Passion, with the Choir & Orchestra of St. Ignatius Loyola, Parish Community Choir, Children’s Choir and soloists. General seating: $35 or $25 (students/seniors). (Preferred seating is sold out). Tickets are available at the Parish House, online at www.smssconcerts.org or by calling 212-288-2520.

Saturday, April 25, 8:30 AM – 1:30 PM
Join Ignatian Teens on a Saturday of Service at the Mercy Center in the Bronx
We will meet at the Parish House at 8:30 AM and go as a group by subway to the Mercy Center. We will be helping young children in a reading enrichment program and assisting adults in their ESL program. Classes end at 1:00 PM. We will be back to the Parish House by 1:30 PM. For further information, or to sign-up, please call or email Judy Choix at 212-717-0055 (judy@bchicart.com)

SAVE THE DATE!
2009 Annual Spring Benefit
St. Ignatius Loyola Day Nursery
The Central Park Boathouse
Friday, May 15th, 7:00 PM to Midnight

LENTEN ACTIVITIES

Lenten Cross Service Project Update
The stole on our Lenten Cross continues to become more colorful! As of this week, we have received 734 commitments of service, advocacy prayer and private forms of Lenten service from 289 parishioners. It's not too late to register. Additional information, list of activities and registration sheets are available in the narthex, in the Parish House, or on our website:
www.stignatiusloyola.org

734 Commitments from 289 Participants

Pax Christi’s 27th Annual Good Friday Way of the Cross
April 10th, 8:30 AM - Noon
Join with nearly 500 people in the largest public Christian peace witness in New York City. The Way of the Cross is a modern-day enactment of the Stations of the Cross, witnessing for peace and justice in the streets of our city. At each station we reflect on our participation in a world still characterized by crucifixion. The walk begins at 47th Street between First and Second Avenues (across from Holy Family Church), proceeds along 42nd Street and ends near Holy Cross Church on 42nd Street, between Eighth and Ninth Avenues.
For more information, please call Pax Christi Metro NY at 212-420-0250 or visit www.nypaxchristi.org

OF INTEREST

“Rejoice, O Jerusalem…”
The Fourth Sunday of Lent is called Lætare (“Rejoice”) Sunday, from the first words of the liturgy [Introit] quoted above. Since it is the middle of Lent, like Gaudete Sunday midway through Advent, Lætare reminds us of the Event we look forward to at the end of the Penitential Season. As on Gaudete Sunday, rose-colored vestments may replace violet, symbolizing the Church’s joy in anticipation of the Resurrection.

— Lent/Easter Sourcebook for Families, ©1991
Holy Week and Easter Music Fund
Response Form for Contributors

Your contribution supports our liturgical music and other worship expenses during Holy Week and throughout the church year. We will be happy to list contributions of $75 or more (received before April 9, 2009) in our music programs for the Easter Vigil and Easter Sunday services. If you wish to be listed, please print in the space below your name (or the way you wish another person to be honored or remembered) and return the bottom portion of this form with your contribution to:

Music Office, Church of St. Ignatius Loyola, 980 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10028.

Thank you for supporting the Liturgical Music program of St. Ignatius Loyola Church.

my contribution of $_______________

(Please print clearly how you wish your donation to be listed in the music program)

Make checks payable to Church of St. Ignatius Loyola. To charge your donation, please complete this section:

Name ____________________________________________________________
Address __________________________________________________________
City________________________ State _____ Zip________
Email ____________________________________________________________

Circle one:  MC  VISA  AMEX  DISCOVER
Number __________________________________________________________
Expiration _____ / _____ Phone __________________
Signature ________________________________________________________
Couples celebrating their 50th Wedding Anniversary anytime during 2009 are invited to attend the Annual Golden Wedding Jubilee Mass at the Cathedral of St. Patrick on Sunday, May 3, 2009 at 2:00 PM. Pre-registration is required. The closing date to register for the Mass is Friday, April 17. Contact Diane Boyle at the Parish House 212-288-3588 or boyled@stignatiusloyola.org

The Year of St. Paul is the theme of Lenten Sunday Vespers at Corpus Christi Church, 529 West 121st Street, Manhattan. Sunday, March 29 at 4:00 PM: “Paul and Worship.” Speaker: Rev. Raymond M. Rafferty, Pastor, Corpus Christi Church. For further information, call 212-666-9350 or visit www.corpus-christi-nyc.org

St. Paul through the Ages: Tuesday, March 24, 6:30 PM, The Kathryn Martin Theater of the St. Jean Baptiste Community Center, East 76th Street, just east of Lexington Avenue. Art historian and author Jeanne Chenault Porter will give an in-depth presentation on the way artists have depicted the apostle Paul through the ages. The program is in observance the Jubilee Year of St. Paul. A reception will follow. Tickets are $25; proceeds benefit the New Restoration Fund of the church. For reservations, call 212.288.5082.

Catholic Education: Then, Now and Tomorrow: Wednesday, March 25, 7:30 PM in Smith Hall at the College of Mount St. Vincent, 6301 Riverdale Avenue, Bronx, NY. Msgr. Thomas J. Shelley, Ph.D., will talk about the significant contributions of the Sisters of Charity to Catholic Education. Free admission. For further information, call 718-879-5245

Music in Desperate Times: Remembering the Women’s Orchestra of Birkenau: March 28, 8:00 PM at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. Ars Choralis, from Woodstock, NY, has created a concert that combines the music of the Birkenau Women’s Orchestra, readings from the women’s diaries, and choral works of peace and resistance. For tickets and additional information, please visit www.arschoralis.org

Coping with Job Loss: A Support Group for the Recently Unemployed: Tuesday mornings - April 21, 28, May 5, 12 and 19; 10:30 AM – 11:45 AM. St. Francis of Assisi Church, 135 West 31st Street, New York. Pre-registration and pre-screening required before Friday, April 3rd. Limited capacity. For more information, please call 212-736-8500, x290 or x354

Weekday Masses Monday-Friday:
- 8:30AM, 12:10PM and 5:30PM

Saturday: 8:30AM
Masses for Next Weekend:
- Saturday Vigil: 5:30PM Fr. Bergen
- Sunday: 8:00AM Fr. Van Dyke 9:30AM Fr Bergen
- Wallach Hall 11:00AM Fr. Ugo
- Solemn 11:00AM Fr. Martin 7:30PM Fr. Martin

Music Information: (212) 288-2520 E-mail: music@stignatiusloyola.org