

one human family caring for creation



**MESSAGE FROM CARITAS
INTERNATIONALIS REGARDING
THE BEATIFICATION OF MSGR
OSCAR ARNULFO ROMERO**

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1. "For Christ's love compels us" (2 Cor 5:14). The life of the Church is manifested in the practice of love that arises from God and has been passed on to every believer. Moreover, the identity card of any disciple of Jesus is fraternal love. With love, as well as sharing and having everything in common, believers ensure that no one is in need and build ecclesial communion (cf. Acts 2). All this leads to acting in faith in the name of Christ and in this way solidarity, mutual accompaniment, reconciliation and fraternity are expressions of Charity. A very special manifestation of Christian charity is the preferential option for the poor. This is typical of faith in Christ.
2. Over time and throughout the world, the example of the lives of the vast legion of Saints has been a convincing witness of faith, love and hope to be imitated by everyone. Many of them are renowned for their actions of charity, mercy and supportive commitment. Today, in our Latin American continent, the testimony of a man of the people, a pastor of the Church and witness to the Resurrection of Jesus stands out: **MSGR OSCAR ARNULFO ROMERO GALDAMEZ**.
3. We share the joy of the Salvadoran and Latin American people on the announcement of the beatification of Msgr Romero. We echo all the members of our confederation in thanking Pope Francis for this wonderful gift: as well as recognising Msgr Romero's exemplary life of holiness, it is an opportunity to reaffirm the Church's evangelising vocation and its sense of solidarity with the people, especially the poorest and those who are suffering. His pastoral charity, lived in an heroic way, inspires us to carry on building peace and justice with the criteria of the Gospel.
4. From Caritas Internationalis we wish to send our fervent congratulations to the Church in El Salvador and all the Salvadoran people for this splendid event of faith and charity. Msgr Romero stood out as a good priest, who showed his solidarity with the poor and vulnerable, and promoted justice and freedom. He now appears as a beacon of light for everyone working in the service of charity and for the Church that proclaims the Gospel throughout the world. He is a model for all believers, for men and women of good will.
5. He is considered as a man of faith, whose faith centred on Christ led him to a permanent preferential option for the poor. "This divine preference has consequences for the faith life of all Christians, since we are called to have 'this mind... which was in Jesus Christ'" (Phil 2:5)

(E.G. 198). With the sentiments of the Lord, Msgr Romero didn't hesitate to identify himself with the people, and likewise as a Servant of God, he assumed his pains and concerns with Paschal compassion. He didn't fear the death threats and false accusations levelled against him, and always had poor and simple people on the horizon of his pastoral ministry. Thus he said: "I rejoice in being in the midst of my people and feeling their affection as in the Church, through their bishop, they look for hope" (Homily of 25 September 1977).

6. His pastoral commitment shows an apostolic zeal that translates into operating charity. In this sense he is a witness of the love that arises from the personal encounter with Jesus. This encounter of friendship with the Lord strengthens love for other people. This is what identifies him with the Good Shepherd who "lays down his life for the sheep" (cf. Jn 10:11). Msgr Romero, in union with Christ, sought what He sought and loved what He loved (cf. E.G. 267). Such great love that he didn't hesitate to offer his own life in harmony with the master in order to proclaim the Gospel, "even when it was necessary to die like him, on a cross" (Homily 27 November 1979).
7. Since his martyrdom, which is now recognised by the Church, the people of El Salvador and Latin America have seen in him an example of Christian life. Now with his Beatification, as well as being able to publicly worship him, we can all present him as a model that encourages the New Evangelisation and the service of charity in the Church. As a good shepherd he strived to renew his Archdiocese in the spirit of the Second Vatican Council and took on the challenges for "a more committed evangelisation, without fear" (Homily 22 April 1979). Therefore, this wonderful opportunity, and as a manifestation of the grace of God, will allow, among other things, Msgr Romero to be presented as a model priest for the New Evangelisation and the service of charity. Based on his experience of the service of charity and to the poor, with resolute Paschal compassion, he must be an example to be followed to live the "joy of the gospel" that "fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus. Those who accept his offer of salvation are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and loneliness. With Christ joy is constantly born anew" (E.G.1).
8. United with the great Caritas family throughout the world, we thank God for the gift of the Beatification of Msgr Romero. We greet the Salvadoran people to whom he devoted himself, the members of the Bishops' Conference of El Salvador and those who serve the people from the charity of Christ, together with our prayer, the expression of our solidarity in fraternal love. May the new Blessed One intercede for all of us and may Jesus Christ, our Saviour, continue to grant us the strength of the Holy Spirit.