

Your Holy Friend of the Month

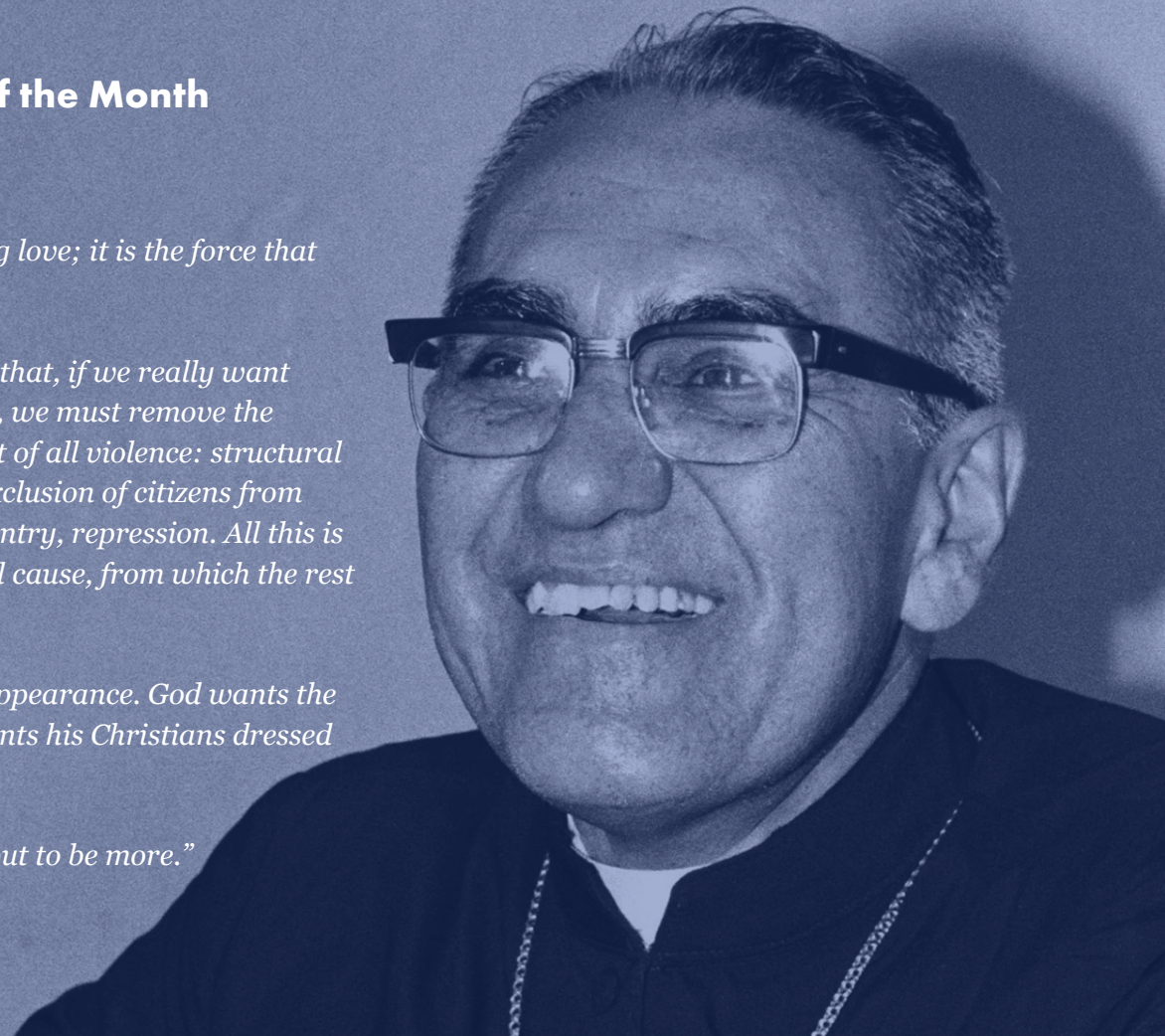
Saint Óscar Romero

“Let us not tire of preaching love; it is the force that will overcome the world.”

“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.”

“God is not satisfied with appearance. God wants the garment of justice. God wants his Christians dressed in love.”

“Aspire not to have more, but to be more.”



Óscar Arnulfo Romero y Galdámez was born on August 15, 1917 in Ciudad Barrios, El Salvador, and was ordained as a priest in 1942. Romero was appointed Archbishop of San Salvador (the capital of El Salvador) in 1977. During his time as Archbishop, Romero became known for his strong stance on social justice and his vocal opposition to his government’s oppressive policies—in particular, their treatment of the urban poor and repression of human rights.

Romero became known largely due to broadcasting his weekly sermons across El Salvador on the Church’s station, YSAX, “except when it was bombed off the air.” He actively denounced violations of the human rights of the most vulnerable people and defended the principles of protecting lives, promoting human dignity, and opposing all forms of violence. On March 24, 1980, Romero was assassinated while saying Mass in a hospital chapel. His death was widely attributed to the government, which was at the time engaged in a brutal civil war with left-wing guerrilla groups.

After his death, Romero became a symbol of resistance for many people in El Salvador and around the world. His legacy continues to inspire human rights activists around the world. He was canonized as a saint by the Catholic Church in 2018, making him both the first Salvadoran saint and the first saint to hail from Central America.

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- Full name & DIN number •
- Current college you are enrolled in and/or where you will study post-release •
- Contact information for college/university where you will study •

March 2023 Newsletter

Thrive For Life

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God’s Project

By R. Lorenz, Jesuit Scholastic at Ciszek Hall,
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Have you ever been in a room where all the lights suddenly go out? At first, you can’t see much. But even at night, there’s enough light from distant sources (like the moon, stars, and city lights) for your eyes to adjust to the dark. However, this would not happen deep underground in a cave, where there is no light at all except what you bring with you. If your flashlight breaks, you would not even be able to see your hands in front of your face! But if you had some spare matches, striking just one would flood the entire cave room with light. The darker the space around you, the more precious and powerful even a small flicker of light can be!

St. Paul’s letter to the Ephesians tells us that something similar happens in our spiritual lives. Here, he is offering encouragement to his friends during a time when being a Christian often led to hardship, persecution, and imprisonment. Look at all the things he says God will give them: wisdom, revelation, knowledge, enlightenment, hope, inheritance, resurrection, power, and fulfillment. That’s quite a list! Imagine how much joy and peace those words would have brought to Paul’s friends! It’s no different today. Who are the people who bring out the best in you? Thank God for them. Who are the people around you who are having a rough time? Ask God to show you how to help them. Because at the end of the day, encouragement is as powerful as a single candle in a dark cave.

The Hope to Which God Has Called You

Ephesians 1: 17-23

I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power.

God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come.

And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Questions for Reflection

- 1 What word, phrase or image caught your attention?
- 2 What feelings and thoughts do you have after reading the text?
- 3 Is there a hope in my life that only the eyes of the heart can see?
- 4 Do I feel the power and strength of God in my life, the power that makes me rise/resurrect again and again in my everyday life?

Daily Ignatian Examen

We invite you to prayerfully reflect:

Presence

Become aware that God's presence is active at each moment of your life, looking at you with love, desirous of speaking directly to your heart. How do you feel at this moment?

Ask

Ask God for the grace to see the ways God is working in your life.

Gratitude

Be grateful. Thank God for the gifts, both big and small of the day. What are you most grateful for today?

Review

Trust that God is with you at each moment of day, during the good and challenging moments. God never abandons you. What were the good moments of today? What were the greatest challenges of today?

Respond

You are not stuck. Tomorrow is a new day. Ask God to give you the grace to be the loving and generous person you were created to be. What can you do tomorrow to be more generous and loving?

Conclude with the Sign of the Cross.

Salt of the Earth and Light of the World

Matthew 5: 1-2,13-16

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

“You are the salt of the earth;

but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored?

It is no longer good for anything,

But is thrown out and trampled under foot.

“You are the light of the world.

A city built on a hill cannot be hid.

No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket,

but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house.

In the same way, let your light shine before others,

so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

Questions for Reflection

1 What is the salt that gives flavor to my life?

2 What flavors do I bring into other people's lives? Do I provide sweetness or sourness?

3 What are the lights that shine in my life?

4 Do my deeds and relationships bring light into the world around me?

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, Who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name.

Thy Kingdom come. Thy Will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hallowed Be Thy Name

By D. Park, Jesuit Scholastic at Ciszek Hall, Fordham University

This month, we look at the words “Hallowed be Thy Name.” Simply put, they mean, “God, your name is most Holy and Glorious!” What is so important about this?

Knowing a person's name is the beginning of all relationships. Our God is not some nameless God. Our God gave us His name. God gave us His name so that we can get to know Him and have a relationship with Him.

In the Bible, God gives us His name in numerous moments so that we can learn more about Him. For example, God appeared to Moses as a burning bush at Mount Horeb introducing Himself as “the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” This is a very gentle introduction, where God presents Himself as a familial God.

Still, Moses asked, “If I now come to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,’ they are going to ask me, ‘What's this God's name?’ What am I supposed to say to them?” God said to Moses, “I Am Who I Am... This is my name forever; this is how all generations will remember me.” (Ex 3:13-15). God's name is “I am who I am”, or YHWH in Hebrew writing, a mysterious name. No surprise, right? God is a living mystery! God is both giving us his name and remaining a mystery. God wants to start a relationship with each one of us, while He invites us to seek Him and make the effort to get to know Him.

To God, we are more than strangers, for we are God's children. Through Jesus, we call God our heavenly Father. As our Father, God promised to save us and be with us forever! We remember all of this when we say the words, “Hallowed be Thy Name.”