

**STATEMENT OF THE U.S. ROMERO CENTENNIAL COMMISSION
ON THE 37TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS MARTYRDOM**

As we mark another anniversary of the March 24, 1980 assassination—and martyrdom—of Archbishop Oscar A. Romero of El Salvador, we are gladdened by news from the Vatican that his canonization may be drawing near.

2017 is also the Oscar Romero Centennial Year because it marks 100 years since his birth on August 15, 1917 and it provides, therefore, great occasion to commemorate the life of this great American saint. In the words of Cardinal Angelo Amato, the Prefect for the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, Romero “belongs to the holiness of the American Church”—meaning that he belongs to all the Americas. “Blessed Oscar Romero belongs to this mighty wind of holiness that blows on the American continent, the land of love and faithfulness to the good news of the Gospel.”

Lord Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury has called Romero, “A saint for the whole people of God” and a sign of our “ecumenical future.”

Therefore, we call to the whole Church and particularly to the churches in America, to reflect, pray and to honor his legacy in this Romero Centennial Year.

- We applaud efforts already underway and salute the 30th Annual, Centennial Edition of the **“Romero Days” Conference** to be held at the University of Notre Dame’s Kellogg Institute March 24-28, 2017. The “Romero Days” conference will provide the academic and intellectual keel for the spiritual reflections that we feel need to follow in the course of the year.
- We call upon Catholics and all whose spirituality includes praying for the intercession of saints to **pray the Romero Novena** (attached), created by the Church in El Salvador to highlight the deep spirituality that underlay Archbishop Romero’s bold and prophetic denunciations. We propose that the faithful pray the Novena starting on August 6, the Feast of the Transfiguration (El Salvador’s patronal feast), running up through August 15, the Romero Centennial.
- Finally, we call on the Church to commemorate Archbishop Romero in a special manner on **All Saints’ Day 2017** with special remembrances and liturgies to honor his memory and close out the Centennial reflections and celebrations.

-THE ARCHBISHOP OSCAR ROMERO U.S. CENTENNIAL COMMISSION-

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**NOVENA OF THE MARTYR
BLESSED OSCAR ROMERO
ARCHBISHOP OF SAN SALVADOR**

ACT OF LOVE TO GOD

I believe faithfully and truly in the Mystery of the Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, three distinct persons and one true God, in whom I firmly trust to obtain the perfection of the pain of having offended His Most Holy Majesty, through the merits of My Lord Jesus Christ, those of His Blessed Mother and those of my glorious advocate Blessed Oscar Romero; I entreat the Lord to always preserve in me this living faith, to grant me the forgiveness of my sins, provide for my needs, and for what I ask in this Novena, if it is for His honor and for the good of my soul. If not, may I live obediently in His holy will as it best behooves me. Amen.

PREPARATORY PRAYER FOR EACH DAY

Glorious Blessed Oscar Romero, we turn to you, confident of your intercession. We are drawn to you with a special devotion and we know that our supplications will be more pleasing to God our Lord, if you, who are so beloved of Him, present them to Him. Your charity, an admirable reflection of God's own, compels you to succor all misery, to console all sorrow and to gratify all desires and needs, if it is to be of benefit to our souls. Look, then, upon our miseries and sorrows, our labors and needs, our good desires, and help us to assure ourselves more and more of our eternal salvation with the practice of good works and the imitation of your virtues. And, in particular, we ask you to obtain for us from God the special grace that, by this devout Novena, we confidently hope to receive. Amen.

FINAL PRAYER FOR EACH DAY

God the Father of all men and women, who has given us in your Martyr Bishop Oscar Romero, a faithful and zealous Pastor, fervent lover of your Church and in her in a special way, the poor and the needy, grant that we may know how to live according to the Gospel. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

FIRST DAY

Begin with the preparatory prayer for each day.

By the generosity with which your Bishop Oscar Romero responded to God's call, recognizing the will of God with living faith always and in everything, I entreat you, in addition to the particular grace of this Novena, to grant me to be always faithful to your commands with a readiness and generosity similar to his, so that the faith received at Baptism will continuously grow and mature in my soul. Amen.

Petition ... Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory. Conclude with the final prayer for each day.

SECOND DAY

Begin with the preparatory prayer for each day.

O Lord, who always hears the supplications of your saints; today we address you through the Glorious Martyr Oscar Romero to petition with faith and confidence for all the needs of Our Mother Church, that she may ever hold fast in the fulfillment of your will. Also, Lord, we pray for the sick who should invoke in faith the name of your Glorious Martyr Oscar Romero.

Petition ... Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory. Conclude with the final prayer for each day.

THIRD DAY

Begin with the preparatory prayer for each day.

By the unyielding hope that your Martyr Bishop Oscar Romero persevered in throughout his life, trusting fully in your paternal providence, I humbly implore you, in addition to the particular grace of this Novena, to grant me never to lose heart before the adversities of life, but rather, animated by the hope of Heaven, to live always confident of your merciful love. Amen.

Petition ... Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory. Finish with the final sentence for every day.

FOURTH DAY

Begin with the preparatory prayer for each day.

By the burning charity that your Martyr Bishop Oscar Romero felt toward the poorest of the poor, I beseech you grant me the particular grace of this Novena, and that my heart may be inflamed, more and more every day, by the divine love that burns in you, and in which you long to see all men and women consumed and purified. Amen.

Petition ... Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory. Conclude with the final prayer for each day.

FIFTH DAY

Begin with the preparatory prayer for each day.

By that inextinguishable zeal that consumed the soul of your Martyr Bishop Oscar Romero in favor of the spiritual and temporal good of his beloved flock, to the point of sacrificing his life for them, I humbly pray that in addition to the particular grace of this Novena, you grant that I be more concerned for my spiritual welfare and the salvation of others. Amen.

Petition ... Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory. Conclude with the final prayer for each day.

SIXTH DAY

Begin with the preparatory prayer for each day.

By the love of work that characterized your Martyr Bishop Oscar Romero in all his occupations, however ordinary and tedious they might be, I humbly beg you, Lord, that besides the particular grace of this Novena, that you grant me a great spirit of faith, to see in the use of the present moment the most effective means of seeking the glory of God, the salvation of souls and my own sanctification. Amen.

Petition ... Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory. Conclude with the final prayer for each day.

SEVENTH DAY

Begin with the preparatory prayer for each day.

By the admirable constancy and strength with which your Martyr Bishop Oscar Romero bore, first vicariously through the others and then in his own body, the horrible contempt of his own kind, in addition to the suffering of isolation and impotence to arrest the evil around him, I beg you humbly that in addition to the particular grace of this Novena, you may grant me to accept with my eyes fixed on you, my God, all the sorrows and difficulties of life. Amen.

Petition ... Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory. Conclude with the final prayer for each day.

EIGHTH DAY

Begin with the preparatory prayer for each day.

By that pious devotion that your Martyr Bishop Oscar Romero always professed to the Blessed Virgin, I ardently beseech you that besides the particular grace of this Novena, you may grant me to conduct myself, always and in everything, as your loving son, in order to merit one day the joy of being presented by Her before your court, to enjoy your company forever in Heaven. Amen.

Petition ... Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory. Conclude with the final prayer for each day.

DAY NINE

Begin with the preparatory prayer for each day.

By that fervent love that your Martyr Bishop Oscar Romero professed for the Holy Eucharist, as the nourishment of his soul in his Masses and Communion, and as the solace of his spirit in his fervent adorations before the Sacred Tabernacle, I beg you, in addition to the special grace of this Novena, grant me that may I grow more and more devoted to the Blessed Sacrament, and to prepare my heart every day to better receive it as to gain the maximum profit. Amen.

Petition ... Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory. Conclude with the final prayer for each day.