



A prayer in celebration of the canonization of St. Archbishop Oscar Romero. St. Romero reminds us in his homilies, and in his actions, that Jesus stands always with those who suffer from poverty, injustice, violence, and hunger.

### **A Prayer of Oscar Romero**

It helps, now and then, to step back and take a long view.  
The Kingdom is not only beyond our efforts,  
it is even beyond our vision.  
We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction  
of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work.  
Nothing we do is complete,  
which is a way of saying that the Kingdom always lies beyond us.  
No statement says all that could be said.  
No prayer fully expresses our faith.  
No confession brings perfection.  
No pastoral visit brings wholeness.  
No program accomplishes the Church's mission.  
No set of goals and objectives includes everything.  
This is what we are about.  
We plant the seeds that one day will grow.  
We water seeds already planted,  
knowing that they hold future promise.  
We lay foundations that will need further development.  
We provide yeast that produces effects far beyond our capabilities.  
We cannot do everything,  
and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that.  
This enables us to do something,  
and to do it very well.  
It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way,  
an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest.  
We may never see the end results,  
but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker.  
We are workers, not master builders;  
ministers, not messiahs.  
We are prophets of a future that is not our own. Amen.

*This prayer was composed by Bishop Ken Untener of Saginaw, drafted for a homily by Cardinal John Dearden in Nov. 1979 for a celebration of departed priests. As a reflection on the anniversary of the martyrdom of Bishop Romero, Bishop Untener included in a reflection book a passage titled "The mystery of the Romero Prayer." The mystery is that the words of the prayer are attributed to Oscar Romero, but they were never spoken by him.*

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