

PARISH OF THE ENGLISH MARTYRS Goring Way

26.04.2020

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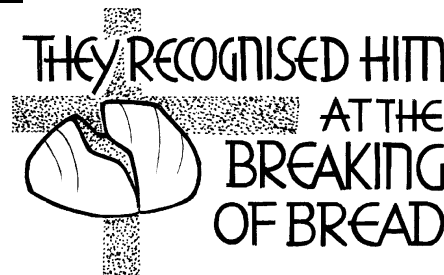
Deacon Gary Bevans 01903 503514

Arundel & Brighton Diocesan Trust is a Registered Charity No: 252878

Third Sunday of Easter

Masses will be celebrated without a congregation

Saturday	25 th	Mary Matthews RIP
Sunday	26 th	Margaret Dunne RIP
Monday	27 th	The Parish
Tuesday	28 th	Brian Hodson RIP
Wednesday	29 th	Lottie-Mae RIP
Thursday	30 th	Elizabeth Brooks RIP
Friday	1 st	Deceased Members of the Murphy & Staunton Families
Saturday	2 nd	Margaret Dunne RIP
Sunday	3 rd	Deceased Members of the Gravatt Family



TODAY'S READINGS: Acts 2:14. 22-23. Peter 1:17-21. Luke 24.13-35

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS: Acts 2:14.36-41. 1 Peter 2:20-25. John 10:1-10

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS: Rose Little, Albert Davitt, Lelia Murray, Nicholas & Mary Murphy, Anne Steere, Anthony Canneaux, Lawrence Brownlee, Margaret Birch, Lita Yong, Patrick Ryan, Brenda Peazold, Mary Wessel, Gina Palermo, Elizabeth Hoskins, Joan Cutmore, Christine Watson, Gordon Milne, Alfred Deacon, Roni Horstead, Ronnie Tyler, Jenny Begley, Bill Hogg, Breda Schlimgen, Michaela Finn, Winifred Lyons, Yvette Allen, Kerry McStravick, Lydia Van Melsen

2. THOSE WHO HAVE DIED RECENTLY: **FATHER GERALD FLOOD**, Bernard Joyce, Mike Begley, Monica Day, Bernard Stone, Roy Jacobs, Margaret Dunne, Anne Wesley, John Field, Nick Brown, Linda Dixon-Smith. *May they rest in peace and rise in glory*

3. GIFT AID ENVELOPES: Worry not if you have run out of envelopes! The new envelopes are in the church and awaiting the weekend that we can all return to Mass.

4. We are now able to put each Sunday's pre-recorded Mass on our Parish website – www.english-martyrs.co.uk – while the present restrictions last. We hope this will be of some help. Please pass on the message. The website will carry the recording of each Sunday's Mass for several days. The Mass is being celebrated in the Good Shepherd Chapel as there would be too much echo in the main church. The readers are recorded in their own homes to comply with the safety measures. This Sunday the readers are Andy & Sandy Curd. We are grateful to them and to Dermot Casey who is doing the filming and recording and to Christina Iden who is operating the website.

FATHER LIAM SAYS: On 24th March, before Lockdown began – Bishop Richard announced that Chatsmore School was to be placed under the patronage of St Oscar Romero. 24th March was the 40th Anniversary of Archbishop Romero's murder. Many years ago our local Catholic High School was named after Blessed Robert Southwell – one of the Forty Martyrs of England and Wales who were canonised in 1970 by Pope Paul VI. On 25th October this year we will be celebrating the Golden Jubilee of their canonisation. Since our parish is under the patronage of the English Martyrs, perhaps we should mark it in some way. The forty canonised were but a fraction of the 400 or so who laid down their lives for the faith in the turbulent 16th and 17th Centuries. For some years our school has been simply called Chatsmore Catholic High School. It is great news that once again its patron is to be a great Christian Martyr who hopefully will be a great inspiration to us all.

Oscar Romero was Archbishop of San Salvador – the capital of El Salvador – the smallest Republic in the Americas – no bigger than Wales. He was assassinated by government forces as he said Mass for the mother of a friend of his a few days before Palm Sunday 1980. He was canonised on 14th October 2018. The formal re-dedication of Chatsmore School will take place around that time. October could well be a month of celebrations!

Romero was born in 1917 and became assistant bishop of San Salvador in 1970. His country was plagued by social unrest resulting from oppression and cruel injustice enforced by a military junta. Romero was not noted for his progressive thinking in social matters and was regarded by the regime as a safe pair of hands. He became Archbishop in 1977 at a time of increasing repression and tension. Political violence and suppression of all forms of protest was escalating and the stance of the Archbishop quickly altered. He became more and more outspoken in his condemnation of violence on the part of the government and on the part of the oppressed. Violence was to be found on both sides and those murdered by the junta were numbered in their thousands. He fearlessly defended the poor but never championed violence.

In Washington, the Carter administration was alarmed by the growing disorder in El Salvador and was concerned that things were getting out of control. The U S was considering giving 5.7 million dollars – a not inconsiderable sum in those days – in Military Aid to the El Salvadorian junta. Romero was alarmed and wrote to President Carter in February 1980 – conscious that Carter was noted for his rhetoric on human rights: 'Because you are Christian and because you have shown that you want to defend human rights I venture to set forth for you my pastoral point of view in regard to this news and to make a specific request. I am very concerned that the United States is planning to further El Salvador's arms race by sending military equipment and advisors to train three El Salvadorian battalions in logistics, communications and intelligence. If this information from the paper is correct instead of favouring greater justice and peace in El Salvador, your government's contribution will undoubtedly sharpen the injustice and the repression inflicted on the organised people whose struggle has been for respect for their most basic human rights. As a Salvadorian and Archbishop of San Salvador I have an obligation to see that faith and justice reign in my country. I ask you, if you truly want to defend human rights, to forbid that military aid be given to the Salvadorian government. I ask you also to guarantee that your government will not intervene directly or indirectly with military, diplomatic or other pressures in determining the destiny of the Salvadorian people.' Romero went on to assure Carter that it would 'be unjust and deplorable for foreign powers to intervene and frustrate the Salvadorian people, to repress them and keep them from deciding the economic and political course that our nation should follow'.

The Archbishop read out the letter in the course of his Sunday homily in his Cathedral on the day he sent it to President Carter. By this time there was a real reign of terror, women and children were being murdered, people were tortured sometimes for weeks before they were killed. Many priests were killed because they championed the struggle of the poor. The first priest that Oscar Romero ordained, Octavio Ortiz, was conducting a weekend retreat for 40 young men and he and four others were murdered. Father Ortiz's head had been blasted off his body, riddled with bullets and run over by a tank. The government claimed that the retreatants had opened fire on the National Guard from the roof of the building and they arranged the bodies there so that the compliant press could photograph them. Oscar Romero denounced the outrage. Cradling the crushed head of the priest he said: 'Octavio my son, you have completed your mission, you have kept the faith.'

Romero said: 'To give life to the poor, one must give from his own life. A Church that does not stir up any conscience, a gospel that does not unsettle, a Word of God that does not get under your skin, that doesn't touch the real sin of the society in which it is being proclaimed, what gospel in that? Let us be firm in defending our rights but let us do so with love in our hearts. For if we act with love we are seeking the conversion of sinners.'

He was a powerful exponent of Liberation Theology.

There will be more about Archbishop Oscar Romero next week.

I am indebted to Kevin Clarke's book 'Oscar Romero'

*May God bless you,
Fr. Liam.*

THE PRAYER OF ARCHBISHOP 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 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 not our own.
Amen

THE MUSINGS OF A MODERN DAY PILGRIM

We all have a story, in fact probably many stories we could tell that would bring sense, colour, coherence and meaning to the lives we live. We are all on a journey with God whether we are aware of it or not. We can choose to engage with Him and become an active participant in that journey or travel on, simply allowing it to just happen to us.

As we considered this Sunday's Gospel reading about the disciples encounter with the risen Lord on the road to Emmaus, we found ourselves reminded again of our pilgrimage walk along the Camino de Santiago, the encounters we had and the miracles we witnessed.

This is a story about Kenji, a delightful, diminutive, round and wise Japanese journalist from Tokyo whom we met walking the Camino. It was a very hot day, one of those life sapping and dusty days where the Camino route leads you along roads, next to motor-ways and along gravel paths. Around mid-morning we found ourselves heading out of the Rioja region in Northern Spain heading towards the Meseta, a dry, arid but stunningly beautiful plateau between Burgos and Leon. It was my turn to carry the cross and this was always a time to reflect and focus in a different way on the pilgrimage we were on. Dermot was walking ahead having an animated, evangelizing chat with a lively but troubled fellow pilgrim. I suddenly heard a man's voice calling out from behind me asking if he could talk to me. Kenji. He didn't speak English very well at all so our common language was Spanish. He wanted to ask me about the cross. He was full of questions about Spiritual Faith, Christianity, Jesus, the Church, the cross and more! So we walked and talked until it was lunch-time. He made it very clear that he was a Buddhist and had been travelling the world walking different pilgrimage routes on a spiritual quest. He had walked this particular Camino route twice previously and had felt compelled that year to return again and to take a side route to another shrine along the way. We ended up journeying together for 5 days, shared carrying the cross, had some good laughs and became good friends. He plied us in the evenings with Japanese Saki which he had brought with him and he wrote the Japanese ciphers for God, heaven and the Camino for me. The cipher for God also means, heavenly universe, pray and sacred. The one for the Camino also meant God ever present.

We parted ways on day 6 having exchanged contact details and gifts and Kenji walked on to his shrine. We did not see him again after that. However, 3 weeks following our return home to England we received an email from him. He told us that his encounter with the cross, our conversations and our time spent with him along with our other Camino family friends had had a profound effect on him. So much so that on eventually returning home to Tokyo he had made the decision to become a Christian, to give his life to Jesus and was going to seek out a church he could make his spiritual home.

Reading this email was incredibly moving and so very humbling because Kenji in his own way had also enriched our lives and was a beautiful treasure found along the Camino. We never know how the Holy Spirit is working in other people's lives, where they are on their spiritual journey or what our Father in heaven is desiring for that person when we encounter them. We are though called by Jesus to share the truth of God's love for us, His desire for relationship with us and the truth of the cross, crucifixion and resurrection and the new life this brings to all of us. We learnt that despite ourselves and our trepidation and uncertainty if we say yes and step out for God, the Holy Spirit WILL use us in the most powerful ways to bring people into relationship with Him.

Did Kenji's heart burn within him like the disciples hearts did on the road to Emmaus, as he carried the cross? Did he only come to recognize this when he was able to open his heart to it and and looked back at the journey he had been on?

Have you maybe ever had an encounter with Jesus in another person and only recognized its truth after the event as you looked back and remembered the encounter? Have you, like the disciples ever found yourself lost in grief, and pain and maybe shock at events and actions that you have been unable to see Jesus when he was with you? Have you been able to sit and take time to look back with his help and recognize where Jesus was walking with you in the midst of this difficult time?

Does the breaking and receiving of the bread, Christ's body, at Mass open you to Jesus and all he desires for you?

"Earth's crammed with heaven,
and every common bush afire with God,
but only he who sees takes off his shoes;
The rest sit round it and pluck blackberries."

Elizabeth Barret Browning

Keep safe.

Jane-Anne and Dermot J