

Archbishop Romero Trust

PO Box 70227, London E9 9BR

romerotrust@gmail.com

14th Trustees' Annual Report - Year Ending April 2018.

The Archbishop Romero Trust - also known as the Romero Trust - is a registered charity (number 1110069). It is governed by a Trust Deed executed on 6th September 2004 amended by a deed of variation dated 9th June 2005. The purposes of the Trust are: a) to advance the education of the public in the life and works of Oscar Romero, the martyred Archbishop of San Salvador, and his principles of human rights, social justice and the relief of poverty; b) to advance religion by promoting liturgical celebrations including commemorations of the life of Oscar Romero and prayer for the cause of his beatification and canonisation; and c) the relief of poverty and the promotion of human rights and social justice (as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and subsequent United Nations Conventions and Declarations and in "Gaudium et Spes", the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World of the Second Vatican Council) in Latin America in memory of Oscar Romero.

The trustees are Dr Julian Filochowski CMG, OBE (Chair), Mr Stephen Davies (Moderator/Vice-Chair), Ms Clare Dixon OBE (Secretary), Rev. Richard Carter, Mrs Jan Graffius, Sister Eileen McLoughlin, Rt. Rev. John Rawsthorne, Mr David Skidmore OBE, and Rev. Frank Turner SJ. Mr Stephen Lloyd is the Trust's Honorary Treasurer, Ms Madge Rondo is the Trust's Honorary Membership Secretary and Ms Tania Dalton is the editor of 'Romero News', the Trust's twice-yearly newsletter. The mandates of the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer run until September 2019.

The Trust is honoured to have Archbishop Leo Cushley, Sister Maria Julia Garcia, Very Rev Dr John Hall, Sister Pamela Hussey SHCJ, Archbishop Diarmuid Martin, Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Archbishop John Sentamu, Mgr Rafael Urrutia and Lord Rowan Williams as its Patrons.

Cardinal Keith O'Brien, an energetic Patron of the Trust until his retirement as Archbishop of St Andrews and Edinburgh five years ago, sadly died in March 2018. R.I.P.

The Trust has no offices of its own; but the registered address is PO Box 70227, London E9 9BR and 57 Lyme Grove, London E9 6PX.

The trustees met on 29th June 2017, 28th September 2017, and 9th January 2018 to approve budgets and project grants and to oversee the Trust's annual programme of activities. CAFOD generously provided hospitality for these Trust meetings. In making decisions and exercising their powers the trustees have had due regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance.

The central focus of the year was the centenary of the birth of Oscar Arnulfo Romero on 15th August 1917 in Ciudad Barrios, El Salvador. The Trust organised a National Mass in St George's Cathedral, Southwark, on Saturday 12th August 2017, to celebrate the hundredth birthday. Archbishop Peter Smith presided, and the homily was given by Archbishop Vincenzo Paglia, the Postulator for Archbishop Romero's Cause who travelled from Rome to take part. The Embassy of El Salvador collaborated in the event which included a reception and a film which was shown in the Amigo Hall afterwards. BBC Radio 4's early-morning 'Prayer for the Day' featured Archbishop Romero in the week between August 12th and 18th in a series of reflections given by Julian Filochowski, the Trust's Chair.

The second highlight of the centenary year was a great ecumenical liturgical celebration which took the form of a Special Romero Evensong arranged by the Dean and Chapter at Westminster Abbey. It was co-sponsored by the Trust together with Churches Together in England, CAFOD and Christian Aid. It took place on Saturday September 23rd with a congregation of 1300 people, together with a distinguished sanctuary party of Catholic, Anglican, Orthodox and Free Church leaders from England and Wales, including the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster and the Papal Nuncio. They were able to listen to a highly-acclaimed sermon from Lord Rowan Williams, a Patron of the Trust, and to hear the first performance of a stunning musical work, 'A Special Appeal', commissioned by the Abbey for this specific occasion from composer James MacMillan. The anthem draws together Romero's words from the eve of his martyrdom with an extract from Psalm 31. The BBC recorded the Abbey Service and it was broadcast on Radio 3 on October 25th and 29th.

The Radio 4 Sunday Morning Service on September 24th was also arranged in conjunction with the Trust. It came from Liverpool

Metropolitan Cathedral - with a special non-Eucharistic Service marking both the Romero Centenary and the Cathedral's Golden Jubilee. The Romero Trustee, Bishop John Rawsthorne, gave the homily.

National Justice and Peace Network adopted Oscar Romero as its first Patron during the principal liturgical celebration at its Annual Conference at Swanwick (July 21-23). A clear Romero theme ran through the whole Conference which included a performance of the Rise Theatre play and a Romero Workshop.

For Romero Week 2018, March 14th-24th, the Trust invited Dr Ruben Zamora, former Salvadoran Ambassador to the United Nations in New York, to travel to Britain to speak at a series of public events. These included an afternoon Reception and discussion with MPs and Peers at the House of Commons on Wednesday March 14th. This was organised by Conservative MP, Sir Peter Bottomley, and Labour MP, Mike Kane, to mark the 40th anniversary of British parliamentarians' 1978 nomination of Archbishop Romero for the 1979 Nobel Peace Prize.

On the following day Dr Zamora addressed a lunch meeting in Cardiff for members of the Welsh Assembly and their guests. This was followed by a public meeting in Cardiff that same evening, which formed part of a 'South Wales Romero Festival'. On subsequent days Dr Zamora addressed meetings in Cambridge, Liverpool and Leeds with 'Romero and the Social Challenges of El Salvador' as the theme of his talk. A webinar was organised at lunchtime on Friday March 16th, in conjunction with CAFOD, through which he addressed a substantial on-line audience across the country. The theme chosen for the National Ecumenical Service in St Martin-in-the-Fields on Saturday March 17th at which Dr Zamora gave the Address was 'Peace - the Product of Justice and Love'.

On Saturday March 24th, the 38th anniversary of Oscar Romero's martyrdom, taking advantage of the Special Indult granted to St George's Cathedral in Southwark by the Vatican's Congregation for Divine Worship, a Special Romero Mass was celebrated at which Archbishop Peter Smith presided and Bishop John Rawsthorne preached.

As in previous years, local, diocesan and ecumenical events took place in Scotland, Wales and England during the month of March. The Trust provided speakers, liturgy outlines, and literature for many of these occasions. All these Romero Week activities were directly in furtherance

of the Trust's charitable objectives and generated substantial media coverage.

The texts of the different sermons and addresses delivered during the year were placed on the Trust website to enable a wider audience in Britain and across the world to have the opportunity to study the various insightful and inspiring presentations.

Throughout the year, the Trust has worked closely with Rise Theatre, a professional, not-for-profit, Christian theatre company, who have written a play, *Romero - Heartbeat of El Salvador*, aimed at schools, parishes and Church groups. The Trust has promoted and publicised the production and helped secure funding from charitable trusts for some of the performances. The play, with a standard 'adult' version together with a puppet version for primary schools, has been very warmly received in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland where it has been put on in school halls, church buildings and community centres. The 3-person cast and their colleagues have worked on a shoestring budget and after twelve months have now completed their commitments. The many requests for extra performances, which they were unable to accept and fulfil, have led to the play being filmed and recorded during a special performance at Worth Abbey for release on DVD - with financial support from the Trust and others. It is hoped that this will be available as an educational resource in the coming year, with the possibility eventually of being able to watch it on-line via the Trust's website.

At the beginning of 2017 the Trust began a cooperation with film producers at Swiss-Italian Television who have made a superb 75-minute film on Romero, entitled 'The Claim - Archbishop Romero, his People and Pope Francis'. It is in Spanish with English subtitles. In the view of the Trust it is the best film available which recounts the story of Archbishop Romero, his ministry, his martyrdom and the rocky road to canonisation. The film is not yet on general release, or available on DVD, because TV contracts are still being sought. Nevertheless, the Trust was given special permission to show the film to non-paying audiences in Britain during the centenary year and in the run-up to the canonisation ceremony - which will be in Rome in October 2018. A special British premier was arranged at the Curzon Cinema in Shaftsbury Avenue, London, for 100 invitees on Saturday 1st July. Subsequently the Trust organised showings in Westminster, Southwark, Stamford Hill, Boscombe, Cardiff, Durham, Harrogate, Preston and Wrexham. In conjunction with SCIAF, Scottish

screenings took place in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Lochgilphead and Dundee. The Trust subsequently facilitated a showing in Brussels to SIGNIS, the World Catholic Association for Communication.

A third highly successful Romero Trust pilgrimage to El Salvador took place in November 2017. Organised by Anthony Coles in conjunction with the Trust, thirty pilgrims left England on November 13th and returned twelve days later after visits to the martyrdom sites with liturgies organised each day at the Centro Loyola, where the pilgrims were accommodated, or at the Holy Places associated with Blessed Oscar Romero and the less familiar martyrs of El Salvador. The pilgrimage recorded a small financial surplus for the Trust.

During 2017-18 the Trust assisted the Postulator of Romero's Cause in the fundraising efforts necessary to cover the costs associated with the canonisation. Copies of the *Positio Super Miro* document, which relates to the authenticity of the miracle associated with Archbishop Romero, were made available through the Trust to thank academic benefactors who made contributions for the work of the canonisation office in Rome.

The Trust has frequent postings on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. These postings offer links to the Trust's website whenever appropriate. There are approximately 950 members of the Romero Trust Facebook Group, around 1050 followers on Twitter and over 100 on Instagram - representing a substantial increase on the previous year. Engagement with the Trust's social media was particularly active during this anniversary year, reinforced as the year came to a close by the announcement of the canonisation date.

The 2017 Archbishop Romero Memorial Lecture, scheduled to have been given in Oxford in November 2017 by the Peruvian theologian Gustavo Gutierrez OP, unfortunately had to be cancelled due to Gustavo's ill-health.

The Trust agreed to sponsor a series of intergenerational conversations within the Catholic community on action to combat poverty and advocacy for justice and peace, 'People, Faith and Justice: A Dialogue'. A grant was secured from Porticus to finance the process and to prepare materials for those attending the Synod of Bishops on Young People which will meet in Rome in October 2018.

The 20th and 21st issues of Romero News, edited by Tania Dalton, were distributed to some eight hundred 'Friends of Romero' in July 2017 and January 2018, both in print and electronically.

With the assistance of the Carmelite Friars in Britain, the Trust once again made a grant of US\$5000 (£3722) towards the running costs of the Divine Providence Cancer Hospital and a separate grant of US\$2712 towards the cost of the reliquary in the chapel there. Thanks to an award of £2500 from St James's Place and a contribution of £750 from Old St Paul's Church in Edinburgh and £500 from an individual donor, further grants totalling US\$4819 were made towards the costs of the palliative care programmes. With earmarked donations received from supporters, the Trust also made a small grant of US\$2100 (£1593) to the Fe y Alegría School in La Chacra, one of the poorest sectors of San Salvador. All these grants contributed directly to the public good.

The Trust has no salaried staff members and relies on the voluntary work of its Trustees and other benefactors. The bankers for the Trust are the Cooperative Bank plc. For the year ending April 2018 total income came to £56,197. Leaving aside restricted income earmarked for the Intergenerational Justice project and other specific programmes, the unrestricted income of the Trust totalled £24,535. This was matched by expenditure of £29,202, giving a deficit for the year in unrestricted funds of £4,667. As a result, £16,075 will be carried forward to 2018/19. The balance sheet shows the figure for total funds held of £30,132, slightly higher than last year. The Trust needs to hold reserves in order to be able to continue to meet its obligations and deliver its programme of activities even in the event of a delay or shortfall in funding. The trustees estimate that reserves of not less than £5,000 are required to provide adequate mitigation against such risks; this estimate is reviewed as the programme of activities develops. Reserves at 5th April 2018 are comfortably in excess of the policy requirement. The relevant financial information is to be lodged with the Charity Commission.

Julian Filochowski
Chair, Archbishop Romero Trust

June 2018