



GATHERING PRAYER

Anniversary to remember the Martyrs of the Universidad Centroamerica, EL Salvador 15 November 2018

Tomorrow we honour the memory of six Jesuits, their housekeeper and her daughter, who were slain by elite Salvadoran forces on this day in 1989. The mission of the UCA was to be a force for positive change in the face of the country's long civil war and its myriad of related social ills. Today we gather to ponder the positive change for good that we can effect as members of the wider Loreto enterprise.

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WE GATHER ...

We gather as Mary Ward's circle of friends to ponder the breadth and depth of our network in this part of our fragile world.

We gather during this month of remembering to ponder where we have come from and pray for guidance about where we are heading.

We gather across these Spring days
to ponder our corporate experience of growth and new life.

WE LISTEN ...

Text attributed to St Oscar Romero

It helps now and then to step back and take the long view.
The Kingdom of God 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 another way of saying that the kingdom
always lies beyond us.

No statement says all that could be said.

No prayers fully express our faith.

No confession brings perfection.

No pastoral visit brings wholeness.

No program accomplishes the Church's (*the Institute's!*) mission.

This is what we are about.

We plant 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 not our own. Amen.

WE RESPOND

The Lord secures justice for the oppressed,
gives food to the hungry.

The Lord sets captives free.

May we serve our God with justice.

The Lord gives sight to the blind.

The Lord raises up those who were bowed down;
the Lord loves the just.

The Lord protects strangers.

May we serve our God with justice.

The fatherless and the widow he sustains,
but the way of the wicked he thwarts.

The Lord shall reign forever;
your God, O Zion, through all generations.

May we serve our God with justice.

WE COMMIT ...

Most loving God, our Friend of all friends:

bless us with a desire to work for your greater glory

bless us with freedom to refer all things to You

bless us with integrity to speak with truth

bless us with a sense of justice in the small and large decisions we make

bless us with joy in our friendships

bless us with shared hope with our colleagues across the Mary Ward network.

We make this and all our prayers in Your Most Holy Name,
now and for ever.

Amen.

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