# LIVING FAITH
# EASTER SUNDAY

ROMAN CATHOLIC
ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. JOHN'S

## THE GOSPEL FOR TODAY

**John 20:1-9**

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.' Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went towards the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead.

## REFLECTION ON THE GOSPEL

Who was the first evangelizer? Today's Gospel makes it very clear—it was Mary Magdalene! When Mary saw the proof that Jesus had been raised from the dead-- when she saw that the tomb in which Jesus had been buried was now empty and the stone rolled away—she ran to tell Peter and the other disciples.

The angels asked Mary a very important question: "Why do you look for the living among the dead?" Put yourself in front of the angels, in the place where Mary Magdalene stood. Imagine the angel asking you, "Why do you look for the living among the dead?" We all do it. Sometimes we stay in broken relationships too long, and they bring only death. Sometimes we listen to or pass on gossip that only causes the death of someone's reputation or good name. Sometimes we hang on to a bad self-image, knowing that there's no life in it, but unsure where to go next, where to look for help.

Jesus is not in the tomb, He does not dwell among the dead. This is why Mary Magdalene runs away from the tomb and towards the friends of Jesus. She runs to share with them the Good News that life has won out over death. We can be bearers of the same Good News. Every time we share a smile with someone who is hurting, every time we pay a compliment instead of tearing someone down, life wins. Every time we face adversity, but stand up and take a step forward, life wins. Jesus wins.

Be a Mary Magdalene. Run away from the tomb and share the Good News that life has conquered death, and always will.

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*Easter symbols and traditions...Some reflections for families about Easter Eggs as we share them this Easter.*

For Christians, the Easter egg is symbolic of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Painting Easter eggs is an especially beloved tradition in the Orthodox and Eastern Catholic churches where the eggs are dyed red to represent the blood of Jesus Christ that was shed on the cross. Easter eggs are blessed by the priest at the end of the Paschal vigil and distributed to the congregants.

The hard shell of the egg represents the sealed Tomb of Christ, and cracking the shell represents Jesus' resurrection from the dead. Moreover, historically Christians would abstain from eating eggs and meat during Lent, and Easter was the first chance to eat eggs after a long period of abstinence. (Orthodox Christians continue to abstain from eggs during Lent.)

Easter egg hunts and egg rolling are two popular egg-related traditions. An egg hunt involves hiding eggs outside for children to run around and find on Easter morning. Eggs are rolled as a symbolic re-enactment of the rolling away of the stone from Christ's tomb. In the United States, the Easter Egg Roll is an annual event that is held on the White House lawn each Monday after Easter.

Adapted from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/04/02/easter-eggs-history-origin-symbolism-tradition_n_1392054.html

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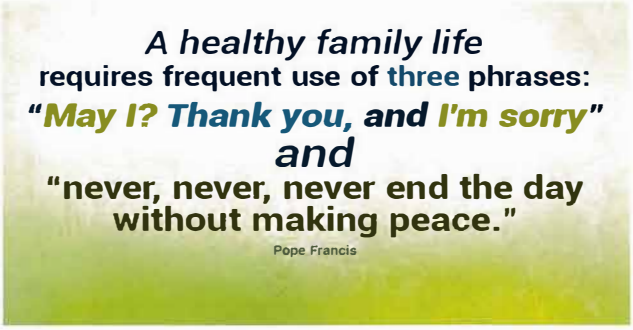
## YOU ASKED...

### Did I hear that Pope Francis is restructuring some of the offices of the Vatican?

The new dicastery (a Vatican department) for the Laity, Family and Life consolidates the work of the previous Pontifical Council for the Laity and the Pontifical Council for the Family.




The new dicastery has responsibility for:

- the promotion of life
- the apostolate of the lay faithful
- the pastoral care of the family and its mission according to God's plan:
    - promote family pastoral ministry
    - protect the dignity and well-being of the family based on the sacrament of marriage
    - promote the rights and responsibility of the family in the Church and in civil society, so that the family institution may be increasingly able to perform its functions in both ecclesial and social contexts
      monitor the activity of the Catholic institutes, associations, movements and organisations, both national and international, which aim to serve the good of the family
    - offer guidelines for courses preparing couples for marriage and for pastoral programmes to support families, with special attention to the poor and the marginalised
      encourage openness of families to adoption and fostering of children and care for the elderly, with a presence also in civil institutions in support of these practices
- the protection and support of human life:
    - support and coordinate activities to encourage responsible procreation and the protection of human life from conception to natural end, bearing in mind the needs of the person in the different phases of development
    - promote and encourage organisations and associations helping women and families to welcome and protect the gift of life, especially in the case of difficult pregnancies, and to prevent recourse to abortion
      support programmes and initiatives intended to help women who have terminated a pregnancy
    - on the basis of Catholic moral doctrine and the teaching of the Church, it will study and promote formation on the main issues of biomedicine and of the law regarding human life

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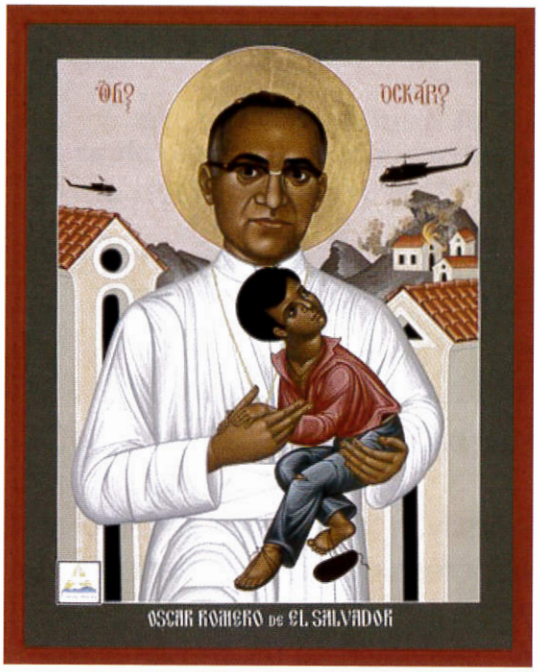
# HOPE AND TRANSFORMATION WITNESS TO THE POWER OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION




**Loving God,**

**Give us the strength,**
**to be humble,**
**to be faithful,**
**to stand with our**
**sisters and brothers.**

**Give us the strength,**
**to be like our**
**brother Oscar,**
**completely committed**
**to Christ.**

**Blessed Oscar Romero**
**Pray for Us.**

**Amen**

**BLESSED OSCAR ROMERO** | 1917-1980
IGSOL.NET/ROMERO

# BLESSED OSCAR ROMERO

Óscar Arnulfo Romero y Galdámez (August 15, 1917 - March 24, 1980) was a prominent Roman Catholic priest in El Salvador during the 1960s and 1970s. He was beatified (declared "blessed" by the Church, moving him closer to sainthood) in 2015. In February 2017, Pope Francis declared that he had been a martyr, someone who lives, suffers and dies for the faith and for love of Christ.

Óscar's father apprenticed him to a carpenter when he was 13, but the young Romero felt a vocation for the Catholic priesthood and left home the following year to enter the seminary. He studied in El Salvador and in Rome and was ordained in 1942.

In his younger years, Óscar was not very critical of the government or the status quo in his country, which became rocked by civil unrest and grave injustice brought against the poor.

Romero said that he owed his change of attitude to his short period of service as bishop of Santiago de María, where he witnessed first-hand the suffering of El Salvador's landless poor. Increasing government violence against socially committed priests and laypersons undermined his trust in the good will of the authorities. The assassination on March 12, 1977, of his long-time friend Jesuit Father Rutilio Grande moved him to become very vocal.

Óscar Romero became Archbishop of San Salvador in 1977. As he spoke out more and more frequently over the following months on behalf of the poor and the victims of repression, he gathered an ever-increasing popular following who crowded into the cathedral to hear him preach or listened to his sermons over YSAX, the archdiocesan radio station.

This led to numerous conflicts, both with the government in El Salvador and within the Catholic Church. After speaking out against U.S. military support for the government of El Salvador, and calling for soldiers to disobey orders to fire on innocent civilians, Archbishop Romero was shot dead while celebrating Mass at the small chapel of the cancer hospital where he lived. It is believed that those who organised his assassination were members of Salvadoran death squads. The date was March 24, 1980.