

John Chrysostom, a great fourth-century preacher in Constantinople, said, "When we suffer anything for Christ's sake, we should do so not only with courage, but even with joy. If we have to go hungry, let us be glad as if we were at a banquet. If we are insulted, let us be elated as though we had been showered with praises. If we lose all we possess, let us consider ourselves the gainers. If we provide for the poor, let us regard ourselves as the recipients. Do not think of the painful effort involved, but of the sweetness of the reward; and above all, remember that your struggles are for the sake of our Lord Jesus."

### *Prayers for Others*

#### *Our Father*

Transform our memory, Lord, so that whenever we encounter suffering for your sake, we will recall all the saints who have gone before us whose courage and faith brought us this far. Amen.

**May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you : wherever he may send you;  
may he guide you through the wilderness : protect you through the storm;  
may he bring you home rejoicing : at the wonders he has shown you;  
may he bring you home rejoicing : once again into our doors.**

## **March 24**

### **Oscar Romero (1917 – 1980)**

Although he began as a conservative archbishop, opposed to the progressive liberation theology that was popular among those seeking to help poor farmers in El Salvador, Oscar Romero was deeply impacted when his friend, a priest, was assassinated as a result of commitment to social justice. Through weekly homilies on national radio, Romero advocated an end to the repression of the people in El Salvador, thus making himself an enemy of the government and the military. He was not successful in ending the violence: more than seventy-five thousand Salvadorans would eventually be killed, one million would leave the country, and another million would be left homeless. Because of his prophetic witness, Romero became a target of assassination. As he was saying Mass on March 24, 1980, he was shot and killed. "A bishop will die," Romero had said, foreseeing his own fate, "but the church of God — the people — will not perish."

O Lord, let my soul rise up to meet you  
as the day rises to meet the sun.

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Come, let us sing to the LORD : let us shout for joy to the Rock of our salvation.

*Song* "Servant Song"

**Unless a seed falls into the ground and dies : it cannot bear fruit or bless others' lives.**

*Psalm 119:34-37*

Give me understanding, and I shall keep your law : I shall keep it with all my heart.

Make me go in the path of your commandments : for that is my desire.

Incline my heart to your decrees : and not to unjust gain.

Turn my eyes from watching what is worthless : give me life in your ways.

**Unless a seed falls into the ground and dies : it cannot bear fruit or bless others' lives.**

Exodus 12:1-14. Mark 9:14-29

**Unless a seed falls into the ground and dies : it cannot bear fruit or bless others' lives.**

Oscar Romero wrote, "It helps, now and then, to step back and take the long view. The Kingdom is not only beyond our efforts: it is beyond our vision. We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is the Lord's work. Nothing we do is complete, which is another way of saying that the Kingdom always lies beyond us. No sermon says all that should 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. That is what we are about. We plant the seeds that one day will grow. We water seeds already planted knowing they hold future promise. We lay foundations that will need further development. We provide yeast that affects 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, 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."

*Prayers for Others*

*Our Father*

Lord, we know the world will kill your prophets. Nevertheless, give us words to convict, to heal, to raise up others for justice, and to offer forgiveness for those who harm us. Amen.

194 *Morning Prayer*

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may he guide you  
may he bring you  
may he bring you



**March 25**

**The Annunciation**

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Come, let us sing t

*Song* "Magnificat

**Here am I, the ser**

*Psalm 119:141-44*

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Your justice is an c  
Trouble and distre  
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The righteousness  
that I may live.

**Here am I, the ser**

Isaiah 7:10-14 L

**Here am I, the ser**

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## March 25

### The Annunciation

On March 25 we remember the special role that Mary plays in the redemption of the world and celebrate the example she is to each of us as disciples of Jesus. When the angel Gabriel visited Mary, she was a teenager in occupied Palestine, as anonymous and apparently insignificant as the billions of people who live and die today in the slums of megacities. But the angel of the Lord called Mary by name and proclaimed that she would carry inside her womb God in flesh. It is a miracle we remember even as we put it into practice: however humble our circumstances, God proposes to live in and through our bodies. As a sign to remind us that anything is possible with our God, we remember that Mary conceived Jesus without the help of any man.

O Lord, let my soul rise up to meet you  
as the day rises to meet the sun.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Come, let us sing to the LORD : let us shout for joy to the Rock of our salvation.

*Song "Magnificat"*

Here am I, the servant of the Lord : let it be to me according to your will.

*Psalm 119:141-44*

I am small and of little account : yet I do not forget your commandments.  
Your justice is an everlasting justice : and your law is the truth.  
Trouble and distress have come upon me : yet your commandments are my  
delight.

The righteousness of your decrees is everlasting : grant me understanding,  
that I may live.

Here am I, the servant of the Lord : let it be to me according to your will.

Isaiah 7:10-14    Luke 1:26-38

Here am I, the servant of the Lord : let it be to me according to your will.