

Maura, Ita, Dorothy and Jean: We Will Remember You

Introduction and Welcome: Betty Cawley, CSJ

Gathering Song – We Will Remember You by Cary Landry

Gathering Prayer

God our hope, bless this community which has come together to remember our beloved martyrs of El Salvador, Maura, Ita, Dorothy and Jean.

God our creator, you have promised us life and so we come to you without fear and full of your confidence.

God our redeemer, you have given us the example of these martyrs so that we can find the way to fullness of life in this world.

God our strength, you have promised us everything we need to follow you on the path of truth and justice so that we can go forth from this place with the assurance that you accompany us on the way.

May the God who created us, the God who redeems us, and the God who sets us free, bless us today and every day.

Reading

By their own testimonies, each of these martyrs articulated a real fear of death and an absolute trust in God. Maura Clark expressed it clearly: “If my time comes, will I be faithful.” Their struggle to be people of integrity and commitment in the face of life-threatening situations continues to speak to us. If the lives and sacrifices of our many modern martyrs are going to have any meaning in the world today, it will be because we still feel their pain and are open to listen to the Gospel calling us:

to risk

- ♦ to challenge ourselves to fidelity and the responsibilities of global/local citizenship;
- ♦ to be a transforming presence of love, accepting all people as children of one God;
- ♦ to hear the cries of oppression around us, particularly refugees and asylum-seekers;
- ♦ to live an ever-deepening awareness that what is worth dying for is also worth living for;
- ♦ to pour forth ourselves in love, living the Works of Mercy in the spirit of the Beatitudes.

May the grace of God be with us as we march courageously into the future casting out fear by our love, creating a world free of the violence that still is destroying life in so many ways, and seeking a peace that is rooted in justice for all.

by Sheila Marie Tobbe, OSU, on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the Martyrdoms of the Four North American Churchwomen

Brief Reflections:

- ♦ Joanne Gallagher, CSJ
- ♦ Maryann Enright, CSJ
- ♦ Carlotta Gilarde, CSJ



Chalatenango, El Salvador: Flower arrangement placed at the site of martyrdom during December 2, 2015, commemoration services.

Prayer of Repentance

God, our savior, our world is broken by violence and injustice. The chasm between poor people and rich people grows wider and deeper. We have degraded this precious earth you have given us. For the sins of our people, we pray:

RESPONSE: God, hear your people, renew our hearts, make us people of justice, people of love, people of peace, people of hope.

God, our redeemer, our own society is broken by injustice, pride, fear, and lack of compassion for the others among us. For the sins of our own nation, we pray:

RESPONSE: God, hear your people, renew our hearts, make us people of justice, people of love, people of peace, people of hope.

God, ever faithful, we have often failed to witness your love and justice in our own lives. For the times we fall short from fear, despair, or lack of love. For the sin within us, we pray:

RESPONSE: God, hear your people, renew our hearts, make us people of justice, people of love, people of peace, people of hope.

Loving God, free us from all the bonds of sin. Make us a free and hope-filled people sowing the seeds of your love and justice in the world.

Concluding Prayer:

LET US PRAY: Loving and merciful God, you sent into the world the promise of healing for all that is broken within us and within our world. In our time, we have witnessed this saving action in the presence of our four sisters who gave their lives for the sake of your people. Their example created among us a community of solidarity which has become a seed of hope, a seed that has within it the promise of a harvest of the fullness of life for all your people.

THIS IS YOUR PROMISE. We embrace this hope as a community joined in a common project of life and justice. We commit ourselves to overcome the worship of the idols of our age with worship in spirit and truth, to overcome violence and hatred with love and compassion, to overcome greed and selfishness with selfless love and relinquishment of privilege, to overcome the pursuit of individual gain and control with solidarity. May the spirit and example of Maura, Ita, Dorothy and Jean give us the courage and strength to incorporate this commitment into every aspect of our lives. For this we pray. Amen.

Closing Song – Women of the Church by Cary Landry



PLANNING COMMITTEE:

- ♦ Betty Cawley, CSJ
- ♦ Lois Connors, CSJ
- ♦ Maryann Enright, CSJ
- ♦ Joanne Gallagher, CSJ
- ♦ Carlotta Gilarde, CSJ
- ♦ Kathy Tighe, CSJA
- ♦ Judy Swett, CSJA

SPECIAL THANKS TO

- ♦ Anna Edge, CSJ
- ♦ SHARE Foundation & LCWR for Roses in December Toolkit

Children of Chalatenango, El Salvador, where Maura and Ita ministered, join in the December 2, 2015, celebration to remember the US Women Martyrs.