

## Quotes from Romero

### **General homilies:**

#### **The church in Latin America**

has much to say about humanity.  
It looks at the sad picture  
portrayed by the Puebla conference:  
faces of landless peasants  
mistreated and killed by the forces of power,  
faces of laborers arbitrarily dismissed  
and without a living wage for their families,  
faces of the elderly,  
faces of outcasts,  
faces of slum dwellers,  
faces of poor children who from infancy  
begin to feel the cruel sting of social injustice.  
For them, it seems, there is no future –  
no school, no high school, no university.  
By what right have we cataloged persons  
as first-class persons or second-class persons?  
In the theology of human nature there is only one class:  
children of God.  
*March 2, 1980*

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**In our preaching** to rich and poor, it is not that we pander to the sins of the poor and ignore the virtues of the rich. Both have sins and both need conversion. But the poor, in their condition of need, are disposed to conversion. They are more conscious of their need of God.

All of us, if we really want to know the meaning of conversion and of faith and confidence in another, must become poor, or at least make the cause of the poor our own inner motivation. That is when one begins to experience faith and conversion: when one has the heart of the poor, when one knows that financial capital, political influence, and power are worthless, and that without God we are nothing.

To feel that need of God is faith and conversion.  
*February 18, 1979*

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**We have a song:** "I have faith that all will change."  
It must change if we truly believe  
in the word that saves  
and place our trust in it.

For me, this is the greatest honor in the mission  
the Lord has entrusted to me:  
to be maintaining that hope  
and that faith in God's people  
and to tell them:  
People of God, be worthy of that name.  
*September 2, 1979*

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**Who will put** a prophet's eloquence into my words  
to shake from their inertia  
all those who kneel before the riches of the earth –  
who would like gold, money, lands, power, political life  
to be their everlasting gods?  
All that is going to end.  
There will remain only the satisfaction of having been,  
in regard to money or political life,  
a person faithful to God's will.  
One must learn to manage the relative and transitory  
things of earth according to his will,  
not make them absolutes.  
There is only one absolute: he who awaits us  
in the heaven that will not pass away.  
*December 10, 1978*

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***Christmas homilies:***

**This is the Christian's joy:** I know that I am a thought in God, no matter how insignificant I may be – the most abandoned of beings, one no one thinks of. Today, when we think of Christmas gifts, how many outcasts no one thinks of! Think to yourselves, you that are outcasts, you that feel you are nothing in history: "I know that I am a thought in God." Would that my voice might reach the imprisoned like a ray of light, of Christmas hope – might say also to you, the sick, the elderly in the home for the aged, the hospital patients, you that live in shacks and shantytowns, you coffee harvesters trying to garner your only wage for the whole year, you that are tortured: God's eternal purpose has thought of all of you. He loves you, and, like Mary, incarnates that thought in his womb.

*December 24, 1978*

**No one can celebrate a genuine Christmas** without being truly poor. The self-sufficient, the proud, those who, because they have everything, look down on others, those who have no need even of God – for them there will be no Christmas. Only the poor, the hungry, those who need someone to come on their behalf, will have that someone. That someone is God, Emmanuel,

God-with-us. Without poverty of spirit there can be no abundance of God.  
*December 24, 1978*

**We must not seek the child Jesus**

in the pretty figures of our Christmas cribs.  
We must seek him among the undernourished children  
who have gone to bed tonight with nothing to eat,  
among the poor newsboys  
who will sleep covered with newspapers in doorways.

*December 24, 1979*

**Today even unbelievers** sense that something divine entered history during that night without compare. We all feel that the child born that night is a child of our family, and that the brightness of God's glory that the angels carol makes of that night the loveliest day, a day when God himself offers us his peace and invites us to be men and women of good will.

What a shame that all of that Christian inspiration with which our liturgy christened a pagan festival has been betrayed by many Christians, who today surrender that spiritual conquest to paganism. To make the values of commerce and of worldly gaiety prevail over the gospel meaning of Christmas is nothing short of a cowardly surrender on the part of Christians.

A return to the spirituality of a genuine Christmas will be a noble gesture of solidarity with Christianity's spiritual victories in the world. A celebration of Christ's birth with a sense of adoration, love, and gratitude toward the God who loved us even to the folly of giving us his own Son, will be to arrange our life so that the peace that only God can give may brighten it like a sun.

*December 15, 1978*

**Let us not be disheartened,**

even when the horizon of history grows dim and closes in,  
as though human realities made impossible  
the accomplishment of God's plans.  
God makes use even of human errors,  
even of human sins,  
so as to make rise over the darkness what Isaiah spoke of.  
One day prophets will sing  
not only the return from Babylon  
but our full liberation.

"The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light.

They walk in lands of shadows,  
but a light has shone forth." (Isaiah 9:1-2)

*December 25, 1977*

**OTHER QUOTES**

**Let us not tire of preaching love;**

it is the force that will overcome the world.  
Let us not tire of preaching love.

Though we see that waves of violence  
succeed in drowning the fire of Christian love, love must win out; it is the only  
thing that can.

*September 25, 1977*

**The world does not say: blessed are the poor.**

The world says: blessed are the rich.

You are worth as much as you have.

But Christ says: wrong. Blessed are the poor, for theirs is the kingdom of  
heaven, because they do not put their trust in what is so transitory.

*January 29, 1978*

**Some want to keep a gospel so disembodied that it doesn't get involved  
at all in the world it must save.**

Christ is now in history.

Christ is in the womb of the people.

Christ is now bringing about  
the new heavens and the new earth.

*December 3, 1978*