

BLESSED RUTILIO IN MENTAL HEALTH & SOLIDARITY IN MISSION

3rd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – 23 JANUARY 2022



Image attributed to www.LumoProject.com

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me to
bring good news to the poor.*

*He has sent me to proclaim
release to the captives
and recovery of sight
to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,
to proclaim the year of
the Lord's favour.*

GOSPEL OF LUKE 1:1-4; 4:14-21

BEATIFICATION OF FOUR MARTYRS

Yesterday the Catholic Church beatified four martyrs who lived today's Gospel passage. All four were murdered in El Salvador, three in 1977 and one in 1980. After many years of research into their lives, we know more about how they thought and what they believed.

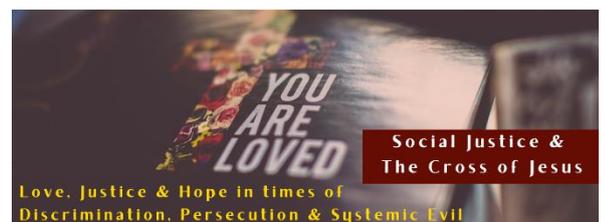
All had a special relationship with Jesus Christ. All knew the personal danger they faced in their advocacy for the poor, and were vulnerable each day as they went about sharing the Good News of Jesus.

They are:

- ❖ *Blessed Manuel Solorzano*, a catechist in El Salvador, who was killed on 12th March, 1977, aged 72
- ❖ *Blessed Nelson Lemus*, a young man who shared in parish activities, and who was killed on 12th March, 1977 aged 16
- ❖ *Blessed Rutilio Grande*, a Jesuit priest in El Salvador, who was killed on 12th March, 1977 aged 49 and
- ❖ *Blessed Cosma Spessotto*, an Italian Franciscan ministering in El Salvador for many years, who was killed on June 14th, 1980, aged 57.

Last night during Mass, we lit a candle for each of them and prayed.

During this past week, another Reflection on *Social Justice & the Cross of Jesus: Love Justice & Hope in times of Discrimination, Persecution & Systemic Evil* was presented on our parish media.



It could easily be applied to El Salvador during that civil war, and to over 30 countries today, including Myanmar. And to countries like Ukraine, threatened by Russia at this time.

[we pause and pray for countries at risk at present]

LUKE 1:1-4; 4:14-21

Let us turn now to the mission of Jesus.

In the opening to Luke's Gospel we hear from its author that it is written as

*"an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus,
so that you may know the truth concerning the things
about which you have been instructed."*

In this orderly account of the ministry of Jesus Christ, we hear in Chapter 4:

*"Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee,
and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country.
He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.*

*When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up,
he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom.
He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him.
He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:*

***'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.'***

*And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down.
The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him.*

Then he began to say to them,

'Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.' "

Let us pause and pray before Jesus,

as we reflect on how our own mission is being fulfilled today.

[pause, reflect and pray]

BLESSED RUTILIO GRANDE & MENTAL HEALTH

During this COVID-19 surge in Australia, mental health is such a critical issue.

We reflect on one of the martyrs, Father Rutilio Grande SJ

and his own mental health challenges in life.

Rutilio is well known for his advocacy for the poor and his solidarity with them.

He is well known for the inspiration that he gave Saint Oscar Romero.

Less known is his struggle with his own mental health, and his acceptance of it.

Rodolfo Cardenal's biography of Rutilio includes mental health challenges that he faced.

In a major health crisis during his time in Panama,

he was diagnosed with catatonic schizophrenia.

After receiving professional medical advice and treatment,

he returned home to El Salvador to recover.

Then came discernment as to what living situations and ministry appointments were best for him. This involved the discernment of his Jesuit superiors, medical professionals and his own prayerful discernment.

Later on, as he approached the time of ordination as a priest, fear of his own unworthiness terrified him. Once more, those around him supported him.

[Cameron Bellm](#) in her article

‘Father Rutilio Grande: the (future) patron saint of breaking mental health stigma?’ in ‘America The Jesuit Review’ on January 19, 2022 writes that

“Although he was reassured by his superiors, this fear gripped Father Grande for some time, until he began to understand his mental health issues as his personal cross and moved into a place of self-acceptance. That self-acceptance gave him the freedom to step wholeheartedly into his pastoral work and, eventually, to lay down his life for his people.”

In the light of today’s Gospel, Rutilio believed wholeheartedly in the mission of Jesus, and the call of Jesus to follow him and to be faithful to the mission of Jesus.

The Spirit of the Lord was upon him.

He was anointed by God with a mission:

‘to bring good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives

and recovery of sight to the blind,

to let the oppressed go free,

to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.’

THE WOUNDS OF OUR PEOPLE ARE OUR WOUNDS TOO

Pope Francis on Thursday, 24 January 2019, addressed the Central American Bishops, saying

‘that we not be afraid to draw near and touch the wounds of our people, which are our wounds too, and to do this in the same way that the Lord himself does.

A pastor cannot stand aloof from the sufferings of his people;

we can even say that the heart of a pastor is measured

by his ability to be moved

by the many lives that are hurting or threatened.

To do this as the Lord does, means allowing this suffering

to have an impact on our priorities and our preferences,

influencing vigorously the use of our time and money,

and even our way of praying.

In this way, we will be able to anoint everything and everyone

with the consoling friendship of Jesus Christ within a community of faith

*hat contains and opens a constantly new horizon
that gives meaning and hope to life.'*

OUR ANOINTED MISSION

Three years ago this Sunday, we reflected on the insight of Pope Francis into Saint Oscar Romero and the mission of Jesus in his DNA.

This weekend we recall that the mission of Jesus was in the DNA of the four martyrs who were beatified yesterday.

As a parish and as a wider community connected online today, we pray for an increased awareness of God and the mission of Jesus in our lives, and for an increased understanding of mental issues.

May we never stand aloof.

Our DNA – created in God's image and likeness.

Our DNA – missioned through baptism.

Our DNA – alive in Eucharist.

As baptised Christians, may we never stand aloof from the sufferings and pain of the People of God. May they impact our priorities, our preferences, our use of time and money, and our way of praying.

Let us pray.

Blessed Manuel Solorzano pray for us.

Blessed Nelson Lemus pray for us.

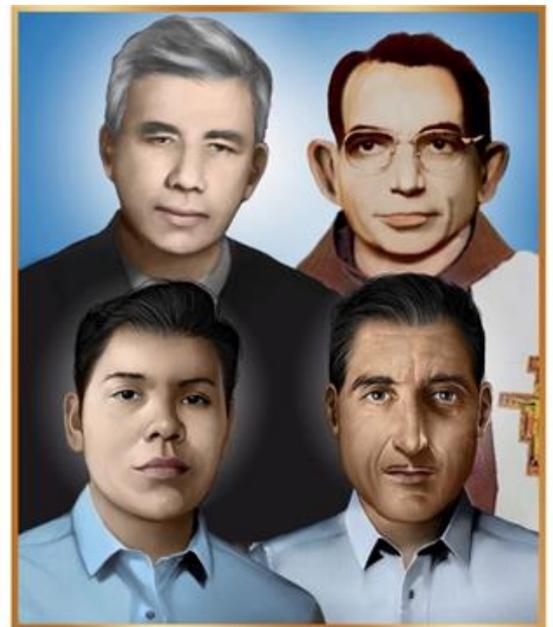
Blessed Rutilio Grande pray for us.

Blessed Cosma Spessotto pray for us.

Amen.

Father Gerry

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/012322.cfm>



BEATOS

P. RUTILIO GRANDE S.J., NELSON LEMUS,
MANUEL SOLÓRZANO Y FRAY COSME ESPESSOTO.

Official portrait of four Salvadorans beatified in El Salvador Jan. 22, 2022.
Top row: Jesuit Father Rutilio Grande and Franciscan Father Cosme Spessotto.
Bottom row: Nelson Lemus and Manuel Solórzano.
(CNS illustration/Beatification Office of the Archdiocese of San Salvador)

Vatican News article [Church in El Salvador celebrates beatification of four martyrs of justice](#)