

Give Voice

El Salvador has had an enormous influence both on my personal journey and of that of Openshaw Baptist Tabernacle. For many of us, the first we knew of this tiny troubled country was when Archbishop Oscar Romero was assassinated in March 1980. Romero, a conciliatory, academic bishop began to speak out on behalf of the poor following the murder of one of his friends, the liberationist priest Rutillio Grande.

Romero became known as the Voice of the Voiceless. Michael Docker's beautiful hymn explores these themes.

Give voice to the prophets who speak the hard word;
Who have waited and listened for what must be heard.
Their lives they may forfeit, their loves they might lose,
But they speak as they find and they call us to choose.

Give voice to the voiceless who suffer alone,
Who have waited in silence, their suffering unknown;
Though horrors surround them, though no one comes near;
They speak in their silence and Christ bids us hear

Give voice to the questions that won't go away;
We have all found it hard to believe what we say.
Christ's spirit still breathes through our darkness and doubt
And we hope in a Kingdom whose truth shall win out

Give voice to the Christ who has suffered and died,
His message of peace speaks through those who have cried,
'Our lives may be forfeit, our suffering he knows,
Yet our shame is his glory; we go where he goes'

Give voice to the praises that rise in the heart;
What our words can't express let our spirits impart.
Give voice in life's beauty and voice in life's pain,
And never cease praising till Christ comes again.

Tune: 'Stowey'

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