

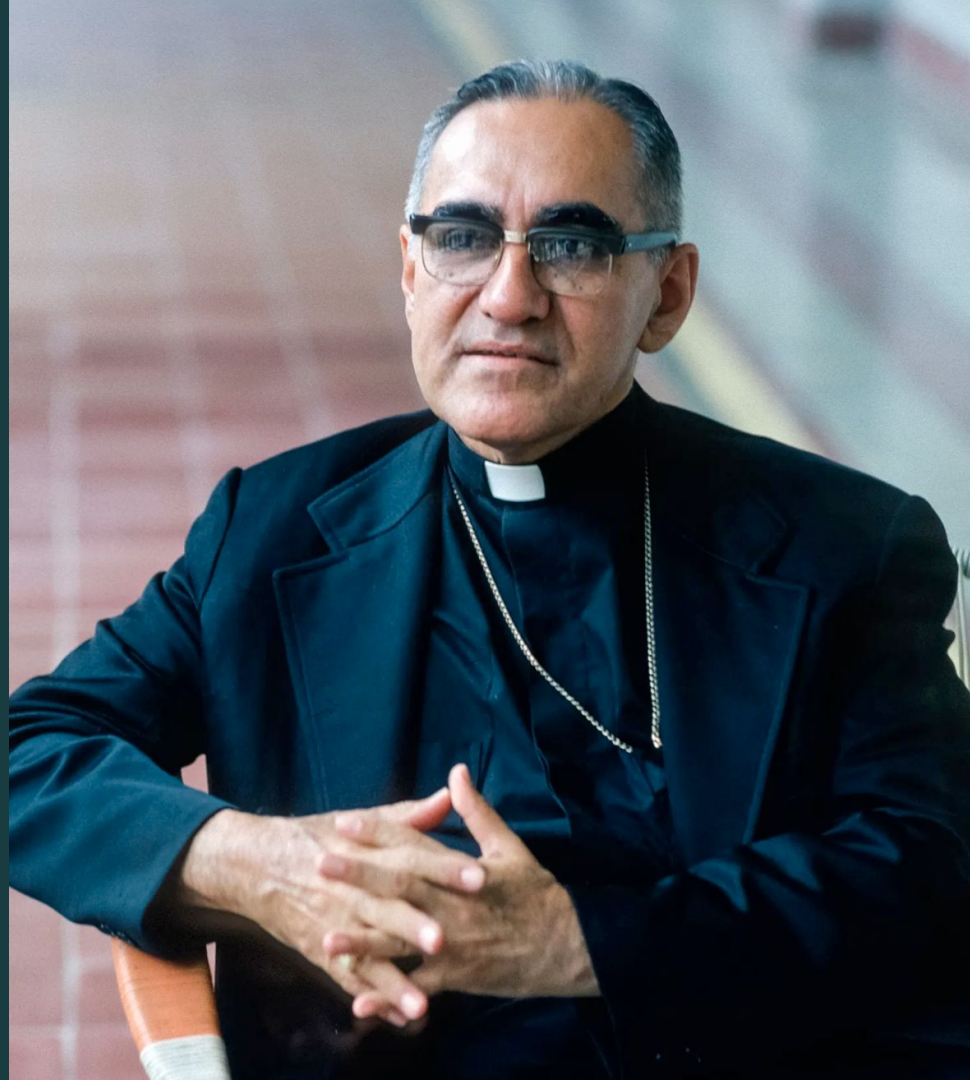
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Music of Liberation: How The Church Remembers Holy Witnesses

Dr. Adan Fernandez,
California Lutheran University
Colburn Conservatory
Holy Family Catholic Church



THE HYMN SOCIETY



Content overview:

Observations in Modern Catholicism



As a Catholic, I find the current state of the church in the United States returning to an older way of interacting with the world. There is a rise in disengagement with societal ills: poverty, racism, sexism, ageism, climate change, and more. Rather, it seems that US Catholics have forgotten the importance of the authority of the saints. The saints offer a lived and embodied faith that, at the time, held a certain type of authority.

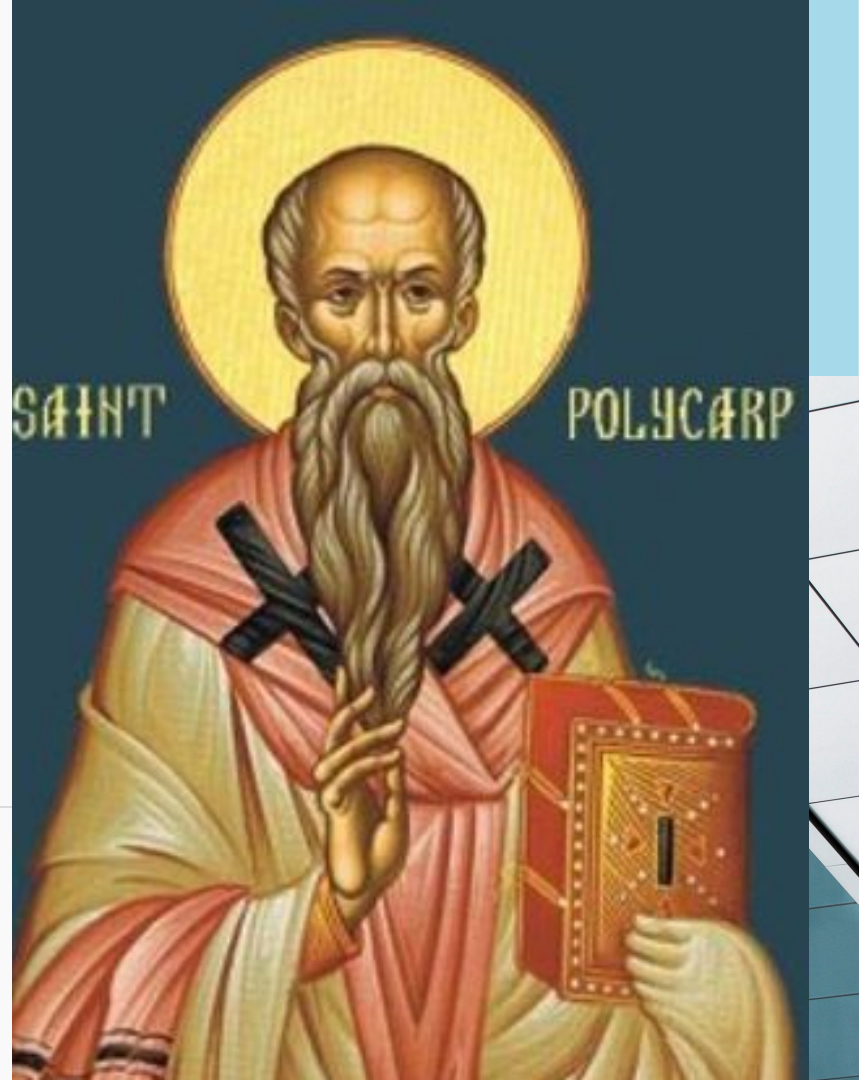
St. Óscar Romero demonstrated, through his life, devotion to the poor. Devotional and folk music about him and his mission is essential to fortifying the Gospel message in the liturgy. The Church has never expected the liturgy to form Christians in isolation. Throughout history, popular devotion has prepared believers to enter more deeply into the mysteries celebrated in the liturgy. In Latin America, I argue that Nueva Canción became one such devotional practice. For many Latin Americans, music about him, particularly in popular music, was a catalyst in understanding Christ's sacrifice in the liturgy. Rather, it was the stories told in Nueva Canción that shaped how people heard the Mass.

This study will look at the intersectionality of a few different modes of research: theological, musicological, and historical.

What Makes a Martyr?

- The person must have truly died
- Violent death inflicted by persecutor
- Persecutor must have acted out of hatred of the faith
- Person must have willingly accepted death rather than renounce Christ
- The individual's life must have shown Christian discipleship

Polycarp of Smyrna (c. 69–155/156 AD) was an early Christian bishop and martyr, traditionally regarded as a disciple of the Apostle John. He served as bishop of Smyrna (modern-day İzmir, Turkey) and was a key link between the apostolic age and the later Church Fathers. Polycarp was martyred during a Roman persecution in the mid-2nd century, and his death is recorded in *The Martyrdom of Polycarp*, one of the earliest Christian martyrdom accounts.



What Makes a Martyr?

- There must be a narrative
- It must be public
- Hold authority as an example of Christian living
- Inspire progeny of Christians through authentic witness and outrage

Perpetua and Felicity were early Christian martyrs from Carthage in Roman North Africa who were executed during the persecution under Emperor Septimius Severus around 203 AD. Perpetua was a young noblewoman and new mother, while Felicity was her enslaved companion, both catechumens who chose fidelity to Christ over renouncing their faith. Their story is preserved in *The Passion of Saints Perpetua and Felicity*, one of the earliest Christian texts partly written by a woman and a powerful witness to faith across social divisions.



Devotional Practice: Why the Liturgy Needs Them

- After Vatican II, music became one of the most significant catalysts for participation
- The vernacular allowed for the liturgy to be understood
- Devotional music had been in the vernacular for generations up to Vatican II (see other studies in Catholic devotional culture*)
- The liturgy became a vessel, being transformed by the propers chosen for the day

*Alvis, Robert E. 2021. "The Tenacity of Popular Devotions in the Age of Vatican II: Learning from the Divine Mercy." *Religions* 12, no. 1: 65. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12010065>





Devotional Practices Shape the Liturgy, Which Shapes Us

Example: The devotion to Our Lady of Charity of El Cobre centers on a small 17th-century wooden statue of the Virgin Mary found in the Bay of Nipe near Santiago de Cuba by three labourers—two Indigenous men and a Black enslaved boy—after a storm. Devotees interpret this event as miraculous and foundational to the cult.

Félix Báez-Jorge, “*La Virgen de la Caridad del Cobre y la historiografía cubana (Dogmatismos y silencios en torno al poder y la nación)*,” *ULÚA Revista de Historia, Sociedad y Cultura* (2015).

The Vatican on Popular Devotion and Liturgy

In 2001, the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments issued the Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy. It recognizes that popular piety like processions, rosaries, novenas, pilgrimages, and local religious customs has been a genuine source of faith throughout Christian history. It also emphasizes that devotions must always remain in harmony with the liturgy.

Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, *Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy: Principles and Guidelines* (Vatican City, December 2001),
https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccdds/documents/rc_con_ccdds_doc_20020513_vers-direttorio_en.html.



What does it affirm?

1. The liturgy has primacy
2. Popular piety is a genuine treasure
3. Popular devotions should be evangelized and purified
4. Culture matters
5. Devotions should follow the liturgical year
6. Pastoral leaders should accompany, not suppress.



7. The liturgy and popular piety enrich one another

- a. "The Liturgy and popular piety, while not conterminous, remain two legitimate expressions of Christian worship. While not opposed to each other, neither are they to be regarded a equiparate to each other." (Section 58)
- b. "For its part, popular piety, because of its symbolic and expressive qualities, can often provide the Liturgy with important insights for inculturation and stimulate an effective dynamic creativity." (Section 58)

How Devotional Piety Has Affected the Liturgy

Popular devotions:

1. Stations of the Cross
2. The Rosary
3. Sacred Heart devotion
4. Eucharistic devotion
5. Divine Mercy
6. Corpus Christi



"Popular piety has a special importance as a bridge between the faith and each culture. Of its very nature, it is directly indebted to its culture. It enlarges the world of faith and gives it its vitality in the various circumstances of life. It is less universal than the liturgy, which connects vast regions with each other and embraces different cultures. Consequently, the various forms of popular piety are farther removed from each other than the liturgies are, and yet they embody the humanity of man, which for all the differences of culture, remains similar in so many ways."



Nueva Canción and the New Devotional

Nueva Canción became a devotional language of witness.

What is Nueva Canción?

The performance is the text

The performance is about showing the text

The audience as text

The audience perception matters as much or more than the intention

The context of the performance

The occasion matters (religious, ritual, festival, entertainment) along with the space of the performance, and status of the performer.

The Role of the Performer

They carry messages from one community to another. They also become a social activist.

The Beginnings of Liberation Theology

Gustavo Gutiérrez (1928–2024) was a Peruvian Dominican priest and theologian widely regarded as the founder of liberation theology. Drawing upon Scripture, Catholic social teaching, and the lived experiences of Latin America's poor, he argued that Christian faith demands a "preferential option for the poor," emphasizing that salvation encompasses both spiritual reconciliation and the struggle against social, political, and economic injustice. His landmark book, *A Theology of Liberation* (1971), became one of the most influential theological works of the twentieth century, inspiring Christian base communities and reshaping Catholic engagement with poverty and human rights across Latin America. Although some aspects of liberation theology faced scrutiny from the Vatican during the 1980s, Gutiérrez remained a respected Catholic theologian whose work was later affirmed in important ways by Popes Benedict XVI and Francis, particularly his insistence that authentic evangelization includes solidarity with the poor and the pursuit of justice.

Gustavo Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation*, trans. and ed. Sister Caridad Inda and John Eagleson (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1973).



Devotional Literature Surrounding Modern Martyrs

Ernesto Cardenal (born January 20, 1925, Granada, Nicaragua—died March 1, 2020, Managua) was a Nicaraguan poet and revolutionary and a Roman Catholic priest who became a widely admired and controversial figure in 20th-century Central American politics. He was active in the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua and served as the country's minister of culture from 1979 to 1988. His involvement in the revolution and his support of liberation theology brought him into conflict with the Vatican. In later years he became critical of the Sandinista government and Nicaraguan Pres. Daniel Ortega. Cardenal is considered to be the second most important Nicaraguan poet, after Rubén Darío.

The Editors of *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Ernesto Cardenal," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, last modified February 27, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Ernesto-Cardenal>.

Salmos by Cardenal

SALMO 5

Escucha mis palabras oh Señor

Oye mis gemidos

Escucha mi protesta

Porque no eres tú un Dios amigo de los dictadores

ni partidario de su política

ni te influencia la propaganda

ni estás en sociedad con el gangster

No existe sinceridad en sus discursos

ni en sus declaraciones de prensa

Hablan de paz en sus discursos

mientras aumentan su producción de guerra

Hablan de paz en las Conferencias de Paz

y en secreto se preparan para la guerra

Sus radios mentirosos rugen toda la noche

Sus escritorios están llenos de planes criminales

y expedientes siniestros

Pero tú me salvarás de sus planes

Hablan con la boca de las ametralladoras

Sus lenguas relucientes

son las bayonetas...

Castígalos oh Dios

malogra su política

confunde sus memorandums

impide sus programas

A la hora de la Sirena de Alarma

tú estarás conmigo

tú serás mi refugio en el día de la Bomba

Al que no cree en la mentira de sus anuncios

comerciales

ni en sus campañas publicitarias ni en sus

campañas políticas

tú lo bendices

Lo rodeas con tu amor

como con tanques blindados

Oración por Marylin Monroe by Cardenal

Señor,

recibe a esta muchacha conocida en toda la Tierra
con el nombre de Marilyn Monroe,

aunque ése no era su verdadero nombre

(pero Tú conoces su verdadero nombre, el de la
huerfanita violada a los 9 años

y la empleadita de tienda que a los 16 se había
querido matar)

y que ahora se presenta ante Ti sin ningún maquillaje

sin su Agente de Prensa

sin fotógrafos y sin firmar autógrafos

sola como un astronauta frente a la noche espacial.

Lord

receives this girl known throughout the Earth by
the name of Marilyn Monroe,

Although that was not his real name

(but You know his real name, that of the orphaned
woman who was raped at 9 years

and the store employee who at 16 had wanted to
kill)

and that now he appears before You without any
makeup

without your Press Agent

no photographers and no autographs

alone as an astronaut in front of the space night.



Infusing the Liturgy with Martyrdom: Óscar Romero

Óscar Romero (1917–1980) was the Archbishop of San Salvador who became a prophetic voice against state violence and economic injustice during El Salvador's civil conflict. He publicly defended the poor, denounced human rights abuses, and insisted that the Church must stand with those who suffer, which made him a powerful symbol of hope for Latin American people. After he was assassinated while celebrating Mass, Romero came to embody the faith, courage, and resistance of communities living under oppression. For many in Latin America, he represents a saint who speaks from within their history—linking Catholic faith with dignity, justice, and the struggle for liberation.

Óscar Romero's Homilies

Will Cohen, "St. Óscar Romero and the Right to Be Accurately Informed About Public Events," *Church Life Journal*, University of Notre Dame, August 7, 2025, <https://churchlifejournal.nd.edu/articles/st-oscar-romero-and-the-right-to-be-accurately-informed-about-public-events/>.

El Salvador Perspectives, "Two Sermons," *El Salvador Perspectives*, March 23, 2024, <https://www.elsalvadorperspectives.com/2024/03/two-sermons.html>.

What else do we find during this Holy Week? A week of bloodshed. Two citizens killed at two roadblocks. In Planes the body of José Estanislao Recinos has been denied to his wife. A young woman was killed near the Apollo movie theater. In the department of Chalatenango the caretaker of the chapel in El Conacaste, Otmaro Guardado, was captured and then found dead; he was a good man.

-1978 Palm Sunday

The campesino Leonardo Muñoz Pacheco was accused of setting fire to the mayor's office in El Paisnal, but the day before the fire he had been taken prisoner. How could he have set the fire? Other campesinos were accused along with him, and their confessions (surely obtained by torture) have been published in the newspapers. Later, when they appeared in court, where they were able to speak freely, they denied their involvement, but those statements were never published so that their good reputation has been tarnished.

-1978 Palm Sunday

I would like to make an appeal especially to the men of the army, and concretely to the National Guard, the police, and the troops. Brothers, you are of part of our own people. You are killing your own brother and sister campesinos, and against any order a man may give to kill, God's law must prevail: «You shall not kill!» No soldier is obliged to obey an order against the law of God. No one has to observe an immoral law.

-March 23rd, 1980

Important Artists Include...

Violeta and Isabel Parra, Víctor Jara of Chile

Years active:

c. 1934–1967 (especially
1952–1967 as
folklorist/composer)



Daniel Viglietti of Uruguay

Years active:

1963–2017



Pablo Milanés and Silvio Rodríguez of Cuba



Years active:

1967–present

Mercedes Sosa of Argentina



Years active:

1950–2009 (major
international career from
1965)



Jara's Legacy

A Life of Justice

Víctor Jara (1932–1973) was a Chilean singer-songwriter, poet, theater director, and educator who became one of the leading voices of the Nueva Canción Chilena movement, which blended traditional folk music with social and political advocacy. Raised in a rural working-class family, Jara studied theater at the University of Chile before gaining recognition as both a stage director and musician. His songs championed workers, peasants, and social justice, and he became a prominent cultural supporter of President Salvador Allende's Popular Unity government. Following the military coup led by Augusto Pinochet on September 11, 1973, Jara was arrested, tortured, and murdered by the Chilean military. His death made him an enduring international symbol of artistic resistance, human rights, and the power of music in the struggle for democracy and dignity.

Víctor Jara (1932–1973)



Plegaria a un Labrador

Levántate y mírate las manos.
Para crecer estréchala a tu hermano.

Juntos iremos unidos en la sangre. Hoy es el
tiempo que puede ser mañana.

Líbranos de aquel que nos domina en la
miseria.

Tráenos tu reino de justicia e igualdad.

Prayer to a Worker

Arise and look at your hands.
Reach out to your brother so you may grow.

Together we will go united in blood.

Today is the time to build for tomorrow.

Free us from the one who dominates us in
misery.

Bring us your kingdom of justice and equality.

Vencerémos



Far Out Team. "Victor Jara: The Folk Singer Murdered for His Music." *BBC Culture*, August 12, 2020.

<https://www.bbc.com/culture/article/20200812-victor-jara-the-folk-singer-murdered-for-his-music>

Victor Jara sang *Vencerémos* right before he died.

Desde el hondo crisol de la patria,
se levanta el clamor popular.
Ya se anuncia la nueva alborada.
Todo Chile comienza cantar.
Venceremos, venceremos.
Mil cadenas habra que romper.

Venceremos, venceremos.
La miseria sabremos vencer.
Sembraremos las tierras de gloria.
Socialista sera el porvenir.
Todos juntos seremos la historia.
A cumplir, a cumplir, a cumplir.

From the depths of our country,
the cry of the people rises.
Now the new dawn is announced.
All of Chile begins to sing.
We will triumph, we will triumph.
A thousand chains will have to be broken.

We will triumph, we will triumph.
We will learn how to conquer misery.
We will sow the fields of glory.
The future will be socialist.
Together we will make history.
Carry on, carry on, carry on.

Vencerá el amor

By Carlos Colón

Carlos Colón writes: “Written to commemorate the martyrdom of six Jesuit priests and two women on the campus of Universidad Centroamericana (UCA) in El Salvador in 1989, this piece takes its inspiration from Roman 12:21: Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”

Performance by Coro Conciencia, November 7th, 2025
Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels, Los Angeles
Conducted by Adan Fernandez





His Legacy Through Music

- Romero inspired music outside of the liturgy
- Points to the martyrdom of Christ
 - Also Polycarp, Perpetua, and Felicity

Por esta tierra del hambre,
yo vi pasar a un viajero
humilde, manso y sincero,
valientemente profeta,
que se enfrentó a los tiranos,
para acusarles el crimen
de asesinar a su hermano,
pa' defender a los ricos.

Through this land of hunger,
I saw a traveler pass by,
humble, gentle, and sincere,
a courageous prophet,
who confronted the tyrants,
to accuse them of the crime
of murdering his brother,
to defend the rich.

El Profeta, by Yolocamba Ita, formed by brothers Roberto and Franklin Quezada

Requiem - Las Lamentaciones de Rufina Amaya

By Carlos Colón



Rufina Amaya was a Salvadoran peasant woman and the sole known survivor of the 1981 El Mozote massacre, in which the Salvadoran army killed nearly an entire village during the civil war. Her eyewitness testimony became crucial historical evidence, preserving the memory of the atrocity and giving voice to victims when the massacre was widely denied.

From **Carlos Colón:** The choral requiem *Las Lamentaciones de Rufina Amaya* was premiered on May 7, 2008 at Baylor University in Waco, Texas. Even though the work specifically commemorates the Mozote Massacre at the beginning of the civil war in El Salvador, it is the composer's wish for this work to be a lament for all the victims of the war. As a native of El Salvador, it is my hope that it will be received as a song of remembrance for all the Salvadorans that died during such a tragic chapter of our history.

Danner, Mark. *The Massacre at El Mozote: A Parable of the Cold War*. New York: Vintage Books, 1994.



Requiem

Rufina Lloro Por sus Hijos, 6:48



¡Ay! Mamá, mamá Rufina
nos daba
gozo tu conción.
Ay! Mamá, mamá Rufina
nos daba
gozo tu cantar.
Un cantar con colores
planchandos
por campesino amanecer.
Ay, mamá Rufina, los
soldados
vienen ya.
Con sus cuchillos y rostros
macabros...

Oh! Mama, Mama Rufina,
your song
brought us joy.
Oh! Mama, Mama Rufina,
your
singing brought us joy.
A song with pressed colors
by a peasant's dawn.
Oh, Mama Rufina, the
soldiers are
coming now.
With their knives and
macabre
faces...

Performance by Coro Conciencia, November 7th, 2025
Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels, Los Angeles
Conducted by Adan Fernandez

Amigos de los Pobres

By Grupo Horizontes



Correo del Sur Digital, "A 36 años de Horizontes y su 'Sangre española,'" *Correo del Sur* (May 17, 2018), accessed January 3, 2026,
<https://correodelsur.com/cultura/20180517/a-36-anos-de-horizontes-y-su-sangre-espanola.html>

¿Quién iba pensarlo? ¿Quién iba saberlo?
 ¿Quién iba a quererlo Monseñor?
 Cuando te mataron, Cuando te callaron
 Alegres decían: "Aquí se acabó su voz",
 ¡Como decir que estás muerto Si tu obra está presente
 Si tu voz nunca ha callado Monseñor!
 Pastor, profeta, hermano, esperanza de los pobres
 Tu palabra está presente y tu voz vive hasta hoy.

Who would have thought it? Who could have known?
 Who would have wanted it, Monsignor?
 When they killed you, when they silenced you,
 They joyfully said, "His voice is silenced here,"
 As if to say you are dead, when your work is still present,
 When your voice has never been silenced, Monsignor!
 Shepherd, prophet, brother, hope of the poor,
 Your word is present and your voice lives on to this day.

The group began on May 17, 1982, emerging from the cultural environment around Radio La Plata in Sucre. It was led by Jorge Poppe and other musicians who wanted to contribute to Bolivian cultural life and enrich the national folklore scene through performance and recordings.



Daniel Viglietti's Legacy

Daniel Viglietti (1939–2017) embodied the turbulent history of the Nueva Canción movement during the 1970s and 1980s. As Uruguay descended into military dictatorship, his politically engaged songs advocating land reform, social justice, and Latin American solidarity made him a target of state repression. He was arrested in 1972, released after an international campaign led by figures such as Jean-Paul Sartre, and forced into exile in Paris, where he continued to compose, perform, and denounce human rights abuses throughout Latin America. Like many Nueva Canción artists—including Chile's Inti-Illimani and Quilapayún—Viglietti transformed exile into an international platform, using concerts and collaborations to sustain resistance against authoritarian regimes. After democracy returned to Uruguay in 1984, he came home and resumed his musical career, becoming a lasting symbol of the movement's commitment to justice, democracy, and the defense of Latin American cultural identity.

Virginia Gorlinski, "The Tumultuous Years: The 1970s through the Late '80s," in *Nueva Canción*, *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, accessed July 21, 2026, <https://www.britannica.com/art/nueva-cancion/The-tumultuous-years-the-1970s-through-the-late-80s>.



Milonga de Andar Lejos

By Viglietti

Qué lejos está mi tierra
Y, sin embargo, qué cerca
O es que existe un territorio
Donde las sangres se mezclan.

Tanta distancia y camino,
Tan diferentes banderas
Y la pobreza es la misma
Los mismos hombres esperan.

Yo quiero romper mi mapa,
Formar el mapa de todos,
Mestizos, negros y blancos,
Trazarlo codo con codo.

How far away my homeland lies,
And yet, how close it feels;
Or perhaps there exists a realm
Where bloodlines intertwine.

Such distance and long roads,
Such different flags unfurled,
Yet poverty remains the same,
And the same men wait in hope.

I want to tear up my map,
To shape a map for everyone—
Mestizos, Black, and White—
And draw it, standing side by
side.

Yo soy un desencontrado
Que no busca que lo encuentren,
Un caminante sin suelo,
Una casa sin paredes.

Los combates de la vida
Son tantos, tantos y tantos:
Por ellos canto.

En el color de mi infancia
Mis ojos ven doloridos
A niño que mira a un padre
Y una madre divididos.

Los llamados de la falta
Son tantos, tantos y tantos:
Por ellos canto.

Crecí entre pianos azules
Y guitarras amarillas,
El tono de mis canciones
Se puso rojo de envidia.

Los crecimientos del alma
Son tantos, tantos y tantos:
Por ellos canto.

Canté como si supiera
Con el aire de mi pueblo
Y al borde de la alegría
La muerte nos quitó el sueño.

Los horrores del poder
Son tantos, tantos y tantos:
Contra ellos canto.

De ser un desencontrado
Yo temo que al fin me encuentren,
Por eso cambio de sitio
Constante, constantemente.

Los exilios de sí mismo
Son tantos, tantos y tantos:
Desde ellos canto.

Quiero decir al final,
Mi corteza es aparente,
Es un modo de cuidar
Mi ternura por la gente.

Los mensajes del silencio...
Por ellos canto.

El final no tiene fin
Ni tuvo inicio el comienzo,
Yo vivo siempre en camino,
Así lucho, quiero y pienso.

Los amores que contengo
Son tantos, tantos y tantos.
Los amores que contengo:
Por ellos canto.

Por Ellos Canto by Viglietti



I am one who evades being found,
Who seeks not to be discovered,
A wanderer without solid ground,
A house without walls.

Life's battles
Are so many, so many, so many:
For them, I sing.

In the hues of my childhood,
My aching eyes behold
A child watching a father
And a mother torn apart.

The calls born of absence
Are so many, so many, so many:
For them, I sing.

I grew up amidst blue pianos
And yellow guitars;
The tone of my songs
Turned red with envy.

The soul's moments of growth
Are so many, so many, so many:
For them, I sing.

I sang as if I knew how,
Breathing the air of my town,
But on the verge of joy,
Death stole away our sleep.

The horrors of power
Are so many, so many, so many:
Against them, I sing.

Being one who evades being found,
I fear that, in the end, I might be;
That is why I change my place
Constantly, constantly.

The exiles from one's own self
Are so many, so many, so many:
From within them, I sing.

In the end, I wish to say:
My outer shell is but a mask,
A way to guard and cherish
My tenderness for people.

The messages of silence...
For them, I sing.

The end has no ending,
Nor did the beginning have a start;
I live forever on the journey—
That is how I struggle, love, and
think.

The loves I hold within
Are so many, so many, so many.
The loves I hold within:
For them, I sing.



Violeta Parra's Legacy

Violeta Parra (1917–1967) was a Chilean musician, folklorist, visual artist, and singer-songwriter whose work transformed the cultural and political landscape of twentieth-century Chile. Through extensive fieldwork documenting rural musical traditions, she recovered and preserved the repertoire of *cantoras* and popular poets whose contributions had been marginalized by nationalist and Eurocentric conceptions of Chilean identity. As both a folklorist and *cantautora*, Parra challenged prevailing gender roles by becoming one of the first women to achieve recognition as a composer of politically engaged folk music. Her original songs united traditional musical forms with critiques of social inequality, political oppression, and cultural exclusion, helping to lay the artistic and ideological foundations of the Chilean Nueva Canción movement. Battle Lathrop argues that Parra's legacy extends beyond music, as her artistic work redefined female musicianship, vindicated marginalized popular culture, and reshaped understandings of national and Latin American identity through a distinctly anti-colonial and socially engaged aesthetic.

Miren como nos hablan de libertad
Cuando de ella nos privan en realidad
Miren como pregonan tranquilidad
Cuando nos atormenta la autoridad

¿Qué dirá el Santo Padre
Que vive en Roma
Que le están degollando
Y a su paloma?

Miren como nos hablan del paraíso
Cuando nos llueven balas como granizo
Miren en el entusiasmo con la sentencia
Sabiendo que mataban ya la inocencia

¿Qué dirá el Santo Padre
Que vive en Roma
Que le están degollando
Y a sus palomas?

El que oficia la muerte como un verdugo
Tranquilo está tomando su desayuno
Lindo es sedar el trigo por lo sembrado
Regado con tu sangre, Julián Grimaó

¿Qué dirá el Santo Padre
Que vive en Roma
Que le están degollando
Y a su paloma?

Mientras más injusticias, señor fiscal
Más fuerza tiene mi alma para cantar
Con esto se impusieron la soga al cuello
El sexto mandamiento no tiene sello

¿Qué dirá el Santo Padre
Que vive en Roma
Que le están degollando
Y a su paloma?

**¿Que Dirá El Santo
Padre? By Violeta Parra**



Look how they speak to us of freedom
While in reality depriving us of it
Look how they preach tranquility
While authority torments us

What will the Holy Father say
Who lives in Rome
That they are slaughtering him
And his dove?

Look how they speak to us of paradise
While bullets rain down on us like hail
Look at the zeal with which they passed the sentence
Knowing they were killing innocence itself

What will the Holy Father say
Who lives in Rome
That they are slaughtering him
And his doves?

He who officiates at death like an executioner
Calmly eats his breakfast
It is a fine thing to sow the wheat
Watered with your blood, **Julián Grimao**

What will the Holy Father say
Who lives in Rome
That they are slaughtering him
And his dove?

The more injustice there is, Mr. Prosecutor
The more strength my soul finds to sing
With this, they placed the noose around their
own necks
The Sixth Commandment bears no seal

What will the Holy Father say
Who lives in Rome
That they are slaughtering him
And his dove?



Julián Grimau García (1911–1963) was a Spanish Communist politician and resistance figure who became one of the most internationally recognized victims of Francisco Franco's dictatorship. After fighting on the Republican side during the Spanish Civil War, Grimau remained active in the clandestine Communist Party of Spain while living in exile.

Secretly returning to Spain in the early 1960s to organize opposition to the Franco regime, he was arrested in 1962, brutally tortured, and tried by a military tribunal on charges related to alleged crimes during the Civil War. Despite widespread international appeals for clemency from political leaders, intellectuals, and religious figures—including Pope John XXIII—Franco refused to commute his sentence. Grimau was executed by firing squad on April 20, 1963, becoming a powerful symbol of resistance to political repression.

Other Artists

Rubén Blades

*El Padre Antonio y el
Monaguillo Andrés*

Martyrdom, liturgical memory, and Romero

Jorge "El Viejo" Palencia

El Profeta

The first testimonial song after Romero's
assassination

Yolocamba I Tá

Romero repertoire

Romero and popular memory of the community

**Pedro
Casaldáliga**

San Romero de América

Foundational devotional poem, later widely sung

**Luis Enrique Mejía
Godoy**

Farabundo y Romero

Christian martyrdom with liberation struggle

Álvar Castillo

Símbolo de Rebeldía

Communal memorial song

Liturgical Composers of Nueva Canción

Pablo Sosa

Mary Frances Reza

Hermana Glenda

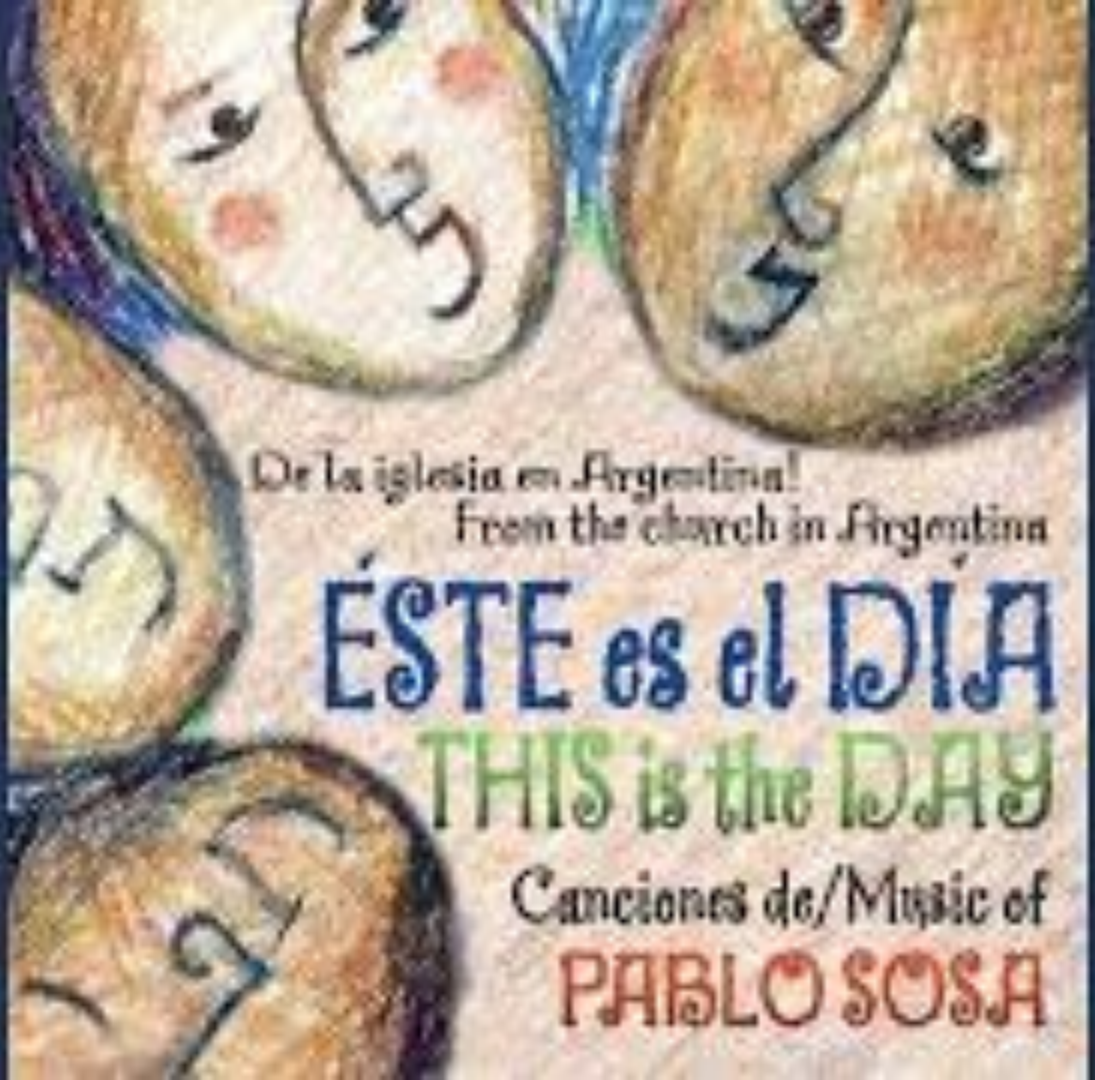
Juan Antonio Espinosa

Santiago Fernández

Pedro Rubalcava

Jaime Cortez

Bob Hurd



De la iglesia en Argentina!
from the church in Argentina

ÉSTE es el DÍA
THIS is the DAY

Canciones de/Music of
PABLO SOSA

El Cielo Canta Alegría	Pablo Sosa (Argentina)	Resurrection, hope, liberation	Sosa was deeply influenced by liberation spirituality, and the text celebrates Easter hope emerging from suffering rather than private devotion.
Pan de Vida	Bob Hurd	Eucharistic solidarity	Eucharistic connection with service to the poor.
Un Pueblo que Camina	Cesáreo Gabaráin	Exodus, pilgrimage, justice	Exodus imagery central to liberation spirituality.
Somos el Pueblo de Dios	Various published settings	Ecclesiology, communal identity	Embodies Vatican II's "People of God" theology that became central to liberationist liturgy.
Ubi Caritas (Spanish settings)	Various	Charity as ecclesial practice	Solidarity with the marginalized.

Witness



Narrative



Devotion



Memory



Liturgy