

Richard J. Clark (b. 1969) is Chapel Organist at Boston College (St. Mary's Chapel) and has served as Director of Music and Organist at St. Cecilia Parish in Boston since 1989. His compositions have been performed in Russia, China, Australia, and throughout Western Europe and North America. His works are published with World Library Publications, CanticaNOVA Publications, Corpus Christi Watershed, and RJC Cecilia Music. Born in Greenwich Village, NYC, he currently resides in Milton, Massachusetts with his wife and four children.

I Am the Land: A Poem in Memory of Oscar Romero by **E. Ethelbert Miller (b. 1950)** is a tribute to the late Archbishop of El Salvador. Assassinated on March 24, 1980 while saying Mass, Romero was beatified by Pope Francis on May 23, 2015. Painting each word and sentiment, the musical setting is melodically and harmonically driven entirely by Miller's text. Ethereal clusters introduce the piece, evoked in a later interlude. (*"This is the meaning of light. This is the meaning of love."*) An overlapping theme that shifts from peaceful to imploring is repeated in various keys (*"I am the land...I am the hungry."*) A playfully distorted reference to the hymn tune ST. THEODULPH announces *"The doors of the Church are open..."* along with a quick quote of *Resurrexi*, the traditional Easter Sunday Gregorian Chant. A harmonic downward spiral evokes Romero's words falling on deaf ears: *"I have asked my government to listen."* Several phrases throughout are punctuated by a major chord with a defiantly bold 11 tension: a chord simultaneously suspended and resolved. This heightens a sense of urgency to Romero's message as a powerful voice crying out for the voiceless, the oppressed, and the slaughtered. Phrases in a modern harmonized Gregorian Chant style are in complete service of Miller's text, and therefore Romero's lifelong example of humble service towards justice and peace.

I Am the Land: A Poem in Memory of Oscar Romero

I am the land.
I am the grass growing.
I am the trees.
I am the wind, the voice calling.
I am the poor.
I am the hungry.

The doors of the church are open

as wide as the heart of a man.
In times of trouble
here is a rock, here is a hand.

God knows the meaning of our prayers.
I have asked our government to listen.
God is not dead
and I will never die.

I am the land.
I am the grass growing.
I am the trees.
I am the wind, the voice calling.
I am the poor.
I am the hungry.

He who is resurrected is revolutionary.
He who is resurrected believes in peace.
This is the meaning of light.
This is the meaning of love.

The souls of my people are the pages of history.
The people of El Salvador are the people of the world.

I am Oscar Romero, a humble servant.
I am the land.
I am all the people who have no land.
I am the grass growing.
I am all the children who have been murdered.
I am the trees.
I am the priests, the nuns, the believers.
I am the wind, the voice calling.
I am the poets who will sing forever.
I am the poor.
I am the dreamer whose dreams overflow with hope.
I am the hungry.
I am the people.
I am Oscar Romero.

—E. Ethelbert Miller