

Presente: An All Saints meditation

By [Roger Lovette](#)

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Before his assassination Archbishop Romero of El Salvador had a practice of reading at the Eucharist the names of members of his church who had either 'disappeared'—or died the previous week. As the prayers of the community were spoken—the names were be lifted up one after another. The congregation would respond after each name was called out: "Presente." Present. Here--with us today.

Presente. I do not know a better word for All Saints Day. And we join with churches around the world in remembering that great cloud of witnesses that have gone before us. We have called out some of their names. And even now some face rises us before us. Presente. They are always with us. Our lives have been touched. I love the way Stephen Spender put it when thinking of what he called "the truly great." *"Born of the sun they traveled a short while toward the sun, And left the vivid air signed with their honor."*

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