

## Poor are hated in Britain, says former master-general of the Dominicans



The life of Archbishop Oscar Romero's is relevant to modern Britain, Fr Timothy Radcliffe has said at a speech in Westminster Abbey.

At his Romero Lecture the former master-general of the Dominicans drew a comparison between the Salvadorean regime of the late 1980s and the anti-poor mood in Britain today.

“Romero confronts us with a second question: what is the violence suffered by the poor in our country? In modern Britain, the contempt for the poor often takes the form of contrasting the so-called good, hardworking poor, and the imagined multitude of skivers, parasites devouring benefits. There are such people but the vast majority of poor people in this country work but simply are not paid enough,” he said.

Fr Radcliffe also went on to praise Independent columnist and author Owen Jones, who he said “has shown how members of the working classes are demonised by the tabloid press and by popular television shows as feckless welfare junkies, who drink too much, smoke too much, each too much, breed too much and make bad parents.”

“They have become regular butts in the media's theatre of cruelty,” he added.

Talking about the low life expectancy of drug addicts on the street, Fr Radcliffe said: “People disappeared from the streets of San Salvador because they were murdered by death squads. They disappear from our streets because they die. Our country is afflicted by a vast, hidden violence on the

poorest. If we do not open our eyes and respond, then it will surely erupt and destroy our society before long... In Britain, contempt for the poor takes the form of contrasting the so-called good, hardworking poor [with] the imagined multitude of skivers.”

Reporter - Catholic Herald