

Dorothy Stang Novena: Day 4 , February 7



Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for justice; they shall have their fill. Matthew 5:6

"Our Gospel response calls us to take risks among our people. They don't have this privilege or they would be killed if they resist openly --indeed, they are killed." — Sister Dorothy Stang

On justice:

Sister Dorothy had a passion for justice expressed over almost 40 years of struggle for the poor farmers and for the integrity of the rainforest. Hundreds of people lost their lives, their homes, their crops and animals to the violence of illegal ranchers and loggers, but she doggedly pushed on. She knew the risks she was taking, living as she did with constant death threats, knowing that there was a \$25,000 bounty on her head.

We can take a lesson from the Brazil story. We must not give up in our desire to see justice done in our own country. We may not have death threats, but working for justice and peace never lets up. Let us patiently work with issues, though they may not be resolved in our lifetimes. Courage and patience to keep on keeping on is a gift of grace.

"Felicio, don't ever give up, do you hear me? You have to keep up the fight. You mustn't abandon our people, do you understand? You must keep on fighting because God is with you." (Dorothy, speaking on the telephone to a young federal prosecutor, a supporter of the farmers, from Belem, on the morning of her assassination, February 12, 2005, as quoted in "The Greatest Gift—The Courageous Life and Martyrdom of Sister Dorothy Stang," by Binka Le Breton.)

Prayer:

Good and gracious God, we pray for the safety of our Sisters in Brazil. We pray for the people for whom they continue the dangerous work of accompaniment. We pray for the indigenous Sisters and Affiliates. We ask that you change the hearts of those who perpetuate violence in Anapu. We pray for ourselves as well that we be faithful to the practice of justice and peace in our communities, on behalf of the needs in our country, in responding to global needs. Amen.

Action:

Learn and respond about the conflict over the Belo Monte dam in Brazil that will destroy over 400,000 acres of rainforest and displace over 40,000 people.