

Brazilians Remember American Sister Dorothy Stang with a Protest

Contributed by Marcela Rebelo
Wednesday, 08 June 2005

Environmentalists, landless rural workers, and university students took part, yesterday, in a protest in the Plaza of the Three Powers to recall the struggle of the American missionary, Dorothy Stang, on behalf of the peoples of the forest.

The nun, who was killed by six gunshot wounds on February 12 of this year, in Anapu, in the state of Pará, would have turned 74 yesterday.

The demonstrators, who sat with their backs facing the Planalto Palace, held white balloons and wore T-shirts with the phrase: "The death of the forest is the termination of our lives."

Sister Dorothy used to wear a T-shirt with the same phrase.

"The nun spent a good part of her life directing herself to governmental institutions, hoping that someone would listen to the demands she had to present concerning the communities with which she worked.

"The sister even slept in the Incra building after spending the day without getting a hearing, hoping to be received the next day. This is what the people here are representing," said one of the coordinators of the protest, Carlos Rittel.

The investigations in Pará are in their final phase. According to the Press Office of the state's Court of Justice, all the witnesses have been heard.

The lawyers for the five individuals accused of participating in the assassination of the nun have until Monday to present their final defense arguments.

Agência Brasil