

Her legacy endures in us

Sister Dorothy Stang, SNDdeN | 1931 - 2005



As we remember Sister Dorothy during the 15th anniversary of her death, we proudly sing out in her name:

*When our care for creation
becomes our vocation,
Let this be the time...*

*When the heart of our labor
promotes love of our neighbor,
Let this be the time...*

-Lyrics from "Let This Be the Time" by Lori True

Backstory

Sister Dorothy Stang, SNDdeN, affectionately known as Dot, dedicated her time and energy to working with the landless farmers migrating to open a path through the Amazon in hopes of obtaining a tract of land as promised by the Brazilian federal government.

Her father, Henry Stang, had instilled in his children a love for cultivating gardens that provided healthy food. Dot, in turn, worked with the migrant farmers to clear the land under the canopy of the forest, without slashing or burning, and to plant food that would sustain their families.

In addition, Dot was mindful of the essential importance of maintaining a bountiful forest. The Amazon forest, she knew, contained the lungs of the planet and she was committed to sustaining it.

As the migrant communities cleared the land and cultivated it, they met with severe opposition from the invading lumber companies and from wealthy individuals armed with guns and false land titles who assaulted the forest to establish large tracts of land for cattle grazing and income-producing mono-cultural products.

Through persevering efforts and with Dot's strong advocacy, the Brazilian government awarded the migrant communities two large tracts of land as federal reserves for their sustainable farming enterprise.

Plot against Sister Dorothy and the Migrant Communities

The powerful lust for lumber and for large land tracts choked any possible human understanding of the needs of the poverty-stricken migrants. Consequently, the greedy lords of lumber and land began to plot a way to undo the progress of the migrant communities now settled on the federal land reserves.



Their first mistake was to think if they killed Sister Dorothy that would be the end of the communities and the land reserves. They saw Sister Dorothy as the *leader* and the communities as helpless *followers*.

They hired two men to kill her. On February 12, 2005, the assassination took place as Sister Dorothy was on her way to a meeting with the communities. She died with her Bible in her hand, marked at the Beatitudes passage.

Blessed indeed was her death as was her life, defined by LOVE – love of God, of God's creation and of God's people.

Contrary to her killers' expectations, the work of the communities continues until this day, led by local leadership and a strong sense of membership.

Commemorating Sister Dorothy Stang, SNDdeN

During the year,
February 12, 2020 – February 12, 2021
WE WILL:

- **Cultivate gardens of any size, anywhere, and share the harvest with people that have limited access to fresh produce.**
- **Plant trees.**
- **Pray for all migrants seeking asylum and peace.**
- **Advocate for comprehensive immigration reform.**
- **Advocate for simple and practical actions to protect the planet.**



As we carry out this project, we will ask Sister Dorothy's help in strengthening our commitment to care for the earth and to stand with those made poor in our society.

This is a project of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur in the United States. To learn more about the 15th Anniversary Commemoration of Sister Dorothy Stang go to: www.snddenusa.org

"Just as plants die and are reborn,
we too each day lay to rest what
we did that day and awake to
a new sunrise."

Dorothy Stang, SNDdeN

BLESSED ARE WE

When we connect the Dots...

- when we **insist** on a place for migrants to survive and thrive.
- when we **persist** in seeding the earth and feeding those in need.
- when we **resist** destruction of the planet.

