

#### Religion IV: Sister Dorothy Stang, SNDdeN (12 pts.)

Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Read Chapter 30 from *A Journey of Courage: The Amazing Story of Sister Dorothy Stang*.

"Morning- Dawns: A Terrible Day"

RAIN WAS FALLING lightly as she left for the meeting. The road was muddy. She carried the maps; some letters and her Bible. A few yards down the road, she passed the home of Cicero and called to him. He was not quite ready to leave. He told her to go ahead and he would catch up.

Twenty minutes is all they needed, she figured. Twenty minutes to walk and talk about the situation. She feared this meeting would not end well, but she was going to try.

And then it happened. Cicero had not yet reached Dorothy. When she got to the top of a hill, Tato's two pistoleiros, Rayfran and Clodoaldo, stepped out. Cicero ducked behind a tree. He couldn't see what they carried, but he could hear Dorothy.

"Good morning, gentlemen," she greeted them. Once again she explained that what they were doing was illegal — spreading fast-growing grass seed over a farmer's rightful land. Again she offered her hand and invited them to the meeting. They were silent and she passed by them.

One of the men called out: "Sister Dorothy!" She turned and saw a revolver in his hand. She reached into her bag.

He taunted her. "Are you reaching for your weapon?"

"This is my weapon," she said, pulling out her Bible. She began to read from the Beatitudes in the Gospel of Matthew: "Blessed are the poor in Spirit; the reign of God is theirs. Blessed are the sorrowing; they shall be consoled."

Rayfran looked at his partner, then back at her.

Dorothy continued, "Blessed are the lowly; they shall inherit the land. Blessed are the peacemakers...."

Rayfran couldn't bear to hear any more. He readied the gun with a click. Dorothy raised her hand as if to ward off a blow.

The first bullet hit her in the hand. She fell, face forward holding her Bible.

Rayfran stood over her and, in cold blood, fired five more shots into her back and head. Cicero ran for help.

Because it was the rainy season and the roads were nearly impassable, and because of the lack of telephones in Esperanca, eight hours passed before the police arrived. It is said that Dorothy's body never stiffened but was kept soft by the gentle, heavenly rain.

Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of slander against you because of me. Be glad and rejoice, for your reward is great in heaven. Dorothy Stang became a martyr.

➤ **Find and read the Beatitudes in Matthew's Gospel.**

1. New Testament scholars tell us that Jesus *reverses* the status quo in the beatitudes. What does that mean?

2. Choose the beatitude that, in your opinion, best exemplifies the life and work of Sister Dorothy Stang. Write out the beatitude in the space below.

3. Explain why you chose the one you did. Be sure to connect it to concrete details from her life.

4. Sister Dorothy said that the Bible was her "weapon." In what sense, if any, was that a true statement? Explain.

5. Look at the exchange between Rayfran and Sister Dorothy—especially the Beatitudes she read to him. Now that you know a bit about Rayfran as a person, what is the irony in the way he responded to her?

6. In your opinion, would Sister Dorothy have forgiven Rayfran for taking her life? Explain.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Sister Dorothy Stang, SNDdeN is often referred to as a martyr rather than as a victim of murder. How would you describe the difference between the two? Is it appropriate to call Sr. Dorothy a martyr? Why or why not?

2. In a small booklet of reflections on the life of Sister Dorothy Stang, SNDdeN, entitled *Blessed is the Memory*, Marlene de Nardo, a friend and co-worker of Dorothy quoted Maya Angelou:

*When great trees fall in forests, small things recoil into silence, their senses are eroded beyond fear... Lions hunker down in tall grasses, and even elephants lumber after safety.*

a. What common saying (question in this case) is Maya Angelou alluding to here?

b. Why is the image of a great tree falling so appropriate for Sister Dorothy? Why is Angelou's response to the age-old question also fitting for Sister Dorothy?

Religion IV: Sr. Dorothy Stang SNDdeN  
*They Killed Sr. Dorothy*  
Viewing Notes

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

**Segment One**

1. Where was Sr. Dorothy from?
2. How old was she when she died?
3. When and where did she die?
4. What is Dorothy's brother's name? How does he describe his sister? What does he say motivated her to do her work?
5. When did Sr. Dorothy go to Brazil?
6. What did the people in Brazil who knew and loved Sr. Dorothy call her?
7. What has happened to the Amazon rainforest in Brazil? What has caused the problem? (Brief response here.)
8. Rayfran Sales was directly responsible for (he was "the trigger man") shooting Sr. Dorothy. Describe him. What was your first impression of him?
9. In the 1970's the Brazilian government promoted development of the northern Para state. It brought about a "land grab" that led to the deforestation of that area. How did Sr. Dorothy herself describe that process of deforestation? Who is responsible for it? Who is most harmed by it?
10. What was the "Sustainable Development Project (PDS)?" How does it work? What was the name of the first PDS?

### **CONNECT TO CST**

1. Review the "Keys to Stewardship" found on pp. 221-22 of the text. Which of these three keys to stewardship apply to Sr. Dorothy's work in Brazil? Explain your choice(s).

2. Was Sr. Dorothy more concerned about protecting the poor peasant farmers of Brazil or the rainforest? Explain your answer with reference to the documentary.

3. Would Sr. Dorothy have defined herself as a Christian or an environmentalist? An environmentalist or a humanitarian? Explain your choice.



Religion IV: CST  
*They Killed Sr. Dorothy*  
Viewing Notes (Segment Two)

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

**Segment Two**

1. **Before Viewing:** At the beginning of this segment Sr. Dorothy says that her fight against the powerful loggers and ranchers in Pará has made her a *persona non grata*. What do you think the term means?

**After viewing:** now what do you think *persona non grata* means?

2. At the Justica Federal building, David Stang meets with Felicio Pontes, Federal Prosecutor for Pará. What does his job entail? Was Pontes on Sr. Dorothy's side?
3. How did Sr. Dorothy help Pontes to do his job? Was Sr. Dorothy taking a risk by helping him in this way? Why or why not?
4. Two groups claim to have rights to the land in Pará and specifically to Lot 55. What are the two groups? Which is more powerful? Which side is Sr. Dorothy on?
5. After Sr. Dorothy is murdered, the president of Brazil sends the military in to keep the peace and also declares a "moratorium on all new logging permits." What does that mean?

6. Who is Sr. Jane Dwyer SNDdeN? What does she believe about who was behind Sr. Dorothy's death?
7. Who is Clodoaldo Carlos Batista or "Tato"? What new information does he provide about Sr. Dorothy's murder?
8. Who is Vitalmiro Bastos de Moura or "Bida"?
9. Make a prediction: Will "Bida" serve time for Sr. Dorothy's murder? Explain your prediction.
10. Who is Americo Leal? Whose side is he on in the land dispute? What is your impression of him? What do you think motivates him?
11. Americo Leal has agreed to defend Rayfran and Tato besides his own clients, Bida and Regivaldo Pereira Galvao, "Taradao". Why do you think he is offering to represent Rayfran and Tato for free?
12. Americo Leal's associate makes a phone call (he's sitting in the back seat of the car) to Rayfran's mother. She is very angry with him. Why?



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

**Segment Three (25:00-44:00)**

1. Who is Americo Leal? Whose side is he on in the land dispute? What is your impression of him? What do you think motivates him?
2. Who is Regivaldo Pereira Galvao? What is he accused of doing?
3. What is a mandante?
4. What is Lot 55? Who claims to own it? Why was it significant to Dorothy Stang?
5. How many people have been murdered as a result of land disputes in Para? How many people have been brought to justice as a result of those murders? What do these numbers say about the justice system in Para?
6. Why do David Stang and Dorothy's religious community in Brazil want her case to be tried by the federal government rather than the state government?
7. Do they win the right to have Sr. Dorothy's case tried at the federal level?

8. Sr. Jane Dwyer hopes that the state prosecutors can send Rayfran Sales and his accomplices to jail for murdering Sr. Dorothy, but particularly for being *ordered* to murder Dorothy. Why is it so important to Sr. Jane that the fact that they were *ordered* to carry out Sr. Dorothy's murder comes out in the trial?

9. Americo Leal has agreed to defend the accused gunmen--Rayfran das Neves Sales, Clodoaldo Carlos Batista and "Tato"--besides his own clients the ranchers, "Bida" and Regivaldo Pereira Galvao, "Taradao". Is this good news for Sr. Dorothy's family, friends and supporters? Why do you think he is offering to represent Rayfran and Tato for free?

10. What is Americo Leal's version of why Rayfran killed Sr. Dorothy? Do you agree with his version of events?

11. Americo Leal's associate makes a phone call (he's sitting in the back seat of the car) to Rayfran's mother. She is very angry with him. Why?

12. Clodoaldo, Rayfran's accomplice, decides to drop Americo Leal's team as his defense lawyers and go with a public defender. Why? Did he make a wise decision?

13. How much money was paid to Rayfran and his accomplices for killing Sr. Dorothy?

14. What was your reaction to hearing this detail of Sr. Dorothy's murder? Did it raise any questions? Thoughts?

15. Why do Sr. Becky Spires and David Stang say they *hope* the verdict in this trial means a "new beginning" in Para? What still has to happen to show that things really are changing for the better there—for the land and the people?