



LAUDATO SI' REFLECTION - FEBRUARY 2019

This resource is developed monthly by GCCM, as an input for personal reflection or for group reflection in [Laudato Si' Circles](#).



This Laudato Si' Reflection is dedicated to the life and memory of **Sr. Dorothy Stang, SNDdeN, "Martyr of the Amazon."** Sr. Dorothy spent over 30 years working as a missionary among the rural farmers and peasants in Amazon Brazil. She struggled tirelessly for land reform and human rights, amidst death threats from wealthy ranchers. On February 12, 2005 while walking on the road she was approached by two gunmen. She pulled out her Bible and began reading from the Beatitudes, ending with the phrase "Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called children of God." After some moments of hesitation, the gunmen fired six shots, killing Sr. Dorothy.

HEARING CREATION'S SONG

Sr. Dorothy had a great love for creation. She once wrote *"I'm trying daily to fill my lungs with the beauty of our cosmos - her energy - so all that is to be woman can be felt in me."* Take a moment now to take a few deep breaths. Imagine that you are breathing in the beauty of the cosmos. What images come to mind? Can you imagine that this is God breathing life in you to be your fullest person? Give thanks for the gift of creation, of air, and the cosmos.

HEARING CREATION'S CRY

"We must make great efforts to save our planet. Earth is not able to provide anymore. Her water and air are poisoned and her soil is dying of exaggerated use of chemicals." Sr. Dorothy Stang

Sr. Dorothy was killed because of her commitment to the poor and the earth. The lives of those fighting for environmental justice continue to be at risk. Brazil is the [deadliest](#) place for environmental activists, with at least 57 killed in 2017. In the last few months alone, an [indigenous leader](#) and [two leaders of the landless movement](#) were murdered in Brazil for their justice work. **This month we pray for the safety of all environmental activists around the world.**

*Blessed are You, Holy Creator,
Source of all that is good,
Beautiful and whole.*

*Where wholeness is
splintered or shattered,
goodness damaged or marred,
and beauty bruised or broken,
we ask for healing and deep peace.*

*Be healing balm for this world;
for all peoples, creatures,
places, events, and for*

the environment.

*We ask your protection upon
those working to protect Your Creation.
Give them courage and strength of heart.
And enlighten those who possess power and
money that they may avoid the sin of
indifference or even worse violence.*

*Inspired by Dorothy Stang,
your servant and martyr,
we pray in communion with
all the saints in glory,
through Christ our Lord. Amen*

Adapted from a healing prayer in memory of Sr. Dorothy Stang written by Sr. Teresita Weind SNDdeN

All Photos and quotes of Sr. Dorothy Stang SNDdeN courtesy of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur



MONTHLY SCRIPTURE REFLECTION:

And raising his eyes toward his disciples [Jesus] said: "Blessed are you who are poor, for the kingdom of God is yours. Blessed are you who are now hungry, for you will be satisfied. Blessed are you who are now weeping, for you will laugh. Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude and insult you, and denounce your name as evil on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice and leap for joy on that day! Behold, your reward will be great in heaven. (Sunday for February 17th, Luke 6:17, 20-23)

REFLECTION

The Gospel reading of the Beatitudes reminds us that following Jesus' footsteps is not without sacrifice. To live in the ways of love and justice may result in ridicule, despair, and as witnessed in Sr. Dorothy, even death. Yet, maintaining single heartedness for God is our true calling as Christians.

We live in a culture that often equates happiness with the accumulation of possessions and accolades. This obsession with external objects and rewards diverts our energy from Gospel values: loving relationships and acts of kindness and justice toward our neighbor and our earth.

Sr. Dorothy's faith and single heartedness to serve the poor and the planet allowed her to live in fearful conditions in order to follow the Gospel. Toward the end of her life, Sr. Dorothy was getting more and more death threats. Although several people suggested she might leave Brazil she responded "It is not my safety, but that of the people that matters."

This month, inspired by the life and witness of Sr. Dorothy Stang, let us reflect on our own lives to see how we might live more in the spirit of the Beatitudes, to live a Gospel life with our hearts focused on one thing, Christ.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS *This month's questions come from the words of Sr. Dorothy Stang:*

1. *We have to learn to have the necessary things of life. We have to ask ourselves, what do I need, not what do I want?*
2. *If we strip ourselves of all the extras that consume so much of our time and thoughts on how to care for them, our leftover time is no longer colored, and it is no longer hard to give a Gospel response. What can we strip ourselves of, to allow more space for a Gospel response?*

*Sister Dorothy Stang, SNDdeN
Martyr 1931-2005*



ACTION

Learn more about Sr. Dorothy Stang's life on the website of Sr. Dorothy's religious community, the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur: notredameonline.org/resources/sister-dorothy-stang/

Lent will start on March 6. This Lent, GCCM is encouraging its network to reduce its meat consumption due to the impact of cattle ranching on rainforests like the Amazon, as well as the number of greenhouse gas emissions released through the meat industry. Consider hosting an evening soup supper and reflection to explore "intentional eating" or some other kind of educational event during Lent. More resources will be available in mid-February at catholicclimatemovement.global/lent-2019

All Photos and quotes of Sr. Dorothy Stang SNDdeN courtesy of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur