



AMERICA/BRAZIL - Diocese of Porto Nacional mourns murdered Father Rubens

Campo Belos (Agenzia Fides) – The Brazilian Diocese of Porto Nacional has expressed its deepest regrets for the murder of Father Rubens Almeida Gonçalves in the city of Campo Belos (GO), in the parish of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception. The priest was seriously wounded by a gun shot to the head on May 20 and died the next day in Brasilia, where he had been hospitalized. The note, sent to Fides, said: "His death took place after a violent attack against life, which clearly shows disrespect and contempt for life itself and the lack of God."

"Fr. Rubens died in the full exercise of his priestly ministry, which has always been marked by missionary zeal and faith in the risen Christ. All the communities for which he worked offered their testimony on his passionate commitment to his mission of evangelization," continues the note.

"We want to reach out to his family, his brothers in the priesthood, and the faithful of our Diocese of Porto Nacional with a fraternal embrace of solidarity and, at the same time, pray to God for their comfort in this time of sorrow." The note is signed by Fr. Paulo Sergio Maya Barbosa, Chancellor of the Diocesan Curia.

According to local press, Father Rubens de Almeida Goncalves, age 35, died from a pistol shot in the head while he was in his parish in the city of Campo Belos, 600 kilometers from Goiânia. He was known for his work among the poor and marginalized. Some witnesses said that the origin of the crime was a request to lease the parish hall that the priest had denied the man who then shot him and killed him. (CE) (Agenzia Fides 05/24/2010)