



AMERICA/BRAZIL - Girls bought for 10 euro, the complaint of a missionary

Sao Gabriel (Agenzia Fides) - There are already 12 complaints which were submitted last month to the authorities of Sao Gabriel da Cachoeira, in the Brazilian town on the border with Colombia, from as many girls who put on record their statements about the violence suffered, of whom nine men are considered responsible, as revealed by the newspaper "La Folha de Sao Paulo." The girls are ethnic Tariana, uanana, toucan and barè, living on the outskirts of Sao Gabriel da Cachoeira, where 90 percent of the population is indigenous.

This battle is being led by an Italian Salesian missionary, Sister Giustina Zanato, who has been working with the poorest and most defenseless of the Amazon since 1984. The missionary risks her life every day to protect these children from the violence of adults. In fact, an indigenous girl of 10-12 years of age in the Amazon is worth a few euro, sometimes only a packet of sweets or a shirt. These innocent children are almost always bought by adult males, white, rich and powerful, sure that they will not be punished. The police, in fact, usually file the complaints of indigenous mothers of girls raped. Often, after complaints, the young victims are threatened and some of them have even had to escape. "We have filed numerous complaints, but we have not seen any results. It is very sad to think that those who should enforce the law do not do it," said the missionary, who has been coordinating the program Menina Feliz since 2008, which assists abused and abandoned children, and is also president of the Municipal Council for the Defense of Children and Adolescents. (CE) (Agenzia Fides 13/11/2012)