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VATICAN - The Pope on Mission Day: "We are close to all men and women missionaries, who work without making noise, and who give their lives"

Vatican City (Agenzia Fides) - On Sunday 20 October, after the Angelus with the numerous faithful gathered in St. Peter's Square, the Holy Father recalled the celebration of World Mission Day with these words: "Today is World Mission Day. What is the mission of the Church? To spread throughout the world the flame of faith that Jesus has lighted in the world: faith in God who is Father, Love, and Mercy. The method of the Christian mission is not proselytism, but that the sharing of the flame that heats up the soul. I thank all those who through prayer and concrete help sustain the work of the missions, in particular the solicitude of the Bishop of Rome for spread of the Gospel. On this Day, we are close to all men and women missionaries, who work without making noise, and who give their lives. [Missionaries] like the Italian Afra Martinelli, who worked for many years in Nigeria: one day she was killed in a robbery; everyone wept, Christians and Muslims. They really loved her! She announced the Gospel with her life, with the works she accomplished, a centre of instruction; in this way she spread the flame of faith, she fought the good fight. Let us think about this our sister, and greet her with applause, all of us!
Afra Martinelli was born in Civilerghe (Brescia-Italy) 78 years ago. She was a lay missionary, she was not linked to any religious institution, and had been in Nigeria for over thirty years, where he founded and directed the Regina Mundi Centre: a computer school and school for boys, in Ogwashi - Ukwu, in the diocese of Issele-Uku. On the morning of September 27 her collaborators found her in her room, seriously wounded in the neck with a machete, and most likely due to an attempted theft. Transported to the nearest hospital, she died on October 9, after several days of agony. (SL) (Agenzia Fides 21/10/2013)

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