

## REMEMBERING SISTER BARBARA ANN FORD, SC, "MISSIONARY DISCIPLE"



### **Call to Prayer (Leader):**

It is hard to forget the shocking news of Sr. Barbara Ford's murder in Guatemala City fifteen years ago on May 5, 2001. More importantly we remember her dedicated life as a "missionary disciple" to people who lived in poverty - whether in New York, the Bahamas, Peru or Guatemala. So, we gather to remember, to celebrate, to believe, to act.

**Song:** We remember how you loved us to your death, and still we celebrate, for you are with us here; and we believe that we will see you when you come in your glory, Lord.  
We remember, we celebrate, we believe.

### **Opening Prayer:** *(Pope Francis)*

Mary, Virgin and Mother, you who, moved by the Holy Spirit, welcomed the word of life in the depths of your humble faith: as you gave yourself completely to the Eternal One, help us to say our "yes" to the urgent call, as pressing as ever, to proclaim the good news of Jesus.

Obtain for us a new ardor born of the resurrection, that we may bring to all the Gospel of life which triumphs over death. Give us a holy courage to seek new paths, that the gift of unfading beauty may reach every man and woman.

Help us to bear radiant witness to communion, service, ardent and generous faith, justice and love of the poor, that the joy of the Gospel may reach to the ends of the earth, illuminating even the fringes of our world. Amen. Alleluia!

**Reader:** We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental. Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature. *(Pope Francis, Laudato Si, #139)*

### **Leader:** **What would Sr. Barbara call us to today?**

**All:** To bring forth the Mission of Jesus, the reign, the kin-dom of God's peace, justice and love especially for those who are poor...

### **Reader:** *Testimony of the Conference of Religious in Quiché:*

*We remember a woman who consecrated her entire life to the most poor, Sr. Barbara Ford, co-worker, companion on the journey in the Diocese of Quiché. For us, the Religious who continue working in the Diocese, she is a model to follow in the struggle for God's Reign, for the dignity of life and the challenge not to weaken under the weight of difficulties that present themselves to us.*

### **Leader:** **What would she ask of us today?**

**All:** To contemplate, to listen, to read the signs of the times – to immerse ourselves in our reality...

**Reader:** *Testimony of our sisters: She liked to study the needs of the people, listen to them; and from the evaluations to form a group with the Educators of Health to design with them an appropriate response to the needs in order to really succeed in a permanent transformation.*

**Leader: What would she tell us?**

**All:** To respond to those needs of our times, of our world – near and far;  
to act in the tradition of Saints Elizabeth Seton, Vincent de Paul and Louise de Marillac....

**Reader:** *Testimony of a bishop and co-worker:*

- ❖ *Sr. Barbara had an “urgency to today” and every day was an “urgent today” to attend to those that needed her. The cry of the poor, the sick, women and children, men and youth was the “urgent today” of God, which she heard.*
- ❖ *She was a woman of action. She gave little time to theory. She was interested in being practical.*

**Personal Reflection: How am I a “missionary disciple”?**

**Sung response:** The Lord hears the cry of the poor; blessed be the Lord!

**Gospel:** Luke 4: 17-21

**Prayers of Commitment and Intercession**      **Response to each: “Asi sea” – Amen**

**Reader:** We are called to be witnesses to the faithfulness of God’s love .....  
We are called to share with others the bread of the Word and the bread that sustains life .....  
We are called to be women and men of healing .....  
We are called to be people of reconciliation who seek to unify those alienated and divided....  
We are called to share with others in a ministry of liberation....  
We are called to promote and foster love in all its aspects.... (Constitution, 1.4-1.5)  
We are called to pray for vocations.....  
We are called to pray for all who are poor, especially the people of Guatemala.....  
We are called to pray for ..... (spontaneous prayer)

**Closing Prayer:** A Prayer for Our Earth (*Pope Francis*)

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures. You embrace with your tenderness all that exists. Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. Fill us with peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one. O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of the earth, so precious in your eyes. Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey upon it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction. Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor of the earth. Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation, to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey toward your infinite light. We thank you for being with us every day. Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace. Amen.

**Song:** We Are Called (Haas) or Bring Forth the Kingdom (Haugen)

*Prayer prepared by Sisters Nora Cunningham, Rosenda Castañeda Gonzalez, and Gloria DeArteaga*