



Current Issues in Prayer

July 2016

Welcome! The Pope invites people of different faiths to come together and pray:

That indigenous peoples, whose identity and very existence are threatened, will be shown due respect.



Getting started:

I go to a quiet place and get comfortable so as to prepare myself for prayer. I become aware of what is going on inside me. I take slow, deep breaths while bringing to mind that, with loving eyes, God is looking at me and at those around me.



Short story:

The Surui tribe in the Brazilian Amazon first came in contact with outsiders in 1969. This happened during the building of the two thousand mile long *Trans-Amazon Highway*. Ninety percent of the tribe was wiped out in the short span of a few years by the diseases they were exposed to now that they were coming in contact with outsiders. Apart from this, the new road made it possible for lumbering companies to cut down immense numbers of trees from the lands that belonged to the tribe.



Almir, the head of the tribe, happened to be in a village, away from the tribe's territory. There he came across satellite images accessed freely on the Internet. Almir made contact with the owners of the Internet site and by means of their satellite images, the tribe is now able to monitor what is happening on its lands and also to report abuses to the authorities and to the police. By means of other electronic means, the tribe is also now getting revenues by selling 'carbon credits' to international companies. Rather than cut down the trees for the sale of wood, companies are now buying living trees. These companies produce carbon dioxide and pay for the maintenance of trees that absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere!



Time to reflect:

Did I ever realize that projects undertaken in the name of progress could have adverse effects on others?

Have I ever realized how one person could actually bring about a radical change in the life of a whole community?



Let us pray:

Lord, help me always to recognize and see what consequences my actions may have on others.



Inspiration:

Whenever you take a man from his land, you take away his life-spirit.

A saying from aboriginal Australia.



Hands on:

I may choose to buy products from companies that do not cheat minority groups in their countries.

I may take a good look and see what actual consequences my way of acting is having on others.