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Stang's murder withdraws trial request

by Dennis Coday

NCR Today

Catholic News Service filed this short piece late on Friday:

US nun's convicted killer withdraws request for new trial

By Lise Alves Catholic News Service

SAO PAULO, Brazil (CNS) -- The convicted killer of U.S. Sister Dorothy Stang withdrew his request for a new trial Dec. 9, hours before he was expected to appear before the courts in the northern city of Belem.

In a courtroom filled with journalists, peasants and even Stang family members, Rayfran das Neves Sales said through his public defender that he was "unwilling to submit himself to yet another public trial, and he would accept the sentence handed down in 2005" of 27 years in jail for the 73-year-old nun's assassination.

A member of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, Sister Dorothy was killed because of her project on the sustainable development of the Amazon region, which bothered many of the large landowners in the area.

Prosecutors maintained Sister Dorothy's murder was ordered, while Sales testified during his two previous trials that he killed the missionary in February 2005 in self-defense because Sister Dorothy threatened him. During questioning by police following his arrest, however, Sales admitted being hired to kill the missionary.

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