

Based on the gospel for Pentecost Sunday, 9 June - John 14:14-16, 23b-26

“The Father will give you another Advocate to be with you forever.”

Jesus told his disciples they would never be alone: the Holy Spirit, the Advocate, would always be with them.

For fans of TV courtroom dramas, the word “advocate” may well evoke visions of efficient-looking and aggressive-sounding be-wigged barristers. But what it brings to my own mind is the many times I hear the word “advocacy” being used, here in the CAFOD office in London.

Advocacy is a vital part of the work done by many experts in our global network. They help to ensure that oppressed communities know their rights – such as the rights to own land, have access to clean water and live in safety - and know how to defend those rights.

For example, José Batista Afonso is a respected lawyer and human rights defender from The Pastoral Land Commission (‘CPT’) in Brazil. He has bravely worked on many cases of human rights abuses and killings linked to land rights conflicts in the Brazilian Amazon as CPT tries to achieve social and environmental justice for poor landless communities.

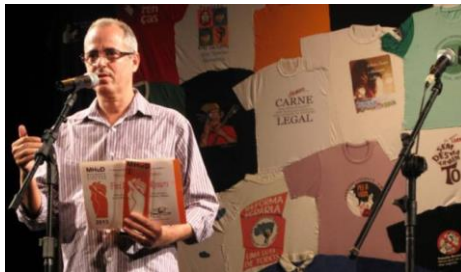
Brazil is the most dangerous country in the world for land and environmental defenders. Unequal land ownership is one of the root causes of poverty and human rights violations in Brazil, and the Amazonian state of Pará, where Batista works, has the highest deforestation rate in the Amazon.

When I hear about Batista and other human rights defenders speaking up for the rights of the most marginalised communities, I find their commitment and their bravery inspiring. And it gives me a glimpse of what the Holy Spirit is willing and able to do as our heavenly Advocate.

The root of the word 'advocate' is the Latin 'advocatus', which means "one called to aid".
Whatever injustices we or our sisters and brothers face, the Holy Spirit is there to assist us.



[Pray: Join us in prayer for Pentecost](#)



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Holy Spirit, assist all those who dedicate their time and risk their lives to stand alongside the poorest and most vulnerable communities. Amen.

