Study Guide Questions:

"Defying Death in Brazil: The Story
of Father Ricardo Rezende"

1) Why do you think that Father Ricardo Rezende does what he does? How do you think his religious beliefs as a Franciscan priest and as a Liberation Theologist impact his actions?
2) How does terrorism function in this community? Does it simply impact the person being murdered or threatened? Or does it have a reach beyond these individuals? Can this kind of victimization have an impact different then it was intended? Can it bring about violence and revenge against the oppressors? Can it call attention to injustice?
3) Why does the Church get involved in issues involving land conflicts? Is that not the domain of governmental institutions?
4) Do you think that starving landless peasants have the right to occupy land that is not being used?
5) Father Ricardo Rezende has survived several attacks against his life. What is it about his religious beliefs that have prepared him for such a precarious existence? Where does he find hope? Where does he find the courage to continue to do the work that he does?
6) Does Ricardo remind you of any other human rights activists in the world? How have they used religion to promote their cause?
7) What do you think of the role of the filmmaker in this process? Does he have the right to walk into a hospital unannounced and ask questions to a man who under armed guard who has just survived three gun shots? Why do you think the man agreed to the interview? Why do you think Father Ricardo took the filmmakers into the hospital?

Bibliography

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4) "The `People's Church,' the Vatican, and Abertura," Della Cava, Ralph. Published in "Democratizing Brazil," Stepan, Alfred (Editor).