



Water for Peace

Creating ripples for a better future

**World
Water
Day | 2024**



World Water Day on March 22 is a United Nations observance. Every year, it raises awareness of a major water-related issue and inspires action to tackle the water and sanitation crisis.

This year's theme is 'Water for Peace', which focuses on the critical role water plays in the stability and prosperity of the world. When water is scarce or polluted, or when people have unequal or no access, tensions can rise between communities and countries.

Public health and prosperity, food and energy systems, economic productivity and environmental integrity all rely on a well-functioning and equitably managed water cycle. Unfortunately, 2.2 billion still live without safely managed drinking water, including 115 million people who drink surface water (WHO/ UNICEF, 2023). Roughly half of the world's population is experiencing severe water scarcity for at least part of the year (IPCC, 2022). As climate change gets worse, clean water will become more critical. We need to work together to fairly manage this valuable resource. Access to drinking water is a human right.

Biblical Reflection



Biblical Text:

"... no bush of the field was yet in the land and no small plant of the field had yet sprung up - for the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground (Gen. 2:5 ESV)

Reflection:

In the biblical perspective, drawing parallels between water and blood is almost inevitable. When God breathed life into a clay effigy, human beings came to life, with the divine breath residing in their blood. Therefore, blood is sacred, because it carries God's own life pulsating through human veins, transforming a creature made of dust into a living being.

However, in the creation narrative, even before the infusion of divine life into the first humans, God watered the earth, sparking life in nature. The divine act of sending water onto the barren ground caused life to spring forth. Consequently, water can be likened to the lifeblood of creation, carrying God's life-giving force into rocks and dust, rendering them living. Hence, like blood, water is sacred.

On this day dedicated to water, we celebrate its rightful significance. God's work as the creator included providing life-giving water. Our work as stewards of creation entails ensuring equitable access to this life-giving resource for all. Where there is water, there is life, and only where life flourishes abundantly can peace thrive.

Mission Involvement



While water has a strong spiritual significance in the Christian tradition as a gift of God, around the entire globe, human misuse and pollution threaten this essential resource, and billions lack any access to clean water. What we could do.

- The WHO guideline for minimum requirement of 100 litres/ day /person. Account for how much water you use in a day.
- Do some research on how much water an average person living in a slum or a village uses in your locality.
- Highlight the suffering of women due to water crisis and search for solution together with women.
- Use campaigns in your parish or join with other organizations to advocate for change in systemic injustice towards distribution of water wherever you are.
- Sign/start a petition to establish laws and infrastructure for safe water; or speak out in spaces of influence – UN, regional bodies, to local politicians.
- Partner with organizations working on supplying water for at-risk communities in low-economic countries, either by sending your donations or volunteering to help where possible
- Discuss with your church leaders about water pollution issues and what you can do together to help.
- Whenever you can, amplify the cries of the polluted rivers, degraded oceans and contaminated underground water.
- Keep your neighboring water ecosystem clean by simple actions such as (a) Not pouring fat drippings or household chemicals down the drain; (b) Using minimal detergent or opting for an earth-friendly brand products; (c) Minimizing the use of pesticides, fertilizers, and herbicides for your farming or gardening.



Prayer for the World Water Day

Good and gracious God,
on this particular day,
we pray for humility to see all the ways
we take water for granted.

We are thankful for your gift of water
seen in the beauty of waterfalls, placid lakes,
rivers that move people and commerce,
oceans full of amazing creatures.



Send your Spirit to change our hearts of those
who use water to create strife and conflict.
Have mercy on those who are sick or in need
because they cannot access safe water.

Give us guidance on how to be
better stewards of a finite resource.
We ask all of this through Christ, our Lord. Amen

(adapted from Catholic Health Association
of the USA)

