



WATER



Water is the most critical resource on earth because it is biologically necessary for our survival. None of us can live without water. Clean, safe water is vitally important. However, only 2.5% of the earth's water is freshwater and there are numerous competing demands on this small amount. Indeed, one of the Sustainable Development Goals is equitable and universal access to clean water and sanitation. [SDG 6](#).

Shortages of water are common. There is uneven distribution of water across the globe, and there is unequal access to the limited amounts of safe water that exist. Over a billion people globally do not have access to reliable, safe, clean water; 844 million people lack even basic drinking water. Climate change will exacerbate already existing water crises around the world, leading to shortages in some areas and flooding in others.

Water is frequently dammed, piped, polluted and contaminated. Contaminated water can transmit diseases such as diarrhoea, cholera, dysentery, typhoid, and polio. Contaminated drinking water is estimated to cause 502 000 diarrhoeal deaths each year. ([World Health Organisation, 2018](#))

Water is increasingly under threat by attempts to privatise and control water sources. Treating water as a commodity means that it is subject to market forces. This can mean that the poor do not have access to water at all.

The Church's View

A Human Right.

Water is a gift from God, a vital element, essential to survival; thus, everyone has a right to it. This right is based on human dignity. Without water, life is threatened. Therefore, the right to safe drinking water is a universal and inalienable right. Pope Francis has denounced as “unacceptable” the privatisation of water resources at the expense of the “human right to have access to this good”.

Not a commodity.

Water cannot be treated as just another commodity among many, Because water is a gift of the Creator, it cannot be seen as a commercial product, only available to those who can pay for it. “The most delicate and sensitive point in the consideration of water as an economic good is to ensure that a balance is maintained between ensuring that water for basic human needs is available to the poor and that, where it is used for production or other beneficial use, it is properly and appropriately valued.” Water, an Essential Element of Life. [A Contribution Of The Delegation Of The Holy See On The Occasion Of The Third World Water Forum](#).

Pollution.



WATER



In his [message for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation](#) in 2018 Pope Francis raised his concern about a number of pollution related issues: maritime ecosystem; international regulations on the

seas in order to safeguard natural resources – marine fauna and flora, coral reefs, sea beds; those who safeguard the oceans and their biodiversity. He has called for the protection of the oceans from plastics pollution.

Ideas for Action

- [13 best ways to save water](#) - ways to save water which could also save you money.
- [Water-saving products](#) - Saving water can reduce your energy use, bills and reduce the impact on your local environment.
- [Great British Beach Clean](#) - get involved in cleaning up our seas.
- [20 Ways to Conserve Water at Home](#) - share the following tips, and do your part to help reduce our overall water consumption!

Liturgy Resources

- [Centre for Earth Ethics](#): Liturgy Resources on Water.
- [Water Justice](#): a liturgy for the season of creation:
- [Caring for God's Creation](#) . [A downloadable booklet produced by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops with suggestions for liturgies](#)
- [Greening Worship](#). A web page from EcoCongregation with lots of useful suggestions for worship
- [Liturgical, Prayer and Spiritual Resources](#). Splendid resources page from the Global Catholic Climate Movement