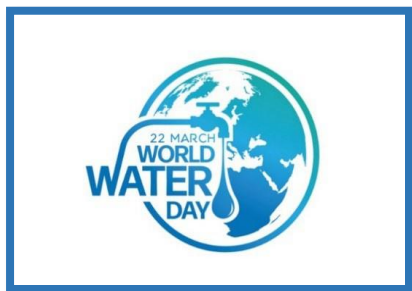


2023 World Water Day Prayer Service



Leader: Water is the building block of life. In most parts of Canada, it's easy to take water for granted — it just comes out of the faucet anytime you want it. Yet, all over the globe there are people who don't have access to clean, safe drinking water. March 22nd is World Water Day, created by the United Nations. It is a day dedicated to drawing attention to the water-related issues that humans face in almost every country.

World Water Day is all about promoting action to tackle the global water crisis. A core focus of World Water Day is to support the achievement of the UN's Sustainable Development Goal Number 6: water and sanitation for all by 2030.

This is to ensure that all have access to safe water throughout the world by 2030! This year's theme is "Accelerating Change". Time is quickly running out.

OPENING HYMN

Now thank we all our God Words: © Norman Habel 1991 to the tune of CBW III #535

**Now thank we all our God In whom this Earth rejoices,
For creatures great and small
Who now have lost their voices;
And species calling us
Before they disappear,
To love this fragile Earth
That God would have us share.**

**O Spirit from the land
Rise up like sacred leaven
To free us from the ills
Polluting Earth and heaven;
Inspire us with the drive
To be like healing rain,
Renewing life on Earth
And praising God again.**

WATER RITUAL

[Leader reads these words as water is poured from a pitcher into a large bowl]

Leader: Water is the source of all life.

All: Be praised, my Lord, through Sister Water.

Leader: It is pure and refreshing. It flows, cleans, and nourishes.

All: Be praised, my Lord, through Sister Water.

Leader: Water is a vital element which we must take care of.

All: Be praised, my Lord, through Sister Water.

Leader: Through the water cycle we are intimately connected to all of creation.

All: Be praised, my Lord, through Sister Water.

OPENING PRAYER

All:

We ask you, Gracious God, help us to know within ourselves all the powers of water: to wear down and to build up, to ebb and to flow, to nurture and to destroy, to merge and to separate. We know that water has great powers of healing and cleansing, and we also know that water is vulnerable to contamination and pollution. We ask your help in our work as healers, in our efforts to ensure that the waters of the world run clean and run free and that all the earth's children have the water they need to sustain abundance of life. Blessed be the water. Amen, so be it.

GOD'S GIFT OF WATER

Leader: Did you know that water is mentioned a total of 722 times in the Bible, more often than faith, hope, prayer, and worship. In the Bible, it doesn't take long for water to be mentioned beginning in the first book of Genesis.

SCRIPTURAL READINGS

Reader 1: Genesis 2:1

Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

PAUSE

Reader #2: Isaiah 44:3

For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants.

PAUSE

Reader #1: Isaiah 49:10

They will neither hunger nor thirst, nor will the desert heat or the sun beat down on them. He who has compassion on them will guide them and lead them beside springs of water.

PAUSE

Reader #2: Matthew 10:42

And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward."

PAUSE

QUIET REFLECTION (3 minutes)

Leader: How might my daily actions reflect a greater consciousness of the vital role that clean water plays within creation?

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

Intentions #1: “God, Living Water, from whom all life flows, hear our prayer as together we thirst for a world where all people have the clean water they need. Work through us to address the causes that lead to lack of water.” (*Lent Reflection for 22 March: World Water Day*)

All: In your mercy, hear our prayer.

Intentions #2: Life-giver God, we know that “water is essential for life on earth. We use water to drink, to clean, and to make plants grow for food. We pray for those who long for clean water for their families.” (*Catholic Agency for Overseas Development*)

All: In your mercy, hear our prayer.

Intentions #1: Gracious God, “water is a sacred gift that connects all life. Access to safe drinkable water is a basic and universal right. Help us to be aware that water is a sacred legacy, a public trust, and a collective responsibility.” (*Pope Francis*)

All: In your mercy, hear our prayer.

Intentions #2: God of Light, grant us the humility to see the ways we take water for granted. Change the hearts of those who use water as a commodity and create undue hardship for others in their need. (Sister Kathy O’Keefe)

All: In your mercy, hear our prayer.

CLOSING PRAYER

Leader: Let us pray

All: We praise and thank You, Lord,
for the gift of living water.

Guide us
to use it wisely,
learn from its humility,
consume it sparingly, and
protect its purity,
so that we may truly
protect, treasure and enjoy your gift of water. Amen.



CLOSING HYMN

CBW III #512 God Created Earth and Heaven verses #1, #3 and #4.

Credits

Introductory text: <https://nationaltoday.com/world-water-day/> and <https://www.worldwaterday.org/>

Image Credit¹: UN World Water Day logo purchased from istock photos

Opening Hymn: Now Thank we all our God - Words: © Norman Habel 1991 used with permission to the tune of CBW III # 555

Water Ritual: adapted from

https://catholicclimatecovenant.org/files/hope_for_creation/attachments/Sing_a_Song_of_Creation.pdf

Opening Prayer: Starhawk in *The Earth Path*

— <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/practices/practices/view/22041/blessing-for-water>

Remember God's Gift of Water-

<https://sites.duke.edu/theconnection/2014/06/05/remembering-gods-gift-of-water/>

Prayers of the Faithful: as indicated

Closing Prayer: http://www.praying-nature.com/site_pages.php?section=eco-prayers&category_ref=62

Image credit² water through hands image -mrjn Photography – www.unsplash.com

This work has been compiled by Sister Kathy O'Keefe C.S.J. and Sister Nancy Wales C.S.J., members of the Ecology Committee of the Federation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Canada.

We are delighted to have the prayer shared and/or copied in its entirety, beyond the Sisters and the Associates, with other individuals and groups. It is copyrighted © March 2023 by the Federation of the Sisters of St Joseph of Canada. We ask only that you credit the Federation's authorship and that you tell us how the prayer is being used by contacting the Executive Director, Federation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Canada at 416-467-2649; or info@csjfederation.ca
