

WAKE UP THE WORLD! Reflections with Pope Francis

You are invited to prayerfully spend time with the following quotations and reflection questions and share your insights in local communities and/or theological reflection groups.

From Laudato si': On care of our common home

Fresh drinking water is an issue of primary importance, since it is indispensable for human life and for supporting terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems.... In many places demand exceeds the sustainable supply, with dramatic consequences.... (Paragraph 28)

One particularly serious problem is the quality of water available to the poor. Every day, unsafe water results in many deaths and the spread of water-related diseases.... Underground water sources in many places are threatened by the pollution produced in certain mining, farming and industrial activities.... Detergents and chemical products...continue to pour into our rivers, lakes and seas. (Paragraph 29)

Even as the quality of available water is constantly diminishing, in some places there is a growing tendency...to privatize this resource, turning it into a commodity subject to the laws of the market. Yet access to safe drinkable water is a basic and universal human right, since it is essential to human survival and, as such, is a condition for the exercise of other human rights. Our world has a grave social debt towards the poor who lack access to drinking water.... (Paragraph 30)

Water continues to be wasted, not only in the developed world but

also in developing countries which possess it in abundance. ...there is little awareness of the seriousness of such behavior within a context of great inequality. (Paragraph 30)



For reflection and discussion

- How are water shortages and pollution currently impacting humans and other species in your region of the world? What are the future prospects for universal access to clean, drinkable water in your reality?
- In what ways do water privatization and commodification impinge on access to fresh, drinkable water, especially for the poor? What are the moral considerations of converting a resource that is a “basic and universal human right” into a commodity with a price tag?
- In what ways might we unconsciously waste or pollute water or reward its commodification by our daily choices?
- How might we deepen our appreciation for the gift of water? How could that deepened appreciation be expressed in our individual and communal lives?