

## 3. Give Drink to the Thirsty

### GATHERING

Water is something we take for granted. Turn on a tap and it is there. But this is not the case for everyone on our planet and scientists predict water access and security will be major causes of future conflict. No-one can seriously practise the Works of Mercy and not change the way we use water. If we maintain our current usage we simply will not sustain humanity in the future.



### READING

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, because they are denied the right to a life consistent with their inalienable dignity. This debt can be paid partly by an increase in funding to provide clean water and sanitary services among the poor. But water continues to be wasted, not only in the developed world but also in developing countries which possess it in abundance. This shows that the problem of water is partly an educational and cultural issue, since there is little awareness of the seriousness of such behavior within a context of great inequality. (*Laudato Si'*, 30)

### BIBLE PASSAGE

The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." The woman said to him, "Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?" Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life." (John 4:9-14)

### DISCUSSION

How do we ensure everyone has access to water in our ministry?

### PRAYER (PAUSE FOR ANY SPECIAL INTENTIONS)

Living Water, Source of Life,

Flow through us into the world.

Wash away our selfishness and blindness so that we truly care for our Earth.

Create in us a thirst for justice and hearts which respond to the cry of those made poor.

Refresh our hope and compassion as we seek to nourish and transform our world.

May we draw everyday on the wellsprings of hope for change.

Amen.

*May the works of mercy inspire and enrich your ministry in Mercy Partners*

## LIVING THE CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY

### Give drink to the thirsty

*Ask: What are people thirsting for?*

*Oppose the privatisation of water*

*Be ever mindful of people who need the basics of life*

### Clothe the naked

*Ask: Who is the vulnerable?*

*Protect the old, young, homeless, poor*

*Act for those who need human warmth*

*Be grateful for those who surround you*

### Welcome the stranger

*Ask: Who needs a safe space?*

*Reach out to the unloved and the unloving*

*Practise radical hospitality*

### Visit the imprisoned

*Ask: What captures people today?*

*Give up attitudes and habits which enslave*

*Help those who are prisoners and the prisoners*

### Visit the sick

*Ask: What brings comfort to the sick?*

*Be there for people who need you*

*Be aware of those in your community*

### Bury the dead

*Ask: What do you need to bury?*

*Put away those things which can bring physical or spiritual death*

*Move on from the negatives of the past*

*Remember with gratitude those who have died and how they have impacted on your life*

### Show mercy to our common home

*Ask: What you can do to nurture the environment?*

*Practise simple daily gestures which break with the logic of violence, exploitation and selfishness*

*Show mercy to all of creation*

*Support action for the environment and support those who care for creation*

### Feed the hungry

*Ask: Who is hungry and why?*

*Protect food sources and biodiversity and oppose waste*

*Share resources – 'be more' rather than 'having more'*

*Support those who feed the most vulnerable*

## GIVE DRINK TO THE THIRSTY

- > **Support** organisations that build wells for water or raise funds for a water well in a specific area of need.
- > **Think** about waste water. Remembering to turn off the water tap when you are brushing your teeth or washing dishes can help, especially in regions suffering from drought.
- > **Make a change** to preserve clean, fresh water by using environmentally friendly laundry detergents or by trying to be moderate in the amount of water we put on our lawns or use in showers
- > **Give** drink to the thirsty in the form of making monetary or food donations to the local food bank, soup kitchen and other initiatives that bring food and drink to the poor.
- > **"Feel"** the thirst by not having another glass and instead donate the money to a clean water initiative.

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COMPASSION JUSTICE RESPECT HOPE



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