

# Online Resource - Lenten Reflections

# The Grace of Fresh Water

GOD REVEALING, GOD INSPIRING, GOD CHALLENGING

*"Our Earth is talking to us and we must listen to it and decipher its message if we want to survive"* Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, 2007

## Week 3 - Fresh Water

*"..Where then can you get this living water?"* Jn 4: 11b

### God Revealing.....

#### Getting to know Fresh Water

Fresh water is water that has less than 0.05% dissolved salts. It begins as rain. Most of Earth's fresh water is in the form of ice. Less than 1% of Earth's total water is available for our use. It may come from rivers, lakes, dams or from underground aquifers, all part of the water cycle. Water moves through the landscape and picks up materials, natural and man-made, shaping the landscape and forming ecosystems.

*The singing Heart of the Earth, John Feehan.*



Image source: E Lanyon

#### Reflection

***"We forget that the water cycle and the life cycle are one."*** Jacques Cousteau, underwater explorer

Living in an arid country like Australia forces us to realise how dependent we are on life-giving water. By its nature, water carries multiple levels

of meaning. It is the fluid of birth. It is the element used to celebrate Baptism into Christ's community. The scriptures are full of water as life imagery: river, well, spring.

**What scriptural image of water appeals to you? Why?**



Image source: Pixabay.com

### God Inspiring.....

#### Meditation

**Create a sacred space with a bowl of fresh water.**

**Read "In Praise of Water":** <sup>1</sup>Let us bless the humility of water, <sup>2</sup>Always willing to take the shape of whatever otherness holds it. <sup>3</sup>The buoyancy of water, stronger than the deadening, downward drag of gravity. <sup>4</sup>The innocence of water, flowing forth without thought of what awaits it. <sup>5</sup>The refreshment of water, dissolving the crystals of thirst. Water, voice of grief, cry of love, in the flowing tear. <sup>6</sup>Water, vehicle and idiom of all the inner voyaging that keeps us alive. <sup>7</sup>Blessed be water, our first mother." Pat O'Donohue in *"The Four Elements"* by John O'Donohue.

**Reflect on the essence of water within our bodies.**

***"We thirst for water and we thirst for the living water in the inner well of the soul."***  
John O'Donohue

We pray in gratitude for living water as a life-giving gift from God. Help us conserve it.

### God Challenging.....

Even as the quality of available water is constantly diminishing, in some places there is a growing tendency, despite its scarcity, to privatise this resource, turning it into a commodity subject to the laws of the market. Yet *access to safe drinking 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.*"Laudato Si" #30

***"We need a renewed spirituality of water that recognises its centrality for all life."***  
*The Gift of Water, Catholic Earthcare Australia.*

#### Responding to God's call

1. Consider your water use at school, home, work. Do you need to use quality water to flush the toilet, water the garden etc?
2. Find ways to be in solidarity with those in the world where fresh water is becoming more scarce, and the poor are having to pay more for it, for example in Pakistan. [www.columban.org.au](http://www.columban.org.au)

***"An awareness of the gravity of today's cultural and ecological crisis must be translated into new habits"***. *Laudato Si'* #209



***"And God saw that it was good."*** Gen 1



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