

WORLD WATER DAY 22 March 2009

What is it?

*Garry collects it from the gutters of most churches and friaries;
Tom Davison collects it in used two litre milk bottles as he waits for it to warm up;
Mel uses it from a watering container to keep his pot plants alive;
And, on feast days, most Friars like to add a touch to their scotch water*

World Water Day is an International Day declared by the UN in 1992. The United Nations General Assembly designated 22 March of each year as the World Day for Water.

This year, the theme is "Shared Water - Shared Opportunities", with a special focus on transboundary waters. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) lead the activities of the World Water Day 2009 with the support of United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

Why is this important?

Over 40% of the world's population lives in river basins shared by two or more countries. The world's 263 transboundary river basins include the territory of 145 countries and cover nearly half of the earth's land surface. Great reservoirs of freshwater also move below borders in underground aquifers. There is enough freshwater to meet everyone's needs however this is not evenly distributed nor managed appropriately. Many are already facing an increasing scarcity of freshwater. In some areas, access to good quality water has reduced due to pollution from the human population, industry and agriculture.

Climate change will have an impact of water resources and their management. As temperatures rise, rainfall patterns will change increasing the risks of floods, drought and other water related disasters.

Thus it is important to nurture the opportunities for cooperation in transboundary water management that can help build mutual respect, understanding and trust among countries, promote peace, security and sustainable economic growth. We share the responsibility for managing the world's transboundary waters for current and future generations.



What can we do?

- Share this information with your parish and community.
- Think of ways that you can conserve water in your community and let me know so that I can share your ideas with ideas.
- Make Lent a time to promote water justice and water as a human right. Refer to the Ecumenical Water Network website (<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/activities/ewn-home/resources-and-links/seven-weeks-for-water.html>) for weekly reflections and campaign ideas.

PRAYER OF WATER

*“Praised be You my Lord for Sister Water, who is useful, humble, precious and pure.”
As St. Francis prayed in great gratitude for Sister Water, we pray in thankfulness for
her life-sustaining generosity.*

*Oh water, in your mysterious beauty you cause the desert to bloom. One tiny drop
spread collected with thousands of drops water seeds and future harvests to feed us
and all creatures. One tiny drop multiplied quenches our burning thirst.*

Our bodies, like the body of earth, are over 75% water.

We are a water people. We are a water planet.

*Oh compassionate God, Creator who breathed over the waters, we seek forgiveness for
our mindless use of water. We beg for wisdom to know how to conserve and cherish
water. We ask healing for the ways that we disrespect and contaminate our sister.
In this drought time we wait and watch for the gift of rain upon the earth. We watch
and wait for the rain of grace into our souls. Come free us from the hatred, greed, fear,
and our lack of love for your gifts upon earth.*

*Transform us into living streams of water, flowing green and moist with life, hope and
love for earth and all peoples. AMEN.*

Adapted from Sr. vJoan Brown, OSF (Ecological Ministry of the Social Justice Office, Archdiocese of Santa Fe)

Whether we live upstream or downstream, we are all still in the same boat.

EARTH HOUR Saturday March 28



Earth Hour 2009 is a global call to action to every individual, every business and every community. It is a call to stand up, to take responsibility and to get involved in working towards a sustainable future. Don't forget to *turn off your lights at 8.30pm on Saturday* for one hour.

Refer to <http://www.earthhourau.org/> for resources.

Sources: <http://www.franciscansinternational.org/resources/prayint.php>
<http://www.ofm-jpic.org/>
<http://www.unwater.org/worldwaterday/flashindex.html>

Sarah Menassa

Promoter of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation

Franciscan Provincial Office 47 Victoria Street, WAVERLEY NSW 2024
Telephone: (02) 9369 9309 Fax: (02) 9369 9322