

LIVING WATER

POST PRIMARY PRAYER SERVICE



YOU NEED:

A large bowl, blue tablecloth, lighted candle, large jug of water, four small cups, the details below printed onto large sheets for the readers, small pebbles and a copy of the service (enough for everyone attending).

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

You may like to introduce music into the liturgy. There are many hymns/songs that would be appropriate. Here are a few suggestions:

- 'Come to the Water' by Matt Maher
- 'Let Your Living Water Flow' by John Watson – Ampelos Music
- 'Holy Spirit Living Water' by David Baroni – Kingdom songs, Inc.
- 'Living Water' by Glenn Feehan – C3 Music Publishing

CREATING THE PRAYER SPACE:

If you plan to create the prayer space yourself prior to the students arriving to class you may wish to download some images from Malawi/Kenya as a visual reflection aid. Go online to www.trocaire.org and download pictures from our Flickr stream. Alternatively you could also set the students a practical homework assignment a few days before the planned service. Instruct them to bring in objects/images that personally reflect for them the significance of water. As a class you could spend a few moments collectively building the prayer space and discussing the symbolism of the objects provided.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Get the class to sit around the room in a large circle
2. In the middle of the circle (on the floor) create a prayer space with a blue tablecloth and a lighted candle
3. Place the large empty bowl in the middle
4. Fill up four small cups of water and give them to each of the readers
5. When it is their turn ask your students to carefully empty the water from their cup into the empty bowl and to read their piece aloud to the class
6. After doing so they can return to their seat.



LEADER: Welcome everyone to our liturgy. Here in Ireland we are blessed to have an abundant supply of clean drinkable water which we use for washing, growing food and cooking. We don't have to wake up every morning worrying about where we are going to get water from and if that water will make us sick. Unfortunately this is the reality for millions of people worldwide. Today we are going to pray for those living in Malawi and throughout the Global South who find it difficult to access this most basic essential need.

Let us begin our prayer: **In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

"I will pour water onto the thirsty land."
Isaiah 44:3.

In the Bible the love and power of God is often described as water (Psalm 42, John 13:5, Matthew 10:42). Water is essential in our lives. It is one of God's most precious gifts to mankind. Water can be refreshing when we are thirsty, and it helps things grow. God wants all of us to be refreshed by him, to grow and to live well. Through experiencing the living water of God's love we are called to love and help others throughout the world especially if they are in need.



INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Invite the first reader to approach the prayer space and carefully empty their cup of water into the bowl
2. Then they should read their prayer to the class and place their empty cup beside the bowl
3. After this they should return to their seat and the next reader should approach the prayer space

We pray this prayer in the name of God, who is the 'living water'.

Amen.



LEADER:

"Let anyone who is thirsty come to me! Let anyone who believes in me come and drink! As scripture says, 'From his heart shall flow streams of living water.'"

John 7:37-38.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION:



READER 1: Today there are 783 million people who find it difficult to access safe drinkable water and most of these people live in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Without access to water for drinking, cooking and cleaning, they are more likely to suffer from water related diseases which can make them sick.



READER 2: In these countries most of the water is collected by women and girls. They can spend up to six hours a day walking to collect water which they then have to carry back to their villages in heavy containers. As a result the girls often miss out on valuable time at school.



READER 3: 2.5 billion people, including almost one billion children, live without basic sanitation. Every 20 seconds a child dies as a result of poor sanitation.



READER 4: 150 litres of water is approximately used by every person living in Ireland each day. This is equivalent to almost 2 full bathtubs of water and most of this water is wasted and flushed away. People living in Malawi consume approximately 20 litres. The earth's resources are not being shared equally.



ALL: *Loving God, Just as we have poured this water into the empty bowl, please fill all of us with your loving spirit. Help us to become fountains of your living water and to show your love and kindness to others in the midst of a thirsting world.*



READER: We pray for the people of Malawi, and our other brothers and sisters in other countries of the world, who are experiencing limited access to water. We pray that they may face a brighter future, one where they no longer have to worry about where their next cup of water is coming from.

Lord, in your mercy,



ALL: *Hear our prayer.*



READER: We pray that world leaders may follow the example of Jesus and ensure that safe drinkable water is accessible to everyone in need.

Lord, in your mercy,



ALL: *Hear our prayer.*

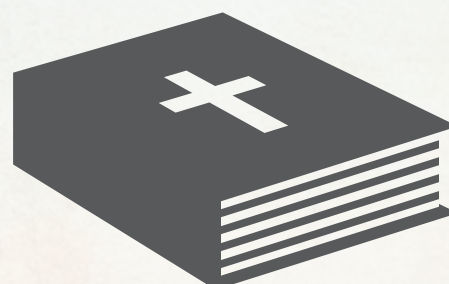


READER: We pray for ourselves, that we will have the courage to take the lead on changing our own lifestyles so that we can have a positive impact on other people and the planet.

Lord, in your mercy,



ALL: *Hear our prayer.*





Women at river, Malawi

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Give out a small pebble to each student
2. Ask them to hold the pebble in their hand and be aware of it as you read them the following poem
3. Alternatively you could divide the poem up and get half of the students to read aloud the first and third verses of the poem and the remaining students could read aloud the second and fourth verses of the poem



LEADER: A Dropped Pebble
by James W. Foley

Drop a pebble in the water: just a splash, and it is gone;
But there's half-a-hundred ripples circling on and on and on,
Spreading, spreading from the center, flowing on out to the sea.
And there is no way of telling where the end is going to be.

Drop a pebble in the water: in a minute you forget,
But there's little waves a-flowing, and there's ripples circling yet,
And those little waves a-flowing to a great big wave have grown;
You've disturbed a mighty river just by dropping in a stone.

Drop an unkind word, or careless: in a minute it is gone;
But there's half-a-hundred ripples circling on and on and on.
They keep spreading, spreading, spreading from the center as they go,
And there is no way to stop them, once you've started them to flow.

Drop an unkind word, or careless: in a minute you forget;
But there's little waves a-flowing, and there's ripples circling yet,
And perhaps in some sad heart a mighty wave of tears you've stirred,
And disturbed a life was happy ere you dropped that unkind word.





INSTRUCTIONS:

1. After reading the poem, ask the students to reflect on how their words and actions have consequences in the world e.g. Can you think of moments in your life when something you have said or done has had an effect on another person?
2. Invite them to each come up in turn and to drop their pebble into the bowl
3. As they do this, ask them to be conscious of the ripples created by their pebble
4. Invite them inwardly to make a pledge to try to help others this lent by respecting their own water usage and to say a small prayer of thanksgiving to God for the precious gift of water
5. You may wish to play some reflective music during this activity. There are suggestions for songs/hymns at the beginning of this resource



ALL (Closing Prayer):

*Loving God,
Help us to go out today and show the
love and compassion to others that
you have shown to us. Help us to use water
wisely and to cherish it as a precious resource.
Let the courage we have received through your
spirit help us bring about your will on earth.
We pray this prayer in the name of God, who is
the 'living water'.
Amen.*



LEADER: In the name of the father
and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.



Woreya and Maria,
Aged 3, Rwanda

