

***“Sacred Water:
Precious Gift and Critical Concern”***



Half-Day Reflection On Water

Adapted from retreat offered by Mercy International Reflection Group at Mercy Center, St. Louis

Suggested Schedule

9:00	Morning Prayer
9:30	Part I: Our Personal Experience of Water
10:00	Sharing
10:15	Break
10:30	Video: “Water, Sacred and Profaned”
11:00	Part II: The Crisis & Our Response
12:00	Closing Ritual

Opening Prayer

Leader: To our God, Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier...

All: We give thanks and praise.

Opening Song: "I Say A Prayer for the Water" by Earth Mama or other appropriate song

Opening Prayer

Ps 104 – (antiphonally)

Ant: Praise the Radiant One, O my soul!

- I. You are clothed with justice and mercy,
arrayed in light as your fine attire.
You stretch over the heavens like a tent,
your radiance covering the waters;
you shine through the clouds,
and ride on the wings of the wind;
the wind, like the Breath of Life, carries your Word,
fire refines the dross of our soul.

- II. You set the earth on its foundations, strong and secure.
You covered it with the deep like a garment,
with many waters that life might come forth.
At your Word, the waters divided,
becoming rivers and lakes and mighty oceans;
storms came to ensure the balance
and to renew the earth.
The mountains rose, the valleys became low
in the places that you did appoint.
You brought harmony to all the earth,
that life might spring forth in abundance.

- I. You created springs to flow into the valleys;
they flow between the hills,
giving drink to every creature of the field,
quenching their thirst

as your living water quenches ours.

With the air, you have given birds their habitation;
they sing among the branches.
The majesty of creation is seen throughout the land;
the sounds of Creation mingle
with the music of the spheres.

II. O You, who know all hearts,
how manifold are your works!
In wisdom you have created them all;
the earth is filled with your creatures.
We look to the seas, great and wide,
which teem with life innumerable,
helping to maintain the balance.
O, that we might receive your gifts,
taking only what is needed with grateful hearts.

(Merrill, Nan. *Praying With the Psalms*. New York, NY: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2002. Reprint permission requested.)

All: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without
end. Amen.

Ant: Praise the Radiant One, O my soul!

Scripture:

Revelation 22: 17

Closing Prayer

Video:

[“Water, Sacred and Profaned”](#)

What image or idea moved you and/or captured your imagination?
What does it say to you?

How does your life bear witness to the sacredness of water?

Part II – The Crisis and Our Response

[Fast facts](#) about the global water crisis

Video:

[“The Water Crisis”](#)

Personal reflection:

What new information did you receive which opens your eyes to the water crisis in the world?



Small group sharing

- What did you see or hear this morning that increased your awareness of the water crisis in our world?

- How do you feel as a result of what you've learned?

- What can **you** do to address this water crisis?

Closing Ritual

Leader: Praised be to you, my Lord, for Sister Water...

All: ... who is useful, humble, precious and pure.

Leader: Let us pray.

Creator God, whose Spirit moved over the face of the waters, who gathers the seas into their places and directs the courses of the rivers; who sends rain upon the earth that it should bring forth life: we praise you for the gift of water. We remember with thanksgiving the many manifestations of your grace through the gift of water...

Litany of Repentance

Water is both gift and right...yet so many of our brothers and sisters lack access to it and suffer and die from its scarcity.

Response: O God of mercy, forgive us, we pray;

For failing to honor the sacredness of water...

For taking for granted its abundance...

For forgetting its essential nature for the sustenance of life...

For thoughtlessly polluting our waterways...

For not calling others to awareness...

For ignoring the desperate need of our brothers and sisters
around the globe...

For failing to take concrete action to change ourselves and
our behaviors...

O Compassionate God,

we seek forgiveness for our mindless use of water...

we beg for wisdom to know how to conserve and cherish it...

we ask for healing for ourselves and our sister Earth.

Commitment

You may find some ideas **at the end of this document.**

- Please choose an individual action that will help **you** to restore a more sacred relationship with water and/or make some small difference.
- Share your commitment with others

Closing prayer

Leader: Spirit of Living Water,

You hold all creation in your womb
and spring us forward onto the Earth at birth.

- I. Spirit of the Tides,
remind us of the rise and fall of your rhythms
so that we may discover them deep within ourselves.
- II. Spirit of Greenness,
bring moistness and vigor to our lives
so that we might savor the experience of your energy
moving through us out into your world.

Leader:

May the blessing of God's sacred waters be upon us. **Amen.**
May we discover within us the fountain of life, gushing forth
to bring newness of life. **Amen.**

May God's Spirit help us to hear and respond generously to
the cry of the Earth, and the cry of the poor. **Amen.**

Ideas for bettering our relationship with “Sister Water”

1. Contemplate – every time you use water, remember that it is a gift of God. Develop an attitude of reverence toward it.
2. Take a shower rather than a bath.
3. Turn off the water while brushing your teeth.
4. Put water in the sink to wash and rinse dishes.
5. Run the dishwasher and washing machine only when full.
6. Use a bucket when washing the car.
7. Use a broom instead of a hose to clean your deck or sidewalk.
8. Start a compost pile instead of using a garbage disposal.
9. Refuse to buy bottled water.
10. Conserve water:
 - Fix leaky faucets/taps/ showers
 - Limit lawn watering and long showers
 - Water garden at the coolest part of the day
 - Allow grass to grow longer; it will stay greener and need less water
11. Be an advocate and defender of “water for all” as a basic human right
12. Be wary of plans to give over water rights to private companies
13. Watch a video(s) at www.mercyworld.org.