

The Water for Life DVD illustrates the work of Catholic Relief Services in partnership with the National Council of Catholic Women in responding to the critical need for water projects in developing countries. The greatest humanitarian crisis in the world today is food and water scarcity issues that threaten the peace and security of most developing nations.

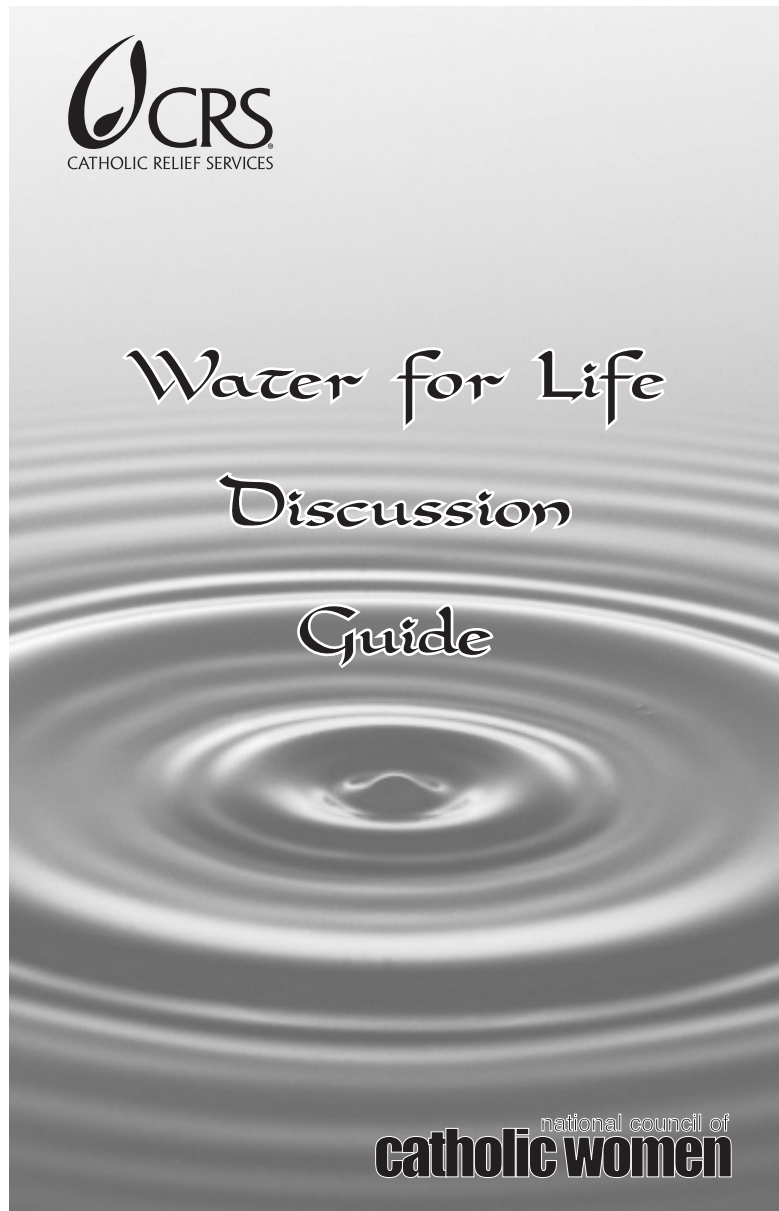


Catholic Relief Services was founded in 1943 by the Catholic Bishops in the United States to assist the poor and disadvantaged outside the U.S. The fundamental force in all activities of CRS is the Gospel of Jesus Christ as it pertains to the alleviation of human suffering, the development of people and the fostering of charity and justice in the world. The policies and programs of the agency reflect and express the teaching of the Catholic Church. At the same time, Catholic Relief Services assists person on the basis of need, NOT creed, race or nationality. (www.crs.org)



The National Council of Catholic Women was founded in March 1920 under the auspices of the U.S. Catholic bishops and in recognition of the widespread influence on church and society already exerted by American Catholic women. The National Council of Catholic Women acts through its membership to support, empower and educate all Catholic women in spirituality, leadership and service. NCCW programs respond with Gospel values to the needs of the Church and society in the modern world. (www.nccw.org)

CRS and the NCCW have been in relationship since 1946, when the NCCW began collecting clothing for CRS to distribute to the refugees of WWII.



Initial Preparation

If you are leading the group discussion, preview the DVD and read this guide so you are familiar with it. Adapt the questions and activities as necessary to your audience.

Suggested Teaching Model

1) Welcome and introductions. Water is a natural resource that covers three-quarters of the earth's surface, with only a fraction of it is locked in ice. South America accounts for about half of the planet's fresh water. Most of the water we use goes to growing food: irrigation siphons off roughly two-thirds of the water we consume. Industrial and other economic activities draw less than a third. Water is often distributed inequitably by class, gender, and even ethnic group. There are strategies to increase water supply such as desalinating sea water or shipping by pipeline or sea, but these are complex and expensive and incur severe ecological cost. Today, approximately 40% of the world's population lives in water shortage conditions and by 2025, that number is expected to reach 66%. (www.un.org/waterforlifedecade)

2) Icebreaker Question

- “It is apparent that water is critical to communities and nations. What do you think happens when there is too much water or too little water to a community?”

3) Pre-Video discussion. Create the connection between faith, justice and water. Share what the Pope, the U.S. Bishops, and the Bible have said on the environment on flip charts or handouts. Choose some or all of these quotes to go over and then answer reflection questions.

- Our faith calls us to be good stewards of the earth and all its creatures. Write some of these questions up on a flip chart and have people read them one by one and ask the question below.

Genesis 1:31, 2:15 (goodness of creation/stewardship of the earth)

Job 37:14 (the wonder of earth)

2 Kings:21-22 (God cleaned the water)

Isaiah 24:4-5 (earth is polluted by man)

Leviticus 25:2-4 (Sabbath- let the land rest)

Psalms 24: 1-2 (earth belongs to God)

Daniel 3:74-81 (all the earth blesses God)

Hosea 4:1-3 (humans wound the earth)

Romans 8:18-25 (all creation awaits redemption)

Question: What did that quote mean to you?

- “The dominion granted to man by the Creator is not an absolute power, nor can one speak of freedom to ‘use or misuse’, or to dispose of things as one pleases. The limitation imposed from the beginning by the Creator . . . shows clearly enough that, when it comes to the natural world, we are subject not only to biological laws but also to moral ones, which cannot be violated with impunity.” (Pope John Paul II, *On Social Concern*)

Question: What do you think are the moral laws God has placed on humans in relation to creation?

- Catholic social teaching: We show respect for the Creator by our stewardship of creation. Care for the earth is not just a slogan but a requirement of our faith. We are called to protect people and the planet, living our faith in relationship with all of God's creation. This environmental challenge has fundamental moral and ethical dimensions that cannot be ignored. (USCCB, *Sharing Catholic social teaching: Challenges and Directions*)

Question: What are some of the fundamental moral and ethical dimensions of water scarcity?

- Seven Themes of Ecological Responsibility. Look at this web site to get fuller explanation: <http://conservation.catholic.org/background.htm>.

1. God-centered and sacramental view of the Universe.
2. Consistent respect for human life, which extends to respect for all Creation.
3. A world view affirming the ethical significance of global interdependence and the global common good.
4. An ethic of solidarity promoting cooperation and a just structure of sharing in the world community.
5. An understanding of the universal purpose of created things, which requires equitable use of the earth's resources.
6. An option for the poor, which gives passion to the quest for an equitable and sustainable world.
7. An idea of authentic development, which offers a direction for progress that respects human dignity and the limits of material growth.

- 4) Watch the entire DVD *Water for Life*, then, take a few minutes to reflect on the following questions:

- What struck you the most about *Water for Life*? What did you feel?
- What did you see to make you believe water is critical to human dignity?
- To make you believe water is critical to a community's development?
- Name some of the problems you saw and some of the solutions.

- Describe where you saw God, Jesus or the Holy Spirit.
- What does your faith tradition say about the care of water and the earth?
- Now that you know about water scarcity and issues pertaining to water security globally, what do you think you can do as a community? As an individual?

5) Activity

Have people reflect on how much water they consume a day. Make a list of each time in one day you use water and guess how much water is used during an entire day. Here are some examples:

- A five minute shower uses 26 gallons of water.
- One toilet flush is 5.28 gallons.
- A washing machine uses 59.45 gallons.
- Last, ask if they know how much water does a person in the developing world use. The average person in the developing world uses 2.65 gallons a day. Compare that to an average day in the U.S. (www.earthday.net)

6) Wrap-Up

“The world needs to respond much better. We need to increase water efficiency, especially in agriculture. We need to free women and girls from the daily chore of hauling water, often over great distances. We must involve them in decision-making on water management. We need to make sanitation a priority. This is where progress is lagging most. And we must show that water resources need to not be a source of conflict. Instead, they can be a catalyst for cooperation. Significant gains have been made. But a major effort is still required. This is an urgent matter of human development and human dignity. The world’s resources are our lifeline for survival, and for sustainable development in the 21st century.” (Kofi A. Annan, Secretary General for the United Nations, 2005)

Seven Ways To Conserve Water

(www.h2house.org and www.coopamerica.org)

- Only buy bottled water if it is absolutely necessary. Government and industry estimates at least 40% of bottled water is actually tap water.
- Change your shower heads and faucets for low- flow shower heads, which will reduce water use by 50%.
- Stop leaks inside and outside the house because leaks waste between 10-50% of water use.

- Replace your old toilet or use the old brick trick to displace water and thus use less water per flush.
- Replace your clothes washer if the “water factor” is above 9.5 and use cold water only because the washing machine is the second largest water user in the home.
- Select plants appropriate to your local climate conditions that need less irrigation. Water your plants only as needed.
- Teach your family and friends.

Organize A Community Action

Gather people interested in water and look at the needs of the community. Observe and name a water problem. What are the social, cultural, political, economic influences on that problem? What are the consequences to the problem? What does your faith tradition say about the problem? Plan an action and ask, what are the risks involved? Then start the same method over again with observation and what was learned. (www.worldwaterday.org/page/130)

Organize And/Or Join Environmental Legislative Advocacy

Many times, the legislation can change structures that allow dignity and a healthy environment. (www.earthday.net)

Make Donation Gifts

For instance, in Malawi one bore hole costs U.S. \$5,750 and provides water for 250 families. Bore hole rehabilitation costs U.S. \$1,750. Digging a shallow well costs U.S. \$1,400.

Some of the integrated water project costs (U.S. \$59,072 for one year) in Brazil include training local leaders and maintaining sanitation facilities.

Payable to the **Water for Life Fund** and send to:

The National Council of Catholic Women
200 North Glebe Rd. Suite 703 • Arlington, VA 22203
703-224-0330 x103

Educate Others

- Order this DVD from NCCW at the above address and phone number.
- Research Water:
 - *Global water information.* (www.unesco.org/water/water_celebrations/index.shtml or www.un.org/waterforlifedecade)
 - *Live a 'green life.'* (www.coopamerica.org)

Find Out More About Catholic Relief Services

For more information call 866-608-5978 or go to: www.crs.org

Malawi Country Profile

The landlocked country of Malawi, lying at the southern tip of the East African Rift Valley, is ranked as the world's seventh poorest country. Almost 80% of Malawi's 11 million inhabitants rely primarily on subsistence agriculture, a livelihood that remains highly vulnerable due to severe climatic conditions, ineffective crop management practices, dependence on maize and poor government policy. With life expectancy at 38 years and close to 62% of the population living below the poverty line, meeting basic livelihood needs is a tremendous challenge for the vast majority of Malawians.

Limited access to health care and education further hinders efforts to achieve greater food security. Sociocultural and economic barriers have a particularly negative effect on women and children. Alarming, 49% of children under five suffer from stunting, indicating severe food insecurity. Chronic illnesses, namely parasites, malaria and increasingly HIV and AIDS, take children out of schools, women away from productive activities and farmers out of fields. Ultimately, these problems create a large population with little access to capital, plagued by chronic illnesses and with little opportunity to reduce food insecurity.

CRS programming includes long-term, sustainable interventions in HIV and AIDS, health and nutrition, agriculture, justice and peace, while maintaining competencies in emergency relief.

Brazil Country Profile

Brazil is the fifth largest country in the world with a population of 172 million people. Approximately 24 million Brazilians live in extreme poverty and, according to the Brazilian bishops, 50 million go hungry. CRS works primarily in two areas: CRS has two areas of emphasis: providing technical assistance and resources to partners helping beneficiaries living in semi-arid regions and supporting human rights organizations that seek to help Brazilian society become more aware of its rights, and to put pressure on those elements within the society that oppress and exploit fellow Brazilians.

CRS reached many extremely disadvantaged populations through its local partners and helped improve living conditions by responding to basic water needs, strengthening access to resources and increasing advocacy for civil, political, economic and social rights.

In addition, by encouraging local communities and organizations to assess their own situations, prioritize their needs, develop initiatives, and seek funding, CRS and its partners are helping local groups build the confidence and capacity to take development into their own hands. Thus, individuals, families, community groups, and local governments learn democratic practices and processes.

EVALUATION

Please copy this page, fill it out and mail to:

Christine Smith, Church Relations Manager
209 W. Fayette Street • Baltimore, MD 21201
Or e-mail your response to: chsmith@crs.org

1. Please give your diocese and name of organization.

2. If you viewed it in a group, how many people saw the DVD?

3. What impact did the DVD have on you or the group?

4. If a group has not seen the DVD, do you have plans to coordinate a group viewing? (*circle one*) **Yes** **No**

5. Please describe either your future plans for the DVD or your thoughts on why you do not intend to use it in the future.
