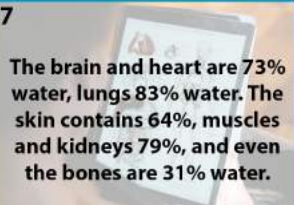


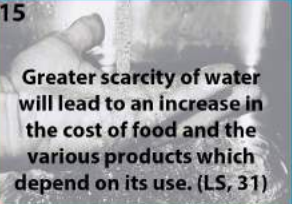
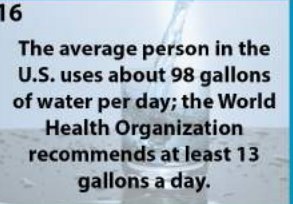



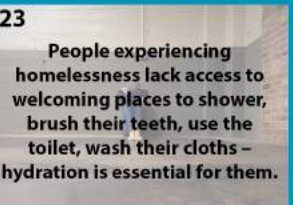

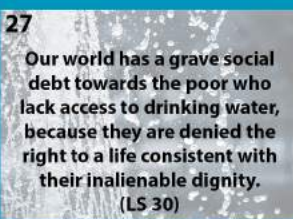

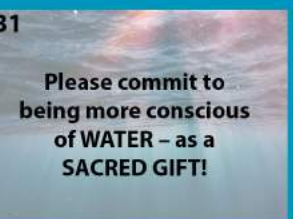


MERCY EARTH CHALLENGE



Water: Sacred Gift

<p>1</p> <p>Please consider your relationship with water, an absolute essential for all life.</p>	<p>2</p> <p>"Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters." (Genesis 1:2)</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Water is sacramental. Yet it is something we tend to take for granted.</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Water is life. It sustains us. It grows our food and makes our economy flow.</p>			
<p>5</p> <p>"Our very bodies are made up of earth's elements, we breathe her air and we receive life and refreshment from her waters." (LS 2)</p>	<p>6</p>  <p>What percent of your body is made up of water? 60%</p>	<p>7</p>  <p>The brain and heart are 73% water, lungs 83% water. The skin contains 64%, muscles and kidneys 79%, and even the bones are 31% water.</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Water is used for hydration, washing, recreation, etc. How have you used water lately?</p> 	<p>9</p> <p>Today, water is under assault. Millions of people lack access to clean drinking water.</p> 	<p>10</p> <p>Water shortages have already taken place in many parts of the world.</p> 	<p>11</p> <p>Since 2014, more than 150,000 households in Detroit have had their water shut off because they cannot afford the high water rates.</p> 
<p>12</p> <p>Water shutoffs are done in many U.S. cities regardless of who is in the house--children, elders, pregnant, babies, or persons who are sick or disabled.</p> 	<p>13</p>  <p>Every spring, Detroit Water Sewage Department announces how many homes will be shut off; in 2019 it was "only 5,600."</p>	<p>14</p> <p>If you are able, round up your water bill to the next dollar amount to contribute to your utility's fund for households having difficulties making water payments.</p> 	<p>15</p> <p>Greater scarcity of water will lead to an increase in the cost of food and the various products which depend on its use. (LS, 31)</p> 	<p>16</p> <p>The average person in the U.S. uses about 98 gallons of water per day; the World Health Organization recommends at least 13 gallons a day.</p> 	<p>17</p> <p>Try using just 4 gallons of water today, the average daily usage in poor countries such as Haiti.</p> 	<p>18</p> <p>Those who lack access to water are denied the right to a life consistent with their inalienable dignity.</p> 
<p>19</p> <p>What's your favorite soft drink? Did you know a small bottle of Coca-Cola takes roughly 1.9 liters of water to make?</p> 	<p>20</p>  <p>Amazingly, it can take 713 gallons to produce the cotton for a single t-shirt.</p>	<p>21</p>  <p>Research installing a low-flow shower-head and low-flow toilet to save water.</p>	<p>22</p> <p>A walk-in center for homeless individuals in Philadelphia receives 6643 visits a year from 1261 unique individuals, partly to access water.</p> 	<p>23</p> <p>People experiencing homelessness lack access to welcoming places to shower, brush their teeth, use the toilet, wash their cloths - hydration is essential for them.</p> 	<p>24</p> <p>What commitments can you make in your community, workplace, home or personally to conserve water?</p> 	<p>25</p>  <p>Jesus said - Give drink to the thirsty. Jesus said - I thirst!</p>
<p>26</p> <p>Express gratitude for the precious gift of water every time you wash your hands today or flush a toilet or do your wash.</p> 	<p>27</p> <p>Our world has a grave social debt towards the poor who lack access to drinking water, because they are denied the right to a life consistent with their inalienable dignity. (LS 30)</p> 	<p>28</p> <p>"More people die as a result of polluted water than are killed by all forms of violence including war." (UN Secretary General)</p> 	<p>29</p> <p>Climate change is bringing drought to many areas, severely disrupting agriculture and food production, while other regions experience severe flooding.</p> 	<p>30</p> <p>Raise someone's awareness of the precious resource that water is.</p> 	<p>31</p> <p>Please commit to being more conscious of WATER - as a SACRED GIFT!</p> 	<p>July 2020</p>