

The logo for the Mercy Earth Challenge features the words "MERCY", "EARTH", and "CHALLENGE" stacked vertically in a bold, green, sans-serif font. To the right of the text is a colorful, stylized flower or sunburst icon with six petals in shades of green, yellow, orange, red, purple, and blue. The background of the slide is white with green diagonal accents in the top-left and bottom-right corners.

# MERCY EARTH CHALLENGE

*“Those who lack access to water are denied the right to a life consistent with their inalienable dignity.”* (July 18<sup>th</sup>, [Water: Sacred Gift calendar](#))

## **Water is Under Assault**

Earth’s precious resource of water is under assault.

Oceans are becoming more acidic. Rivers, springs and underground aquifers, sources of fresh water, are polluted and exploited, denying millions of people access to clean drinking water. This is exacerbated by corporations and large companies, like beverage companies, extracting huge quantities of water from local sources, leaving little or no water for local use. In many places throughout the world, water is becoming a commodity sold for profit rather than recognized as a resource for basic human need.

Join us in learning more this week.

- Oceanographer Triona McGrath explores how climate change is leading to acidification of the oceans in [this video](#) (8.55 minutes). You can access Spanish sub-titles by clicking onto the three dots at the bottom right of your screen.
- A 2019 [report from the National Resources Defense Council](#) shows that communities of color in the U.S. are consistently more likely to have drinking water systems that violate federal law. The report is available in English and Spanish.
- Choose one of the following videos from the Story of Stuff: A [Tale of Two Cities](#) (12.37 minutes) explores the growing threat

of water privatization through the story of Ewart and Flint, two very different cities in Michigan.

[Our Water, Our Future](#) (7.29 minutes) tells the story of activists who set out to protect their town in Oregon against a proposal from Nestle to bottle their water.

You may access auto-translate through the videos' settings function.

- Read about water shut-offs and the fight over water privatization in Detroit. [Mercy Sister Mary Ellen Howard](#) has joined other activists in fighting mass water shut-offs in that city. And [an article reports](#) how Pepsi and Coke make millions of dollars bottling the city's tap water at the expense of local residents.

### **How are Mercys responding?**

We asked for your stories of water, and we received a few submissions that we will be sharing throughout the month. The first is a [video from Sister Anne Quigley](#), who taught on the San Carlos Apache reservation for 19 years. She shares how she learned a deeper appreciation for water as sacred gift during her time in ministry there.

Thank you for participating in the Mercy Earth Challenge this week,  
Sisters of Mercy Justice Team