

World Water Day Assembly 22nd March 2012



Part 1

Sketch : Water

This sketch highlights some of the key issues faced by people who are living without access to clean water and sanitation.

Five people enter the worship space / stage carrying opened umbrellas, as if it is raining.

Person 1 (To the other people on stage) Good morning!

Person 2 (Disbelieving) Good? Good? What's good about it? It's raining again! I can't stand the British weather...

Person 3 (Trying to be positive) Well, it's good weather for... er, ducks...

Person 4 That's just quackers.

Person 5 And that's a terrible joke. Anyway, I like rain! (Takes down umbrella and jumps up and down excitedly) I love splashing in the puddles.

People 1-4 (Stops suddenly and stare at Person 5) What? You like rain?!

Person 5 Yeah! I love it. I mean, without it, can you imagine what life would be like?

Person 1 (Sarcastically) Yes! Sunny!

Person 5 Well, okay, it's good to have a bit of sun, too. But we need the rain to survive, don't we?

Person 2 I suppose so...

Person 5 Just think of all the times that you've used water so far today.

Person 3 Well, I showered this morning.

Person 4 (Holding their nose) Are you sure?

Person 2 And I brushed my teeth. (Breathes heavily) Hmm, minty fresh!

Person 3 And I made a cup of tea.

Person 1 (Producing a water bottle) And I've got my water bottle here for later.

Person 4 And I put some clothes in the washing machine before I came out.

Person 3 And I had a boiled egg for breakfast.

Person 1 And I watered the plants.

Person 2 Oh and I flushed the loo!

Person 5 (Interrupting) Okay, okay! Too much information! But you see, we use water all the time, often without thinking.

People 1-4 (Nodding their heads together) Yes, you're right.

Person 5 And where do you think all that water comes from?

Person 1 Er, the tap...

Person 5 Well, yes. But first of all it comes from the rain!

Person 2 I suppose you've got a point.

Person 5 So can you imagine life without water?

Person 3 (Looking up at the sky, sighing) Not in this weather, unfortunately.

Person 4 It would be pretty awful.

Person 5 But that's what millions of people across the world face regularly. 884 million people in the world don't have access to regular clean water.

Person 1 That's a lot of people.

Person 5 And two and a half billion people don't have a safe, clean toilet.

Person 2 That's a lot of people.

Person 5 And not having clean water brings all sorts of problems. For example, lots of time is spent collecting water from wells – a job that's often left to women and children. So children can't always get to school and women cannot always find work.

Person 3 That's not good.

Person 5 And, of course, a lack of clean water often leads to diseases such as dysentery and diarrhoea.

Person 4 That sounds dreadful.

Person 5 That's true. Diarrhoea is easily treated in this country, but it can be deadly.

Person 4 So it could be prevented?

Person 5 Yes, and it's a problem that is affecting many different places - parts of Africa, for example, where it is often hot and dry but also in countries where floods are common, like Bangladesh.

Person 1 So what can we do?

Person 5 Well, organisations such as CAFOD are working hard to give more people access to clean water. In Zambia, for example, CAFOD partners are helping communities to drill boreholes for water and are providing families with a large rainwater tanks to collect water.

Person 2 That sounds brilliantly easy.

Person 5 It is! And CAFOD is working with governments and leaders to help provide better water facilities.

Person 3 It sounds like there's a lot of change needed.

Person 5 There is! But CAFOD are also helping local people to find out more about the importance of clean water and good hygiene, so that they can help to protect themselves.

Person 4 It sounds brilliant!

Person 5 It is! Because water is a brilliant thing – a life-giving thing that we need to survive! So, you see, that's why I love rain (*starts to jump again*) and love splashing in puddles!

People 1-4 (holding out a hand and taking down their umbrellas) Er, it's stopped raining!

CAFOD's work

The sketch gives some brief explanation of CAFOD's clean water work in Zambia and other countries. You can add to this by using messages given by some of the people helped by CAFOD's partners (ask different pupils to read these):

Rosena in Zambia says: "The new system is much better because the water that collects in the tank is protected and lasts for a long time. We use the water for drinking and cooking. We save it for emergencies – drinking water is very special in this village, it is a very valuable thing! "

The borehole and the rainwater tank have both made a huge difference to Rosena. She says: "Having water near our house has made a big difference in my life because it saves me time and energy. I use the extra time to play and have fun with my friends!"

Zimi in Zimbabwe says: "You don't think much about water until there is a problem getting it. Then you think about it all the time. I get a lot of nosebleeds and if water isn't available, how do I clean my face? If we don't have water we can't wash our hands after break and our exercises books get covered in sand and dirt.

"Water is very precious and important in life because without water you cannot survive. Living in a place without water is very hard. It means you have to walk a long way and you get tired.

"Having toilets in the school means we are more hygienic. We help out by washing the toilets and keeping them clean. It's good having toilets and a borehole near the school. It makes our lives easier."

Prayers

Conclude with the following prayers:

Lord, help us to appreciate your gift of water.
As we drink, wash, cleanse and grow,
remind us how brilliant water is
and how precious it is too.

Lord, hear us: **Lord, graciously hear us.**

Lord, we pray for people living without clean water,
and for those who must travel
long distances to collect it.
Bless CAFOD's work in providing water filters
and collection tanks.

Lord, hear us: **Lord, graciously hear us.**

Lord, we pray for those who have been affected
by illness as a result of dirty water and sanitation.
Bring healing to them
and help us to work towards cleanliness and health.

Lord, hear us: **Lord, graciously hear us.**

A Closing Prayer

Lord God,
we thirst for a world of justice –
a world of peace and happiness.
We thirst for people to be treated equally and fairly.
So, Lord, give us the gift of water: the water of life,
the water of forgiveness,
the water that refreshes us
and gives us the energy we need to change our world.
Amen.

