

Water for Life



**Cross Catholic
OUTREACH**

Delivering Food, Shelter and Hope to the Poorest of the Poor

Bless Kenyan families with clean water — and the Living Water of Jesus Christ — through your parish's Lenten outreach.

In the village of Mokine, located in the Archdiocese of Mombasa, Agnes and her neighbors walk about 2 miles to reach the nearest water source. Children often miss school to help collect water for their families.



ACTIVITY GUIDE

As your parish, school or group embarks on its 40-day journey to help Kenyan families in need of clean water, we pray you'll find this activity guide helpful. Inside, you'll see fundraising ideas, daily prayers, Bible verses and meaningful reflections. We encourage parents to work through these activities with their children throughout the Lenten observance.

Getting Started

This activity guide coincides with the U.S. Council of Catholic Bishops' Liturgical Calendar and is designed to enrich the Lenten observance of Catholic families. The "Read and Reflect" sections are based on Sunday Mass readings throughout the 40 days of Lent that culminate in the celebration of Easter.

Some of the activities, such as the "Verse to Memorize" and the "Fact and Prayer" can be done as a family. Throughout the week, families, parishes, schools and groups can work together to complete our suggested Fundraising Activities or conduct fundraising projects of their own.

Feel free to be creative in your use of this guide, incorporating your own ideas to enrich your experience. When you do, please tag us @CrossCatholic on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter using #WaterForLife and tell us about your Lenten observance!

You may also visit CrossCatholic.org/lent to make additional donations on behalf of your family.



WEEK 1

Read and Reflect

Scripture Reading: 1 Peter 3:18-22

In this passage, St. Peter reminds his readers that Noah and his family “were saved through water,” just as we proclaim salvation through baptism. As we begin this season of prayer, fasting and almsgiving for the sake of communities in need, it is important to remember that water does much more than quench thirst. It is also a symbol of spiritual cleansing and a blessed reminder of the new life that is available to us in Christ.

Reflection: Make a prayer card and place it by the sink or hang it on the fridge near the water filter. Every time you use water for anything, say a prayer thanking God for salvation and asking him to provide for families without water.

Verse to Memorize

And saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent and believe in the good news.”

~ *Mark 1:15*

Fundraising Activity: “Collection Cup”

Since much of the campaign will involve fundraising, have the children make a paper water cup using the origami pattern and instructions shown here. They will use their cups to store any money they collect at home during the week.

Directions:

1. Take a large, square piece of paper and turn it so that it looks like a diamond.
 2. Fold the diamond in half to form a triangle.
 3. With the long edge down, fold the left corner diagonally across the center so that the tip meets the right edge of the triangle.
 4. Repeat step 3 for the right corner, folding it diagonally across the center so that the tip meets the left edge of the triangle. It should overlap the side you folded in step 3.
 5. Fold the front-top corner down toward you.
 6. Fold the rear-top corner backwards away from you. Use your fingers to widen the opening at the top and complete your cup.
- Decorate the outside to represent **Water for Life**.

Alternatively, you can use any wide-mouthed cup or water bottle to stay focused on the project’s central purpose: **to provide water for those who have none!**



Fact and Prayer

About 32% of Kenyans do not have access to safe, clean water sources. (CIA World Factbook, 2017)

Father, thank you for cleansing us from our sins and for giving us new life through the sacrifice of your beloved Son. Please help us share these precious gifts of mercy and restoration with those in need of clean water. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.



WEEK 2

Read and Reflect

Scripture Reading: Romans 8:31b-34

God did not withhold anything from us, but gave up his own Son for our salvation.

Reflection: Consider what the Lord has called you to give up during this Lenten season. How can you use that sacrifice to bring him glory and share his mercy with others?

Verses to Memorize

Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, “This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!” ~ *Mark 9:7*

Fundraising Activity: “Every Drop Counts”

Place your collection cup near the bathroom sink, kitchen sink or water dispenser at home. Encourage each family member to place a few coins in the collection cup every time they get a drink, wash their hands or wash the dishes.



Fact and Prayer

Nearly 70% of Kenya’s population does not have access to proper sanitation (such as modern toilets or latrines). This further contaminates the water supply. (The World Bank, 2017)

Dear Lord, thank you that you are a good Father who loves to give good gifts to your children. We lift up the villages in southern Kenya that do not have clean water or proper sanitation. Please meet their needs, heal their bodies and fill them with hope for the future. In the name of Christ our Lord, Amen.



WEEK 3

Read and Reflect

Scripture Reading: John 2:13-25

In this week's reading, Jesus admonished the people who were using his Father's house for their own profit. Many times, our culture encourages us to seek our own benefit above all else. In contrast, Lent encourages us to deny ourselves, honor God and bless our brothers and sisters in need.

Reflection: This week, practice making sacrifices for others around you. Sacrifice a few hours to help at the local food bank, or eat at home instead of at a restaurant and place the money your family saves in the collection cup.

Verses to Memorize

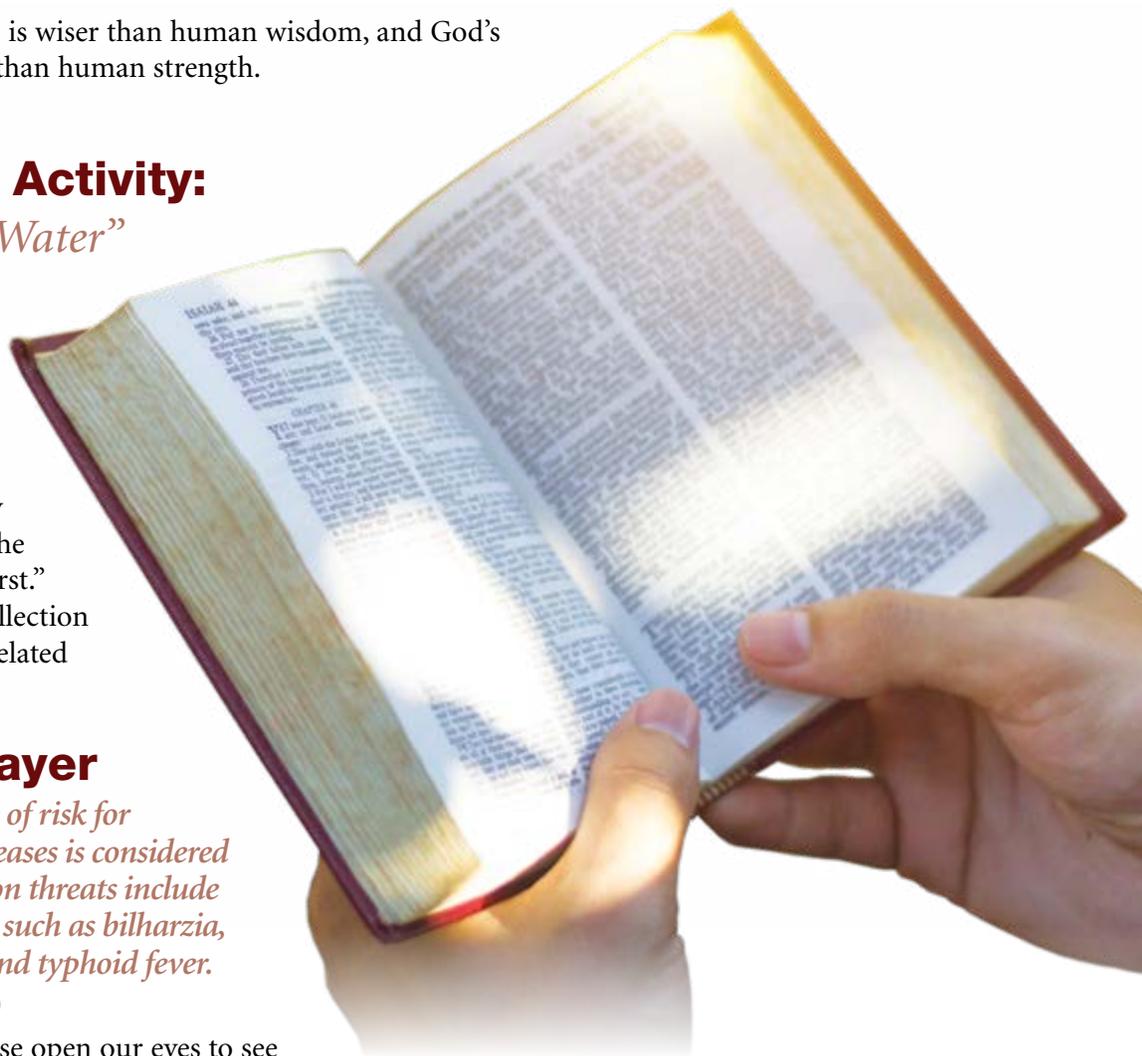
For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

~ 1 Corinthians 1:25

Fundraising Activity:

"The Hunt for Water"

Many poor families spend hours hunting for far-away water sources. This week, hunt through the Scriptures to find any verse that mentions the words "water" or "thirst." Place a coin in the collection cup for every water-related Scripture you find.



Fact and Prayer

In Kenya, the degree of risk for major infectious diseases is considered "very high." Common threats include waterborne diseases such as bilharzia, bacterial diarrhea and typhoid fever.

(CIA World Factbook, 2020)

Heavenly Father, please open our eyes to see urgent needs in the world around us. Bless your Church with wisdom and creativity as we reach out to share Christ's love with those who are sick from drinking unclean water. We pray you would quench their thirst, heal their diseases and use us to bless them in a meaningful way. Through Christ our Lord, Amen.



WEEK 4

Read and Reflect

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 2:4-10

We are saved through faith alone, but we are also “created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.”

Reflection: Fill a clear pitcher with water. Have children add dirt, sticks and leaves to the pitcher. Explain that many poor families must use such dirty water for drinking, washing and bathing. Spend some time praying together, asking that God would use you to accomplish “good works” and help families in Kenya.

Verses to Memorize

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. ~ *John 3:16*

Fundraising Activity: “Washing for Water”

Consider hosting a car wash, dog wash or other water-related service activity. Donate any proceeds to provide clean water for villages in need.



Fact and Prayer

About 41% of Kenyan children under 5 are anemic due to vitamin and mineral deficiencies — conditions worsened by frequent bouts of diarrhea and other waterborne illnesses. (The World Bank, 2016)

Creator and Heavenly Father, thank you for the gift of salvation that comes through Christ alone. Thank you also for allowing us to take part in your plan to accomplish good works that help children and families in need. Please lead us this week as we live by faith. May your mercy be visible in our lives. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.



WEEK 5

Read and Reflect

Scripture Reading: John 12:20-33

Jesus told his disciples that they would bear fruit by dying to their flesh and sowing seeds of salvation. He assured them that the Father would honor anyone who used his or her life to serve Christ.

Reflection: What are some practical ways that you can use your life to serve Christ right now? Spend some time discussing this question with your family. Make a plan to bless at least one person in need this week.

Verses to Memorize

Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him. ~ *Hebrews 5:8-9*



Fundraising Activity: “Growing in Grace”

Place soil in several recyclable seed planters or similar containers. Plant a few bean seeds, marigold seeds or other fast-growing seeds in each one. Explain that most families in Kenya rely on farming for survival. Help the children water the plants, emphasizing the importance of water for growing food. Consider hosting a plant sale with these or other plants, donating the proceeds to **Water for Life**.

Fact and Prayer

Kenya’s economy relies heavily on agriculture — a dangerous gamble in a country frequently plagued by drought. Roughly 75% of the people earn at least a portion of their income through farming.

(CIA World Factbook, 2020)

Christ our Redeemer, thank you for giving your life to reap a great harvest of souls. Help us follow in your footsteps as we sow into the lives of families without water. Please answer their prayers, bless their crops and help them experience your great love. We ask this in your holy name. Amen.



WEEK 6

Read and Reflect

Scripture Reading: Mark 15:36-39

Jesus thirsted as he hung on the cross, but instead of receiving water, he received sour wine.

Reflection: We believe that Jesus still asks us to quench his thirst, and we can fulfill his request by bringing water to those who have none. This week, wake up a little earlier than normal. Spend at least five minutes reflecting on these verses and praying for those who still thirst.

Verses to Memorize

Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting, “Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! ~ *Mark 11:9*

Fundraising Activity: “Walk for Water”

Map out a course similar in length to what a Kenyan family might have to walk to get water (we recommend between 2 and 12 miles). Charge an entrance fee for participants to Walk for Water, donating proceeds to **Water for Life**. Provide a bonus for anyone who completes the walk while carrying a full bucket of water.



Fact and Prayer

More than 36% of Kenyans live on less than \$1.90 a day (in 2011 purchasing power parity).

(The World Bank, 2016)

Lord, in Matthew 25:40, you said, “Just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.” We pray that you would receive all glory and honor as we work to meet the needs of struggling families in Kenya. Please bless their lives and give them the peace of knowing that you are always with them in their suffering. We ask this in the name of Christ. Amen.

Discussion Questions for Families

1. How many gallons of water do you think it takes to fill up a bathtub? (Answer: 30-42 gallons.) How many gallons of water do you think a five-minute shower uses? (Answer: About 12.5 gallons.)
2. What are some items you can use to carry water (i.e., hands, buckets, cups, sponges, bowls, etc.)? Explain that many Kenyan children carry 5-gallon jerricans from the water source back to their homes.
3. What are some things that we use water for every day? What is something that would be much harder to do without water?
4. How can we use water to stay healthy and clean (i.e., handwashing, etc.)? Spend a little time discussing the waterborne illnesses that poor families in Kenya often encounter.
5. What are some of the household chores that we use water for? Consider having a family cleaning day and using any “allowance” to provide water for families in Kenya.
6. Look at a map and determine the distance to the children’s school, your local parish or other recognizable locations. Draw comparisons between these distances and the distance that some villagers must walk to collect water. (In the villages we’re serving, it is often between 2 and 12 miles.)



**Cross Catholic
OUTREACH**

Delivering Food, Shelter and Hope to the Poorest of the Poor

Our Mission

We mobilize the global Catholic Church to transform the poor and their communities materially and spiritually for the glory of Jesus Christ.

Good Stewardship

We consider every gift we receive as a precious resource from God. We direct every donation to its intended project, provide honest and accurate reports to our donors, and keep overhead costs to an industry low. We handle funds with utmost integrity and hold our ministry partners in the field to the same high standards by asking them to document costs and the impact of their outreach. These detailed accountability measures have earned us ongoing accreditation by the following organizations:



C i V
Caritas In Veritate



The Chronicle of Philanthropy
The nonprofit world's No. 1 news source

2700 N. Military Trail • Suite 300 • PO Box 273908 • Boca Raton, Florida 33427-3908

800-914-2420 ext. 300 • CrossCatholic.org/lent

@CrossCatholic @CrossCatholic @CrossCatholic /CrossCatholic Blog.CrossCatholic.org

Copyright Cross Catholic Outreach. Cost-effectively written and designed in-house, and mailing facilitated by volunteers. [gb2010]