

WEEK THREE



Healthy Ocean, Healthy Human

Water and Ocean Reflection Series

Photos: Kristin McDermott

MESSAGE FROM POPE FRANCIS

"Our commitment to give water its proper place calls for developing a culture of care' (Laudato Si, 231) and encounter, joining in common cause all the necessary efforts made by scientists and business people, government leaders and politicians. We need to unite our voices in a single cause; then it will no longer be a case of hearing individual or isolated voices, but rather the plea of our brothers and sisters echoed in our own, and the cry of the earth for respect and responsible sharing in a treasure belonging to all. In this culture of encounter, it is essential that each state act as a guarantor of universal access to safe and clean water."

Pope Francis address to Conference on the Human Right to Water. 23 Feb 2017



YouTube video Ocean Pollution Harming Humans
(3 min 46)

CONNECTIONS AT THE UN

The health of the ocean relies on the health of waterways draining into the seas and ocean. **Sustainable Development Goal 6** which focuses on the sustainable management of **water and sanitation for all**, has as one of its targets:

"By 2030, Improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally."

Source : <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/water-and-sanitation/>

TAKE ACTION

- Familiarize yourself with Sustainable Development Goal 6. Is your country making developments in order to implement this goal?
- Research the water quality in your town. Is this a healthy quality for the environment? (See below in the 'Did you know?' section to learn more about 'water quality')

For Reflection



Take a walk along a drain, stream, river, estuary or beach....notice pollution and pick up rubbish.

If you are walking along a drain, stream or river:

Study the water quality and the banks along drain, stream, or river. Find out where the water you are walking along begins and where it ends up. Is the water quality and banks the same all along the journey?

If you are walking along an estuary or beach:

Study the quality of the water and the coastline. What drains into the sea where you are? Where do these water sources begin? What is the quality of the water draining into the sea?

From your walk, draw or take pictures. Write a poem, short story or reflection on what you discover on your journey.



Prayer

Where do you go, O drop of water?
Merging, rippling, fluid body.
What do you see?
Travelling down waterways,
joining joyfully with the sea.
God, share with me the story.
Let me understand, let me live...
the vibrant sacred story,
the vibrant sacred dream,
life-giving, life emerging water.

DID YOU KNOW?

Determining water quality involves both assessing its physical and chemical characteristics. A person can look at water visually and think that if it is clear then the water must be good. However, a chemical analysis may determine that the water has a lot of extra nutrients in it (e.g. nitrogen) – thus lowering the quality of water (too many nutrients lower the dissolved oxygen content in water).

What is considered an 'acceptable level' of nutrients for water can be different amongst local regions, between rural and urban councils, and at national and international levels of government. Check the website of your local and regional councils for water quality standards in your area. Are these the accurate levels needed for the health of the environment and humans?