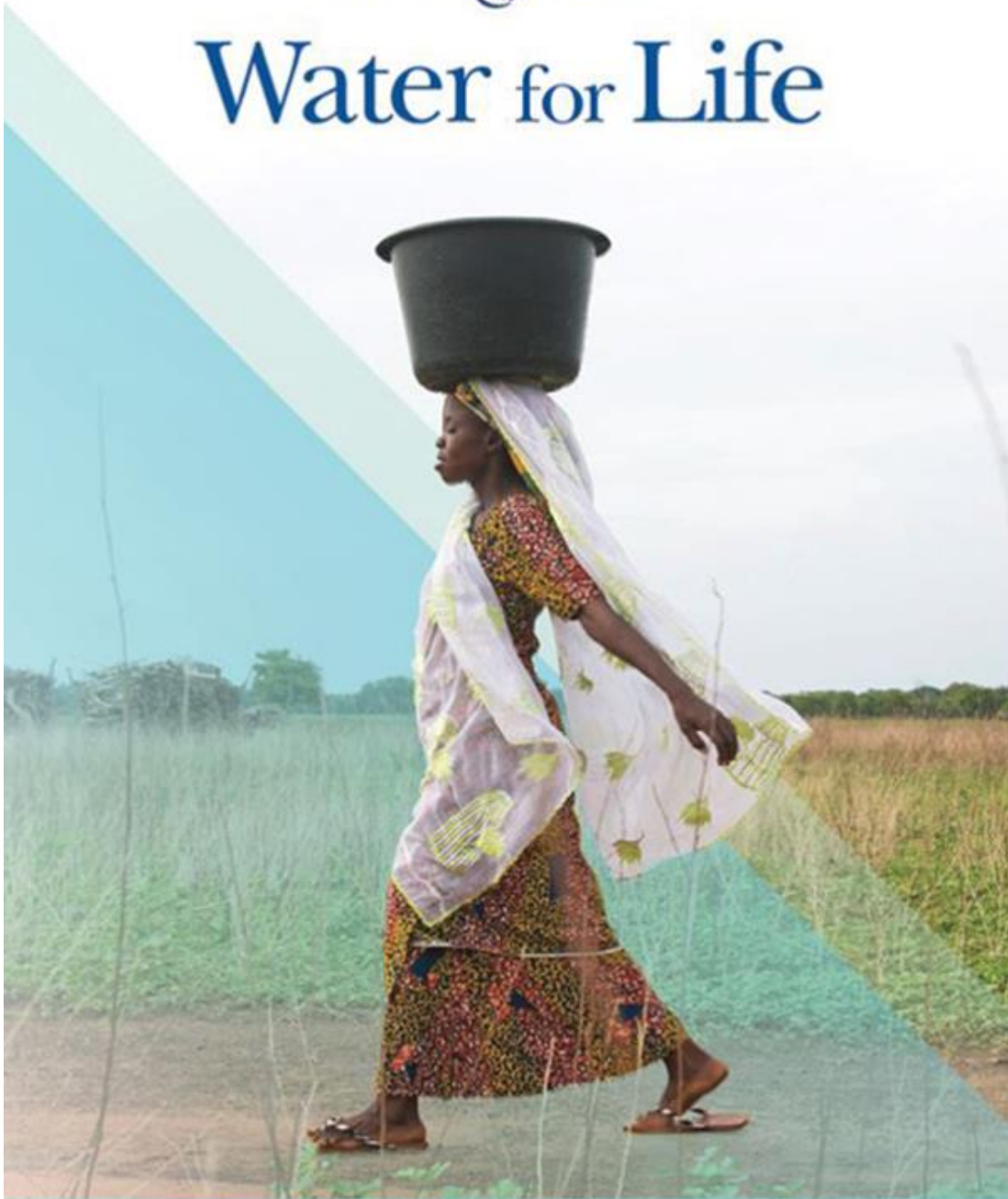


NATIONAL COUNCIL OF  
CATHOLIC  WOMEN

# Water for Life



Since 1946, CRS and the NCCW have been in partnership,  
making a difference around the world.

## WATER FOR LIFE DISCUSSION GUIDE

**The *Water for Life* video illustrates the work of Catholic Relief Services in partnership with the National Council of Catholic women in responding to the critical need for water projects in developing countries. The greatest humanitarian crisis in the world today is food and water scarcity issues that threaten the peace and security of most developing nations.**

**Catholic Relief Services** was founded in 1943 by the Catholic Bishops in the United States to assist the poor and disadvantaged outside the U.S. The fundamental force in all activities of CRS is the Gospel of Jesus Christ as it pertains to the alleviation of human suffering, the development of people and the fostering of charity and justice in the world. The policies and programs of the agency reflect and express the teaching of the Catholic Church. At the same time, Catholic Relief Services assists people on the basis of need, NOT creed, race or nationality. [crs.org](http://crs.org)

**The National Council of Catholic Women** was founded in March 1920 under the auspices of the U.S. Catholic bishops and in recognition of the widespread influence on church and society already exerted by American Catholic women. The National Council of Catholic Women acts through its membership to support, empower and educate all Catholic women in spirituality, leadership and service. NCCW programs respond with Gospel values to the needs of the Church and society in the modern world. [nccw.org](http://nccw.org)



## Water for Life Discussion Guide

### Initial Preparation

If you are leading the group discussion, preview the video and read this guide so you are familiar with it. You can adapt questions and activities as necessary to your audience.

### General Teaching Model

#### 1) Welcome and introductions

#### 2) Icebreaker Questions

- Do you think water is critical to communities and nations?
- What do you think happens when there is too much water or too little in a community?

#### 3) Share what the Pope, U.S. Bishops and the Bible have said on the environment on flipcharts or handouts.

Choose some or all of these to go over and answer reflection questions.

- Our faith calls us to be good stewards of the earth and all its creatures. Write some of these questions up on a flipcharts or handouts. Choose some or all of these to go over and answer reflection questions.
  - *Genesis 1:31, 2:15*  
(goodness of creation and stewardship of the earth)
  - *Daniel 3:74-81*  
(all the earth blesses God)
  - *Hosea 4:1-3*  
(humans wound the earth)
  - *Romans 8:18-25*  
(all creation awaits redemption)

“The dominion granted to man by the Creator is not an absolute power, ‘nor can one speak of freedom to use or misuse’, or to dispose of things as one pleases. The limitation imposed from the beginning by the Creator...shows clearly enough that, when it comes to the natural world, we are subject not only to biological laws but also to moral ones, which can’t be violated with impunity.” (Pope John Paul II, *On Social Concern*)

**Question:** What do you think are the moral laws God has placed on humans in relation to creation?

Catholic social teaching: We show respect for the Creator by our stewardship of creation. Care for the earth is not just a slogan but a requirement of our faith. We are called to protect people and the planet, living our faith in relationship with all of God’s creation. The environmental challenge has fundamental moral and ethical dimensions that can’t be ignored. (USCCB, *Sharing Catholic social teaching: Challenges and Directions*)

**Question:** What are some of the fundamental moral and ethical dimensions of water scarcity?

#### 4) Watch the entire **Water for Life** video

Take a few minutes to reflect on the video using the following questions:

- What struck you the most about the *Water for Life* video?
- What did you see to make you believe water is critical to human dignity?
- What did you see to make you believe water is critical to a community's development?
- Name some problems you saw and some solutions.
- Describe where you saw God, Jesus or the Holy Spirit.
- What does your faith tradition say about the care of water and the earth?
- Now that you know about water scarcity and issues pertaining to water security globally, what do you think you can do as a community? As an individual?

#### 5) **Activity:**

Have people reflect on how much water they consume a day. Make a list of each time in one day you use water and guess how much water is used during an entire day. Here are some examples. A five-minute shower uses 26 gallons of water. One toilet flush is 5.28 gallons. A washing machine uses 59.45 gallons. Last, ask if they know how much water does a person in the developing world use. The average person in the developing world uses 2.65 gallons a day. Compare that to an average day in the U.S.

#### 6) **What You Can Do:**

- **Eight Ways to Conserve Water**

1. Only buy bottled water if it is necessary. Government and industry estimate at least 40% of bottled water is tap water.
2. Change your showerheads and faucets for low-flow showerheads, which will reduce water use by 50%.
3. Ask newspapers and magazine companies to use recycled paper or to have their information on the internet.
4. Stop leaks inside and outside of the house because leaks waste between 10-50% of water use.
5. Replace your old toilet or displace some of the water in the tank with a brick, which allows you to get the same flush pressure, but to use up to half a gallon less water per flush.
6. Replace your clothes washer if the "water factor" is above 9.5 and use cold water only, because the washing machine is the second largest user in the home.
7. Select plants appropriate to your local climate conditions that need less irrigation. Only water your plants when needed.
8. Teach your family and friends.

- **Organize A Community Action**

Gather people interested in water and look at the needs of the community. Observe and name a water problem. What are the social, cultural, political, economic influences on that problem? What does your faith tradition say about the problem? Plan an action and ask what are the risks involved? Then start the same method over again with observation and what was learned.

- **Organize and/or Join Environmental Legislative Advocacy**

Many times, the legislation can change structures that allow dignity and a healthy environment.

- **Make Donation Gifts**

Payable to the Water for Life Fund and send to:

The National Council of Catholic Women  
200 North Glebe Road, Suite 703  
Arlington, VA 22203  
703-224-0330

### **Educate Others**

Order the *Water for Life* video from Catholic Relief Services by emailing [resources@crs.org](mailto:resources@crs.org) or view it on CRS YouTube by going to <https://www.youtube.com/user/CatholicRelief/featured> and typing in the search bar “**CRS and National Council of Catholic Women: Water for Life**” to view the video.

### **Research Water Resources**

Global Water information:

UNESCO - <https://en.unesco.org/themes/water-security>

World Water Day - <https://www.worldwaterday.org/>

Earth Day - <https://www.earthday.org/>