

# Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation News

## Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours

### World Water Day



March, 2019  
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**"We, Sisters of Bon Secours and Bon Secours Associates throughout the world, affirm access to clean water is a basic human right."**

(Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours, Corporate Statement on Water, 2013)

The theme for World Water Day 2019, 'Leaving no one behind', is an adaptation of the central promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: that as sustainable development progresses, everyone must benefit. Sustainable Development Goal 6 (SDG 6) includes a target to ensure availability and sustainable management of water for all by 2030. This means leaving no one behind.

Today, billions of people are still living without safe water – their households, schools, workplaces, farms and factories struggling to survive and thrive. Marginalized groups – women, children, refugees, indigenous peoples, disabled people and many others – are often overlooked, and sometimes face discrimination, as they try to access and manage the safe water they need. This issue of JPIC News will focus on both global water reality as well as ways we can be aware of the water footprint we leave on Earth.

March  
JPIC Days of Remembrance

March 3  
World Wildlife Day



March 8  
International Women's Day



Globally, women and girls are the primary water collectors for their families and for this reason many girls do not attend school.

March 22  
World Water Day



March 25  
International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade



### The Global Water Reality

- 4 billion people – nearly two-thirds of the world's population – experience severe water scarcity during at least one month of the year.
- 2.1 billion people live without safe water at home.
- More than 700 children under five years of age die every day from diarrhea linked to unsafe water and poor sanitation.
- One in four primary schools have no drinking water service, with pupils using unprotected sources or going thirsty.
- Globally, 80% of the people who have to use unsafe and unprotected water sources live in rural areas.
- For the 68.5 million people who have been forced to flee their homes, accessing safe water services is highly problematic.
- 159 million people collect their drinking water from surface water, such as ponds and streams.
- Over 800 women die every day from complications in pregnancy and childbirth.
- 700 million people worldwide could be displaced by intense water scarcity by 2030.

Source: UN Water

In 2010, the UN recognized "the right to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation as a human right that is essential for the full enjoyment of life and all human rights." The human right to water entitles everyone, without discrimination, to sufficient, safe, acceptable, physically accessible and affordable water for personal and domestic use; which includes water for drinking, personal sanitation, washing of clothes, food preparation, and personal and household hygiene.

## Water as a Weapon in Conflict



Water used as a weapon of war in Syria

When you think of the ways in which wars and conflicts are fought, water wouldn't immediately come to mind, but in many conflicts, restricting or controlling the access to water can be used as a weapon. There are different ways that water can be used as a weapon, which include:

- Attacking water infrastructure and workers, or denying access. For example: Attacks on water and sanitation infrastructure: this includes both intentional attacks, such as targeting pipelines or pouring concrete into wells, and inadvertent attacks, where reckless bombardment with no attempt to avoid critical civilian infrastructure results in damaged or destroyed water and sanitation systems.
- Contaminating water: when water sources are poisoned, the water has been turned into a weapon. This includes throwing dead human or animal bodies in a well to contaminate the water supply as a tactic to deny a community safe water.
- Denial of humanitarian access: often in conflicts, humanitarian workers and supplies are denied access to reach communities or areas that need assistance.

## Water and Gender

In many countries, the presence or absence of a safe and sufficient water supply and improved sanitation facilities has a disproportionate effect on the lives of women and girls for three main reasons. First, women and girls usually bear the responsibility for collecting water, which is often very time-consuming and arduous. Second, women and girls are more vulnerable to abuse and attack while walking to and using a toilet or open defecation site. And third, women have specific hygiene needs during menstruation, pregnancy and child rearing. *Source: UN Water*



## Your Water Footprint

Do you know how much water was used to grow your food and to produce your clothes and the things you buy? It is a surprising amount. You may not see this 'invisible' water, but it accounts for most of the water you use, far more than you use from the tap. Our use of water is not limited to kitchens, bathrooms and gardens. On a daily basis, we contribute to the consumption of large quantities of water when buying various products, from the food we eat, paper and cotton to biofuel. This way, we indirectly affect water resources throughout the world.

### Water Footprint per Capita

Peru – 3,000 liters/day  
 Great Britain – 3,400 liters/day  
 Ireland – 3,600 liters/day  
 France – 4,900 liters/day  
 USA – 7,800 liters/day



### Water Footprint Calculator

Use this tool to calculate your personal water footprint:  
 Eng: <https://www.watercalculator.org/>  
 Sp: <https://www.watercalculator.org/wfc2/esp/>  
 Fr: <http://aquapathproject.eu/calculator-fr/france/first.html>

### How much water it takes to produce 1 pound of ...

Beef	1,847 gallons
Pork	718 gallons
Chicken	518 gallons
Eggs	395 gallons
Soybeans	257 gallons



### How much water it takes to manufacture...

1 lb. of plastic	22 gallons
1 lb. of cotton	1,320 gallons
1 cell phone	3,190 gallons

### Reflection

*What did you learn about your water footprint?*

*What has changed in the way you relate to water since the Bon Secours Water Statement was first promulgated in 2013?*

*How can you personally care for and conserve water in your everyday life?*

### Prayer

Creator God, whose Spirit moved over the face of the waters, who gathers the seas into their places and directs the courses of the rivers, who sends rain upon Earth that it should bring forth life: we praise you for the gift of water. Create in us such a sense of wonder and delight in this and all your gifts, that we might receive them with gratitude, care for them with love and generously share them with all your creatures, to the honor and glory of your name. AMEN.

We affirm  
 that water is a  
 sacred gift  
 that connects all life.

Bon Secours  
 Corporate Statement on Water



### International Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation Committee

Sr. Teresa Margot Benites Montero, CBS (Peru)  
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