

Laudato Si'-Safe Water for All

My name is Jackson Barney and I live in Central Valley California. I am one of more than 2 million Americans without water. Every day, my parents have to haul in buckets of water. People think this problem is long gone, but it is far from it. To make matters worse, there is little political movement to help us. Sometimes it feels like we are living on another planet. It especially hurts to know that I live in the richest country in the world and I am denied the most basic human right based on my geography.

This problem is especially bad for where I live. I live right next to an irrigation ditch of clean water and none of it is available to me. It all belongs to the orchards. I am also very angry because I live across the street from a working fire hydrant, but that is where the water main stops, so I have to get my water from polluted wells. The worst part is that I thought I was the only one but more than 2 million other Americans have the same problem and there is little political will to fix it. This is also a problem involving human dignity. Everyone should have access to clean water.

Laudato Sí, a letter from Pope Francis to all the people on earth, teaches many things about this matter. It teaches that we should stop waste and show love. It teaches that we need to strive to stop pollution and destruction. It teaches that we need to take only our fair share. It teaches that we need to put love for our world and love for our neighbors into action. For these reasons and more, I write this essay on the water problem in our common home.