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Water Essay

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The earth is made up of 71% of water and only about 3% of the world's water is freshwater, two-thirds of this is kept away in frozen glaciers or otherwise unavailable to us. Our water systems we mainly rely on, like rivers and lakes, are recently becoming too dry or polluted to use. Not only is this water scarcity a problem, but proper sanitation is as well. Many people are being exposed to diseases like cholera, typhoid fever, and other water-borne illnesses. In California, during drier seasons, we heavily rely on saved water through reservoirs and melted snow packs. For recent years, the average water level in our reservoirs has significantly dropped and it has only gotten worse. For 2022, the first three months were the driest in over 100 years.

Hattie Avery lives in a tiny coal town in West Virginia where there was no clean water for more than a decade until a nonprofit stepped in to help. Avery expresses her hurt that their town is “the town that time has forgotten”. She feels there has been no help offered to them simply because they do not matter enough, despite many being dedicated, law-abiding, faithful, citizens. In *Laudato Si* it is said, "When we fail to acknowledge as part of reality the worth of a poor person, a human embryo, a person with disabilities – to offer just a few examples – it becomes difficult to hear the cry of nature itself; everything is connected." (LS 117). We must not forget those in need no matter their social status. Everyone deserves equal opportunity and help with something as important as clean water. This deeply connects to the Catholic Social Teaching of Life and dignity of the human person. Similar to how we must understand that each of us is made in God's image, we must also understand that every person has a natural human dignity no one can take away. Human dignity is given freely to us all no matter who we are or what we have done in our lives.

From the Message of His Holiness Pope Francis on the Occasion of “World Water Day 2019” it is

said “‘Leaving no one behind’ also means being aware of the need to respond with concrete actions; not only with the maintenance or improvement of water facilities, but also by investing in the future, educating new generations in the use and care of water. This task of raising awareness is a priority in a world in which everything is discarded and disdained, and which in many cases does not appreciate the importance of the resources we have at our disposal” (Francis, 2019). Each and every person has a responsibility regarding the use of water and the treatment of our brothers and sisters. Many of us have the privilege of having clean running water everyday, but we take it for granted and often forget to be thankful for this. As individuals, we should take responsibility to conserve water as much as we can. To our brothers and sisters who are suffering, we can also support those working towards more accessible water. Whether it be through donation or simply volunteering at special organizations gathered for this purpose, anything we can do is important and necessary.

In my own way, I can personally work on conserving water. Recently, there have been instances where I find myself wasting more water than usual. That is when I came to the realization that much of my every day routine revolves around water. To wash my face, shower, wash my hands, do my chores, brush my teeth, etc.. it all depends on water in order to be done. After taking note of this, I decided to reduce the amount of time it takes me to shower as well as reducing the amount of times I open and close the faucet in order to save a little more water. By doing this I not only reduced my wastefulness in the moment, but I also reduced it significantly in the long run. This issue is a great problem to the world and should concern many people. The large amount of communities without clean running water is extreme and we need as much help as we can get to help solve this issue. These communities are being neglected and deprived of an important resource needed to survive.