

Sacred Waters

Water and Ocean Reflection Series

Photo: Kristin McDermott

MESSAGE FROM:

POPE FRANCIS

'...human life is grounded in three fundamental and closely intertwined relationships: with God, with our neighbour and with the earth itself.

According to the Bible, these three vital relationships have been broken, both outwardly and within us. This rupture is sin. The harmony between the Creator, humanity and creation as a whole was disrupted by our presuming to take the place of God and refusing to acknowledge our creaturely limitations.'

Pope Francis, Laudato Si, #66



Sacred Water Culture

CONNECTIONS AT THE UN

Within the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the sacredness of the earth and water are recognized and prioritized. The Declaration states that 'Indigenous peoples have the **right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with** their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used **lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations** in this regard.'

Article 25, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf

TAKE ACTION

- RESEARCH THE UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES.
- CHECK TO SEE IF YOUR COUNTRY HAS RATIFIED THE UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES.
- IN WHAT WAYS DOES YOUR LOCAL AND NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS SEEK TO UPHOLD INDIGENOUS VALUES OF LAND AND WATER?

Reflection



Take a walk along a drain, stream, river, estuary or beach....

Spend some time on reflecting on how water is used in many sacred rituals and how water is perceived by the indigenous cultures of the area.

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



Prayer

God said "Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear." And it was so. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good.

Genesis 1: 9-10 (NRSV)

DID YOU KNOW?

Mercy Global Action at the UN has worked extensively in the context of the sacredness and importance of water in all communities. We recognize that, while not exclusively detailed within the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, water is indeed, to be listed as a right that all peoples, including the poor, vulnerable and marginalized, have access to. It was a great success, after long deliberation of Member States and long hours of advocacy from the MGA UN office, that the human right to water and sanitation was listed within the Preamble, and as a commitment, in Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.

Mercy Global Action at the UN takes issues of water injustice, such as fracking, and develops solutions through human rights based approaches to advocacy. To see some of our recent work, in partnership with other NGO's at the United Nations, hover your cursor to read "Water and Sanitation: A Peoples Guide to SDG 6".