



We Mercies

Care for Creation

As you take the next step, remember the traditional custodians of the land

WATER - THE NEXT "OIL"?

One of our rights as human beings - or as earth creatures – is the right of access to fresh clean water. Climate change is affecting that right drastically for many, human and other than human, especially those in poorer countries.

The World Council of Churches has recently urged the elimination of the use of bottled water owing to its adverse impact on the environment and its impediment to realizing the human right to water.

Check out the key findings of the **Climate Council's** recent report on climate change at

<http://bit.ly/1U8NO Gv>.



According to research, bottled water wastes fossil fuels in production and transport. About 75 percent of the empty plastic bottles end up in landfills, lakes, streams and oceans where they never fully decompose. It is also argued that some governments shun their responsibilities to provide safe drinking water because people have the alternative of bottled water. The bottled water industry has captured the minds of many, especially in the so-called developed countries, to think that bottled water is safer and healthier than tap water, even when tap water is really safe to drink.

**September
2015**

(ed. Anne McLay)

In his encyclical *Laudato si'*, Pope Francis also tackles the issue of our right to water. Francis connects it to climate change and the loss of biodiversity.

He writes that fresh drinking water is an issue of primary importance, since it is indispensable for human life and for supporting terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. (28) **One particularly serious problem, he states, is the quality of water available to the poor.**

Even as the quality of available water is constantly diminishing, in some places there is a growing tendency, despite its scarcity, to privatize this resource, turning it into a commodity subject to the laws of the market. Our world, he says, has a grave social debt towards the poor who lack access to drinking water, because they are denied the right to a life consistent with their inalienable dignity.³⁰

Water continues to be wasted....the problem of water is partly an educational and cultural issue, since there is little awareness of the seriousness of such behaviour within a context of great inequality.

Some studies warn that an acute water shortage may occur within a few decades unless urgent action is taken.³¹

***Question for
reflection***

***How may I save
water in
everyday life?***