



“Local individuals and groups can make a real difference. They are able to instill a greater sense of responsibility, a strong sense of community, a readiness to protect others, a spirit of creativity and a deep love for the land.”

(Laudato Si', 179)

In the United States most of us take the clean, safe water flowing from our faucets and fountains for granted. But even here in America, we can't always count on that basic human need being met. Remember the Lake Erie/Toledo Water Crisis in 2014 and the Flint Water Crisis just 2 years ago? Different causes, but the same reaction to shortage that resulted in panic, and rethinking about how our utilities are protected and managed in this country. When we have safe water we should consider NOT buying bottled water; it's unnecessary and leaves a wasted plastic bottle to dispose.

But what if you don't live in a place with affordable, accessible AND safe water? The World Health Organization reported that in 2017, only 71% of the global population (5.3 billion people) had access to a safely managed drinking water service; one that is located on the premises, available when needed and free from contamination. In the United States we enjoy the world's most reliable and safe water supplies, but nearly 1.6 million people don't have indoor plumbing. The lack of sewage disposal leads to contamination of their wells and stream water. Some regions are experiencing weather patterns, storms, flooding and drought that threaten safe and abundant water.

Water crises have multiple causes including pollution, overuse, waste, drought, conflict and restriction by governments. While we've been making progress with access to safe water in most poor countries, climate disruptions will continue to place strain on water sources that are affected by drought and overuse.

PRAY/LEARN

As we pray for people who don't have safe and abundant water, we can learn ways to conserve our own water use and reduce our "thirst" for consumer products that consume lots of water to produce.

World Vision has a comprehensive website with information on a wide variety of topics including hunger, immigration, disease and disaster relief, but we'll direct you to their [report "From the Field"](#) on the global water crises.

World Water Reserve has a [directory of organizations](#) that are making a difference.

FAST/CHANGE

Resolve not to use or buy single serve plastic bottled water. Consider taking a refillable water container for road trips and at the gym.

Install low flow showers and toilets and practice other water conservation habits in your home, office and school with [suggestions from Partners for Clean Streams](#), a local watershed organizations that is dedicated to the health of the streams and rivers of the Toledo region and the people who use them.

This [guide from Eartheasy](#) gives you 45 ways to conserve water in your home and yard.

GIVE/VOLUNTEER

Change lives and create hope by providing clean drinking water to families worldwide. You can donate to the [Filter of Hope](#) group, whose members are distributing 400 Filter of Hope kits this week in rural Honduras.

[Water Mission](#) is another worldwide organization working to provide safe water.