

Inspired

Spring 2023

Stories of encountering Christ in global mission



Deeper Water

By Deacon Mickey Friesen
Director, Center for Mission



Center for Mission Director since 2001.

We live in a thirsty world. There are few things more basic, more ordinary, and more natural than our common need for water. And yet, we humans share other thirsts in life like the need for safety, shelter, love, purpose and meaning. It's hard to live without these essentials as well. In a sense, our common thirsts bind us together as one human family.

Water is also a sign of faith that connects us. During baptisms, we bless the water by recalling all the ways water plays a role in God's saving plan and leads people to

go deeper in trusting God. Jesus told His disciples to "put out into deeper water" (Luke 5:4) to seek more than

they could imagine. This is also the call of mission - to go further, to go deeper...to go to the ends of the earth to share the living water of God's love.



The Center for Mission exists to build bridges of faith, hope and love to the Church around the world - sharing living water of faith with our brothers and sisters across many borders and oceans.

Since 2004, our Archdiocese has been in a special relationship with the Church in the Diocese of Kitui, Kenya. Water has played a key role in connecting us. We have worked together to bring water to many thirsty places and people in Kitui. Severe droughts are an unfortunate fact of life and climate changes have only made things more barren. Searching for water is a daily ritual and necessity of life. Mostly women and teenage girls fulfill this task for families by walking for miles carrying water jugs to dry riverbeds. What looks exhausted and dry on the surface does not mean that there

isn't water below to those who know where and how to look. They know to go deeper. They have learned how to dig temporary wells in certain spots to find water that still collects beneath the barren and arid surface. Their daily searches for water bind them together. Their common thirsts unite them.

When I have met people in Kitui, they greet you with the words,

"God is good all the time. All the time God is good." Their physical thirsts are not as deep as their faith in the goodness and providence of God. God satisfies their thirsty hearts in ways that are deeper than their trials and struggles.

Water continues to be a sign that brings us together and deepens our faith. In this newsletter, we consider some of the ways that



water is helping us to go deeper, to discover ourselves in unity and solidarity with those who struggle with water, especially in Kitui, Kenya.

One of our most active programs for children and youth in schools and parishes that provides encounters for those struggling with lack of water in Kitui, is the Living Water program.

This newsletter provides one inspirational example of how an individual encountered the situation in Kitui through the Living Water program and experienced a transformation that touched her soul compelling her to go deeper, ..remarkable for her young age as a kindergartner.

Questions? Please contact Eric Simon, simone@archspm.org, 651.291.4446.

Deep Encounters that Touch the Soul

By Eric Simon
Mission Promotions Manager

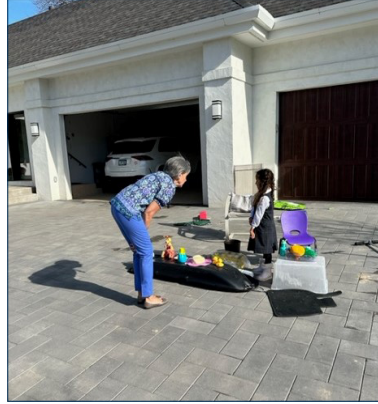


Eric is the communications and marketing manager for the Center for Mission working with many aspects of mission activity in the Archdiocese.

As mentioned in the cover article, the Center for Mission program, Living Water, was created to introduce children in schools and parishes to other communities and countries outside their daily lives. It is a program that encourages children to go deeper in their understanding of struggling peoples and communities: through their faith and elements of our social teaching.

The Archdiocese has had a strong partnership, through the Center for Mission, with the Diocese of Kitui, Kenya who has been suffering water shortage due to a decades-long severe drought. The partnership has been active since 2004 and focuses on solidarity and mutuality with the sharing of faith and resources. Together, our two dioceses have agreed that the issue of water is the most critical need for food, healthcare, livestock, and even baptisms and we happen to be the "land of lakes." The Living Water program

is an opportunity for children and youth throughout schools and parishes to encounter the lives and daily struggles of another global community. Each child receives



a calendar that focuses on our partner Diocese of Kitui, Kenya and a water bottle to collect coins as donations for water. The calendar offers four weeks of daily reflections, prayers, education and information.

Occasionally, we hear about unique and inspirational reactions through the program from participants and, this

year, we were awed by how this encounter touched a soul of a kindergartner from Providence Academy! Isobel Ketcher (Izzy) heard about the situation in Kitui, Kenya in class through her teacher Mrs. Tasha McMorrow. Mrs. McMorrow had received calendars and bottles for her Kindergarten students and was introducing the program to them. She used the calendar, video she found online and related her

own personal story since she had traveled to Tanzania in High School. Her students loved her stories.

"Something touched them, I could see that many of the students were very interested," Mrs. McMorrow said. When Izzy left for the day, Naomi, Izzy's mom, told that, "She ran up to her room wanting cardboard for a sign." Izzy announced, "I am going to raise money for water!" Izzy was so moved by the days events, she sacrificed many of her own toys and other items to sell in her driveway.

Izzy's mom created a flyer and produced a small video of Izzy announcing the sale and the importance of the collection. These were then sent to all her neighbors. Izzy did have people arriving to buy her collected items, but she was dissatisfied with her sales, so she decided to take it "on the road." Izzy loaded up her wagon and went door-to-door.

Mrs. McMorrow heard about Izzy's passionate actions and shared it at Providence and the Center for Mission. She was a bit surprised

and admitted, "Well, Izzy tends to be quiet in class. I am amazed that she put her toys on sale and spoke to strangers." However, Izzy's mom, Naomi, was not surprised at all, "Once Izzy has an idea, and

she is very creative and passionate, she will just go for it!"



Izzy collected an amazing \$248 dollars for water and water projects in Kitui, Kenya! But, Izzy was not very happy with that total, she said her objective was one million dollars!

Well, there is always next year!

Partnership with the Diocese of Kitui, Kenya

By Janine Ricker
Global Mission Outreach



As the Global Mission Outreach Coordinator for the Center for Mission, Janine introduces students and adults to our Catholic brothers and sisters

across our borders, worldwide. She does this through programs, education and mission trips.

The Living Water program is an effort of the Center for Mission to help our brothers and sisters in Kitui, Kenya by addressing their need for water. Inspired by the Gospel conversation story between Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well, this program provides spiritual and physical nourishment - Living Water - in both our dioceses. In Minnesota, the program offers us the opportunity to receive nourishment through prayer, reflection and the sharing of our resources to aid the Kitui community. Our brothers and sisters are nourished through the receipt of life sustaining water that allows them to flourish

physically and spiritually.

Early in our partnership, the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis and the Diocese of Kitui mutually agreed to work together to help address the need for water in Kitui, which has been experiencing drought for over 10 years. The Diocese of Kitui identifies areas where access to clean water is necessary, determines the best way to increase access (sand dams or water tanks) and hires locally in villages for construction, so that jobs are created as part of these efforts. For example, money raised for the sand dam in the village of Nuui, provided daily wages for the village workers. The dam owned by the community was very successful.

The Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis also provides the funding for the needed infrastructures for gathering water.

For the Living Water program, students in the Archdiocese receive a Living Water calendar with prayers, information and daily reflections, including a Living Water bottle to "collect change" for a better life for our friends in Kitui. Families in our archdiocese are encouraged to reflect on the calendar's entries and to fast from all beverages except

water when eating out, then placing the coins they otherwise would have spent in their water bottles. These bottles are then brought into their classes for Living Water collections.



Since its inception, more than 40 archdiocesan schools and parishes have raised almost \$250,000, helping to fund the construction of seven dams, the installation of dozens of water tanks at schools - that collect rain water - and community education seminars on drought-resistant farming and sanitation. We are grateful for all

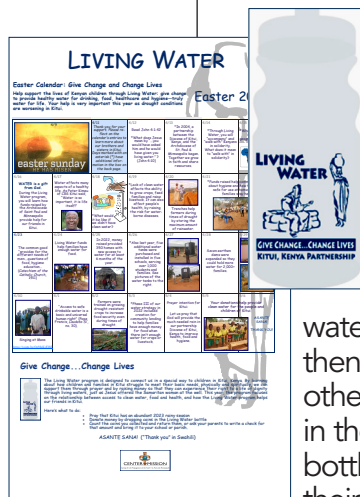
those who have helped to provide accessible, clean water to those living in some of the driest, most remote regions of Kenya.



An envelope is included in this newsletter so

that you, our donors, can also contribute to the Living Water collection providing clean water to our struggling brothers and sisters in Kitui, Kenya. Help the Kamba tribe of Kitui find water for hygiene, cooking, crops, livestock, even baptisms. As our friend in Kenya, Peter Kimeu, once remarked, "Water is life itself."

Thank you!!!



www.centerformission.org



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Encounters that Touch the Soul

Partnership with the Diocese of Kitui,
Kenya



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