



LIVING WATER PROGRAM

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

This Lent, consider helping those in our global solidarity partnership diocese, the Diocese of Kitui, Kenya, by participating in the Center for Mission's Living Water program. This Lenten service learning opportunity allows your parishioners to grow in solidarity with the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Kitui by providing some of the necessary funding for life-sustaining development projects.

The Living Water program is inspired by the Gospel conversation between Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well. *Jesus said to her, "If you knew the gift of God and who is saying to you 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."* (John 4:10). We all need to be nourished by the Living Water offered by Jesus. In Minnesota, this program offers us the opportunity to receive this nourishment through prayer, reflection and the sharing of our resources to help the Kitui community. Similarly, our brothers and sisters in Kitui are nourished through the receipt of life sustaining aid that allows them to flourish both physically and spiritually.

Here in the land of 10,000 lakes, we can often take water for granted. It is always readily accessible and clean. For the Church in Kitui, the reality is much different. The Diocese of Kitui is home to one of the driest regions in Kenya. Frequent drought and a lack of infrastructure force many people to walk miles daily to the nearest water access point (dam, pond, river) to collect the water their families will use for drinking, bathing, and laundry, farming and watering their livestock. Since its inception in 2013, the Living Water program has worked to add water access points for the people in Kitui, reducing the amount of time and distance they have to walk to get water. The generosity of students and parishioners in this archdiocese has resulted in the construction of seven dams and the installation of dozens of water tanks at schools to provide accessible water to those living in some of the driest, most remote regions of Kitui. But there is still more work to do.

How the program works:

Each family or individual will receive, at no cost to parishes, a Living Water calendar with information, prayers and reflections, and a Living Water bottle to "collect change to bring about change" for a better life for those in Kitui. Parents are encouraged to reflect on the calendar's entries with their children during their family prayer time, and families are encouraged to fast from beverages other than water while eating out or ordering takeaway, donating the money they otherwise would have spent to the program. The program is designed to begin on Ash Wednesday and continue through the first four weeks of Lent, but can also be adapted to best suit the needs of parish communities.

This year, program materials explore the relationship between access to clean water, health, and hygiene. Money raised will continue to help fund increased access to clean water, sanitation improvement, and education on best hygiene practices.

If you have any questions, or would like to participate, please contact Janine Ricker at rickerj@archspm.org, or 651-291-4504. Thank you for considering the Living Water program.

Sincerely in Solidarity,
Janine Ricker
Global Mission Outreach Coordinator
Center for Mission