**Primary school assembly**

World Water Day 22nd March

**Sketch: Water**

*This sketch highlights some of the key issues faced by people who are living without access to clean water and sanitation.*

*Five people enter the worship space / stage carrying opened umbrellas, as if it is raining.*

Person 1 *(To the other people on stage)* Good morning!

Person 2 *(Unbelievably)* Good? Good? What’s good about it? It’s raining again! I can’t stand the British weather…

Person 3 *(Trying to be positive)* Well, it’s good weather for… er, ducks…

Person 4 That’s just quackers.

Person 5 And that’s a terrible joke. Anyway, I like rain! *(Takes down umbrella and jumps up and down excitedly)* I love splashing in the puddles.

People 1-4 *(Stop suddenly and stare at Person 5)* What? You *like* rain?!

Person 5 Yeah! I love it. I mean, without it, can you imagine what life would be like?

Person 1 *(Sarcastically)* Yes! Sunny!

Person 5 Well, okay, it’s good to have a bit of sun, too. But we need the rain to survive, don’t we?

Person 2 I suppose so…

Person 5 Just think of all the times that you’ve used water so far today.

Person 3 Well, I showered this morning.

Person 4 *(Holding their nose)* Are you sure?

Person 2 And I brushed my teeth. *(Breathes heavily)* Hmm, minty fresh!

Person 3 And I made a cup of tea.

Person 1 *(Producing a water bottle)* And I’ve got my water bottle here for later.

Person 4 And I put some clothes in the washing machine before I came out.

Person 3 And I had a boiled egg for breakfast.

Person 1 And I watered the plants.

Person 2 Oh and I flushed the loo!

Person 5 *(Interrupting)* Okay, okay! Too much information! But you see, we use water all the time, often without thinking.

People 1-4 *(Nodding their heads together*) Yes, you’re right.

Person 5 And where do you think all that water comes from?

Person 1 Er, the tap…

Person 5 Well, yes. But first of all it comes from the rain!

Person 2 I suppose you’ve got a point.

Person 5 So can you imagine life without water?

Person 3 *(Looking up at the sky, sighing)* Not in this weather, unfortunately.

Person 4 It would be pretty awful.

Person 5 But that’s what millions of people across the world face regularly. More than 650 million people do not have access to safe water.

Person 1 That’s a lot of people.

Person 5 And 2.3 billion people around the world don’t have a safe, clean toilet. That’s one in every three people!

Person 2 That’s a lot of people.

Person 5 And not having clean water brings all sorts of problems. For example, lots of time is spent collecting water from wells – a job that’s often left to women and children. So children can’t always get to school and women cannot always find work.

Person 3 That’s not good.

Person 5 And, of course, a lack of clean water often leads to diseases such as dysentery and diarrhoea.

Person 4 That sounds dreadful.

Person 5 That’s true. Diarrhoea is easily treated in this country, but it can be deadly.

Person 4 So it could be prevented.

Person 5 Yes, and it’s a problem that is affecting many different places - parts of Africa, for example, where it is often hot and dry but also in countries where floods are common, like Bangladesh.

Person 1 So what can we do?

Person 5 Well, organisations such as CAFOD are working alongside local communities so that more people have access to clean water. In Zimbabwe, for example, CAFOD partners are providing safe water sources and using solar energy to pump water into remote villages.

Person 2 That sounds brilliantly easy.

Person 5 It is! And CAFOD is working with governments and leaders to help provide better water facilities.

Person 3 It sounds like there’s a lot of change needed.

Person 5 There is! But CAFOD are also supporting local people to find out more about the importance of clean water and good hygiene, so that they can help to protect themselves.

Person 4 It sounds brilliant!

Person 5 It is! Because water is a brilliant thing – a life-giving thing that we need to survive! So, you see, that’s why I love rain *(starts to jump again)* and love splashing in puddles!

People 1-4 *(holding out a hand and taking down their umbrellas)* Er, it’s stopped raining!

**CAFOD’s work**

The sketch gives some brief explanation of CAFOD’s work on water and hygiene projects in Zimbabwe. You can further this by using messages given by some of the people helped by CAFOD’s partners (ask different pupils to read these):

* Beauty now has a clean water source in her village. She says, **“Initially we used to fetch water from the Zambezi river, 2.5km away. The water was not clean so we used to suffer from diarrhoeal diseases throughout. There is no more diarrhoea now we have this clean water.”**
* Belita and other women and girls in her area used to have to collect water from the bottom of the steep, rocky hillside, risking injuring themselves. Now, using solar power,water that is pumped from the bottom of the mountain to the top. Belita says, **“Our children now have time to go to school. Even though some have still to travel far for water, this has been reduced. We can see the difference for our children’s future, now they have more time.”**
* Martha and other women in her community used to walk long distances to collect water from the Zambezi river, where they faced the risk of crocodile attacks. Now a solar powered project pipes water from the Zambezi to villages. Martha says, **“Now we can access water next to our homestead, it like we are dreaming. The coming of this water has improved our hygiene. We would not have been able to construct latrines without water. We can also clean daily now. We can wash out clothes.”**

**Prayers**

Conclude with the following prayers:

Lord, help us to appreciate your gift of water.

As we drink, wash, cleanse and grow,

remind us how brilliant water is

and how precious it is too.

Lord, hear us: **Lord, graciously hear us.**

Lord, we pray for people living without clean water,

and for those who must travel

long distances to collect it.

Bless CAFOD’s work, supporting families to access clean water.

Lord, hear us: **Lord, graciously hear us.**

Lord, we pray for those who have been affected

by illness as a result of dirty water and sanitation.

Bring healing to them

and help us to work towards cleanliness and health.

Lord, hear us: **Lord, graciously hear us.**

**A Closing Prayer**

Lord God,

we thirst for a world of justice – a world of peace and happiness.

We thirst for people to be treated equally and fairly.

So, Lord, give us the gift of water: the water of life,

the water of forgiveness, the water that refreshes us

and gives us the energy we need to change our world.

Amen.

Statistics taken from: WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) Report 2015 update